

The Definitive Stamps of the Reign of King George VI



Australian Post Office

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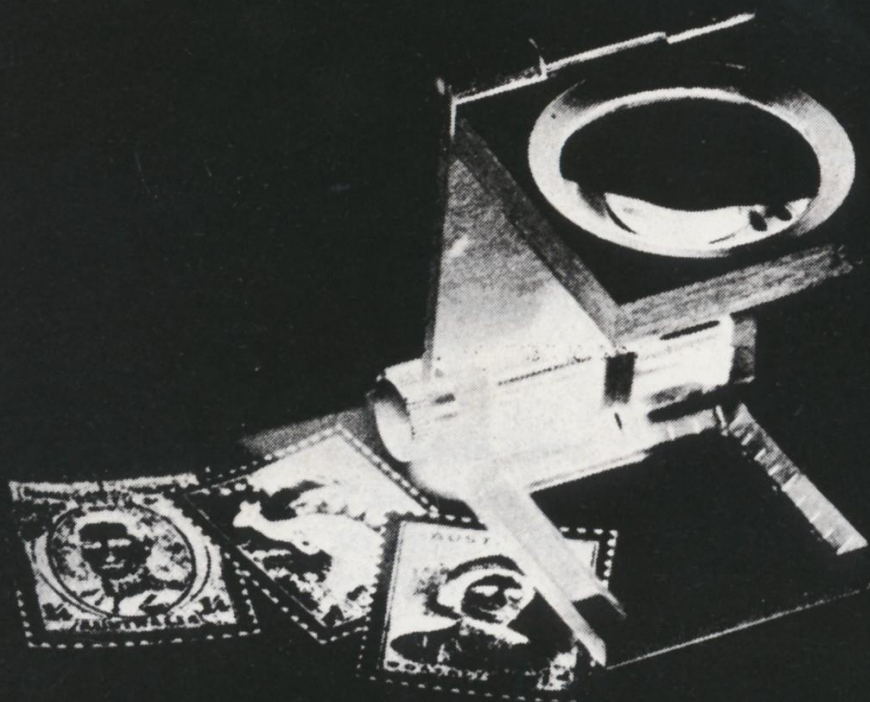
The Definitive Stamps of the Reign of
Queen Elizabeth II, 1952-65

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AUSTRALIAN POST OFFICE

The Definitive Stamps of the Reign of King George VI

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of Australian postage stamps



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Introduction

The first series of stamps of the reign of King George VI introduced the concept that all definitive stamps should be recess-printed.

Up to that time most definitives had been produced by the letterpress process, not only for reasons of economy and convenience, but also because until 1934 the Note Printing Branch of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, where all postage stamps were manufactured, had restricted capacity so far as recess-printed stamps were concerned. Only 14 such stamps for the Australian Post Office emanated from the Branch over the 1927-1932 period, these comprising airmails, commemoratives, and one solitary definitive.

The Post Office had been aware for a long time that Australian stamps needed to be improved, both as to design and method of production. As early as 1931 it had announced plans for the issue of a series 'to advertise Australia abroad' and contemplated that such series would comprise mainly line-engraved stamps from designs prepared by Note Printing Branch artists. The use of the expression 'line-engraved' connoted recess-printing. Of the stamps, several were to be concerned with fauna, and specifically mentioned at the time were the lyrebird, kookaburra, kangaroo, platypus and koala, while others were to bear royal portraits and various Australian scenes.

As events were to show, all the fauna subjects mentioned found places in the initial King George VI series but even earlier, in 1932, in an effort to put the plan under way, the lyrebird and kookaburra subjects were utilized for definitive stamps of that year.*

The programme had also provided for the issue in 1932 of further definitives illustrative of the kangaroo and platypus but such stamps did not then eventuate as circumstances had become unfavourable. The limited recess-printing facilities at the Note Printing Branch were at that time fully committed to the production of lengthy series of new stamps for New Guinea and for Papua, all due for issue in 1932, while immediately following came the Depression, one effect being retrenchment in many government activities. The plan, perforce, had therefore to be suspended and the Post Office was obliged to announce that on account of the financial stringency the original programme of stamp issues had been abandoned.

* The stamps are described in the Australian Post Office booklet 'The 1913-14 Recess-Printed Series and the King George V Sideface and Pictorial Definitive Stamps'.

Within the Post Office it had also become evident at this time that a mixed series of both letterpress and recess-printed stamps would have certain disadvantages. In the knowledge that the Note Printing Branch had placed an order in England for new presses highly suitable both for banknote and stamp printing, the Post Office plans were revised to the intention that as soon as the additional machine capacity became available all postage stamps would be recess-printed. The new presses were installed and in operation in 1934 and, so far as stamps were concerned, were first employed for the production of the Victorian Centenary commemorative series of that year.

The plan for the production of the new definitive series was then advanced to the extent that various designs were prepared, including new portrait presentations of King George V. The death of His Majesty early in 1936 occasioned necessary changes. Approved portraits of King Edward VIII were obtained from England and new designs prepared for royal approval.

The Postmaster-General of the day announced in February 1936 that new stamps depicting King Edward VIII would be issued as early as practicable and that it was also intended to issue, about the same time, other stamps of the projected new series. The concept of the new series also envisaged the discontinuance of the £2 stamp and the separate 3d and 6d airmail stamps.

There was further amplification in an official statement in September 1936, it being announced that some of the existing Australian stamps would be replaced in 1937, probably at a date coinciding with the Coronation of King Edward VIII; that the portrait of His Majesty would be incorporated in the designs for the more extensively used values and that the stamps would be of smaller dimensions, conforming to the size of the then current British stamps, and that they would be recess-printed.

By late 1936 the King Edward VIII design had been allocated to the 1d, 1½d, 2d, 3d and 1/4d denominations and some dies had been completed. The abdication of King Edward VIII and the accession of King George VI in December 1936 brought all work on the new stamps to an immediate halt. The necessary revision which followed, while altering the detail, maintained the same general concept of the form of the series. It is perhaps appropriate to mention, as a last word, that no printings of King Edward VIII stamps were made. Subsequently, all relevant dies and proofs were destroyed.

CHAPTER ONE

The Lower Values of the First King George VI Series

The general pattern of the initial King George VI series followed the concept developed for the abortive King Edward VIII series in that all stamps were to be recess-printed; the more extensively used values were to depict His Majesty — the theme being extended to include Her Majesty — and the lower values were to be of small size.

The outline for the design subjects, as approved in January 1937, provided as follows:

$\frac{1}{2}$ d Kangaroo; 1d Queen Elizabeth; $1\frac{1}{2}$ d and 2d King's bust without Crown; 3d King's bust with Crown; 4d Merino Sheep; 5d Koala; 6d Kookaburra; 9d Platypus; 1/- Lyrebird; $\frac{1}{4}$ d King's bust with Crown; $\frac{1}{6}$ d Mercury; 2/- King and Queen; 5/- Pastoral Scene; 10/- Parliament House, Canberra; £1 King and Queen with Coat of Arms.

The Note Printing Branch was asked to prepare further designs on the above basis. Designs incorporating some of the subjects had in fact been tentatively considered earlier but at this time all were subjected to further scrutiny. While most subjects listed ultimately appeared on the stamps, some changes were made as work on the series progressed.

Unlike other countries within the British Empire, Australia did not issue special stamps commemorative of the Coronation of King George VI on 13 May 1937. But the Post Office did arrange for issue of two stamps of the new series on 10 May 1937, the 1d portraying Queen Elizabeth and the 2d depicting King George VI.

An innovation introduced by the Post Office at the time was the provision of specially printed first day covers. In spite of the considerable competition of privately printed covers these proved very popular as practically the whole supply in all States was exhausted. They were sold, with the two stamps affixed, for the price of $3\frac{1}{2}$ d.

The remainder of the new series appeared over the following months, the 3d, 6d and 1/- in August 1937 and the balance on various dates in 1938, the last to be issued being the 5d, in December. The proposed 2/- stamp was not issued. The series was not intended to include a £2 stamp but it may

be noticed that for some time afterwards, until exhaustion of stocks, the £2 Kangaroo stamp* continued to be available.

To avoid possible confusion, the colours of the stamps, as listed in the Summaries in this and subsequent chapters, generally accord with those appearing in most standard catalogue listings. In instances where the official names of the colours differed markedly these are mentioned in the general descriptive texts.

The ½d Kangaroo: The earlier design concept for the ½d stamp envisaged the depiction of two kangaroos, rather than a single animal, and designs had been submitted on that basis in September 1936. Various other designs showing one or more kangaroos were considered at intervals during 1937 but none of these had found acceptance. Two such designs are shown at Figs. 56 and 57.



FIG. 1

Finally, a new design based on photographs of 'Duke', a favourite kangaroo at Melbourne's Zoological Gardens, was accepted in March 1938. The stamp appeared on 3 October 1938, in a colour officially described as mid-chrome. (Fig. 1.)

This was to prove a long-lived design which survived more than 27 years, disappearing only at the end of the £sd. currency period.

The 1d Queen Elizabeth: The time available for the production of this stamp, and the 2d King George VI stamp, was exceptionally short, taking into account that both were required to be issued on 10 May, 1937. The design shows Queen Elizabeth in Court dress and was based on a Dorothy Wilding photograph.



FIG. 2

The design was approved in February 1937 and die proofs a month later, leaving but a few weeks for the preparation of the plates, printing, and distribution to meet the determined date of issue.

The design (Fig. 2) and that of the accompanying 2d were subjected to some degree of criticism when the stamps appeared. Most comment concerned the somewhat weak lettering of 'AUSTRALIA' and the figure of value and the white areas behind the portraits. The designs were subsequently revised and the modified stamps are described in Chapter Two.

The 1½d King George VI: The portrait utilized for this stamp, a Peter North photograph, depicts His Majesty in the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet.

* This stamp (1932-35 series) is described in the Australian Post Office booklet 'The Early Commonwealth Period and the Kangaroo and Map Series'.



FIG. 3

The die originally prepared exhibited the same characteristics as the 2d but before plate-making commenced it was required to be altered. The lettering was strengthened and the 'halo' effect behind the portrait removed. The revised 1½d die served, in fact, as the model for the changes embodied in the modified 1d and 2d stamps which appeared some months later.

The 1½d stamp (Fig. 3) was issued on 20 April 1938, the colour being officially termed burnt umber.



FIG. 4

The 2d King George VI: The same portrait as adopted for the 1½d design was used. Like the 1d, the design was approved in February 1937, leaving very little time for the stamp production processes to be completed. In company with the 1d it was issued on 10 May 1937 (Fig. 4). The main points of public criticism of this design were mentioned above in respect of the 1d.



FIG. 5

The 3d King George VI: The same portrait as used for the 1½d and 2d designs was adopted for the 3d stamp although the presentation was quite different, there being a crown above the head, as was intended, this being flanked with wattle leaves and blossom. This particular frame design had been evolved earlier for use for the intended 3d and 1/4d King Edward VIII stamps. The stamp was printed on chalk-surfaced paper and was issued on 2 August 1937 (Fig. 5). Interesting aspects of this stamp are the distinctive die or plate differences which occurred progressively so as to create three major varieties. These differences may be summarized as follow:

- (a) The letters 'TA' of 'POSTAGE' to the right are joined, or nearly so. The outline of the King's chin consists of separate strokes (Fig. 5a).

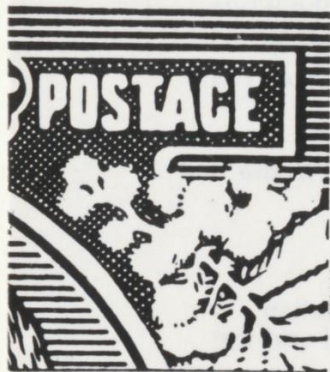


FIG. 5A



FIG. 5B



FIG. 5C

- (b) As (a) except that the 'T' and 'A' of 'POSTAGE' have been separated. This was done by a series of retouches on the printing plate (Fig. 5b).
- (c) The original die was modified. The 'T' and 'A' of 'POSTAGE' are clearly separate and the outline of the chin is defined by a continuous line (Fig. 5c).



FIG. 6

Stamps illustrative of the above varieties are all of 1937-38 printings on chalk-surfaced paper. By 7 December 1938, the Note Printing Branch had disposed of all printed stocks of the 3d on that paper and from the same date commenced distribution of the 3d with the characteristics mentioned at (c) above, on ordinary paper. The first supplies were sent to Adelaide and because of the heavy demand at that time of the year they were being sold over post office counters very shortly afterwards. Later reference is made to the use, and discontinuance, of chalk-surfaced paper for other denominations.

The 4d Koala: The earlier intention had been that this stamp should depict a merino sheep, with the Koala appearing on the 5d. However, the subjects were changed over. The original Koala design had been prepared some years before and had been based on a photograph of 'Gumleaf', a koala born in 1930 at the Koala Park Animal and Bird Sanctuary, West Pennant Hills, N.S.W. 'Gumleaf' contracted ophthalmia and died of that complaint in 1933. An unadopted Koala design is shown at Fig. 58.

The final design was approved about the middle of 1937 and the stamp issued on 1 February 1938 (Fig. 6). The design was subjected to some criticism upon its appearance but the stamp survived for many years, not being replaced until 1957.

A small printing of this stamp was made on chalk-surfaced paper and sent to Darwin, N.T., early in 1942. It is thought that the bulk of the stock of this printing was destroyed when the Darwin Post Office was bombed on 19 February 1942.



FIG. 7

The 5d Merino Sheep: This stamp was issued on 1 December 1938, in a colour officially termed dark magenta (Fig. 7). The subject of the design was a prize merino ram in a pastoral scene against the background of the Blue Mountains, this being typical of the 'Macarthur' country in New South Wales where the breed was originally established.

The design was, in fact, a smaller copy, slightly modified, of the design which had been used for stamps of the Captain Macarthur Centenary commemorative series of 1934. An unadopted design is shown at Fig. 59.



FIG. 8



FIG. 9



FIG. 10

The 6d Kookaburra: Quite a number of Note Printing Branch designs for this stamp were considered in 1936 and early in 1937. That selected represented the bird and background in a form differing from its earlier representations on stamps. Die proofs were approved in April 1937 and the stamp was issued on 2 August 1937 (Fig. 8).

The 9d Platypus: The design for this stamp had taken a long time to develop and not until October 1937 were die proofs submitted and approved. One of the unadopted designs is shown at Fig. 60. At that particular time considerable quantities of the 9d Kangaroo stamp were in stock and while the 9d Platypus stamp could have appeared much earlier its date of issue was not until 1 September 1938, by which time most of the 9d Kangaroo stamps had been absorbed. The colour was officially termed umber-grey (Fig. 9).

The 1/- Lyrebird: The design for this stamp was derived from the earlier Lyrebird stamp of 1932, being, in fact, a smaller replica. The die of the smaller version was actually cut late in 1934 but plates were not made until 1937. The stamp was issued on 2 August 1937 (Fig. 10).

The 1/4d King George VI: The design of this stamp, as approved in April 1937, accorded with that of the 3d and a die based thereon was engraved. However, this original die was re-engraved, before plate-making, so that the presentation of the head followed that of the modified version of the 2d. The wattle sprays at the upper sides were also re-engraved and became more definite in expression than the similar sprays on the 3d. The intended date of issue for this stamp had been 1 July 1938, but because of the large stocks of the 1/4d King George V stamps on hand, was deferred. The stamp appeared on 3 October 1938, in a colour officially described as deep roseine (Fig. 11).



FIG. 11



FIG. 12

The Printer and Printing: To avoid subsequent repetition, it is noted here that the work of engraving the dies and printing the stamps described in this booklet was carried out entirely at the Note Printing Branch, Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Melbourne.

Unless otherwise stated, all stamps were recess-printed on paper watermarked multiple small crown over C of A (Fig. 12).

Summary:

Designers and Engravers: The 1d, 1½d and 2d stamps were designed by R. A. Harrison and the ½d, 3d, 4d, 5d, 6d, 9d, 1/- and 1/4d by F. D. Manley.

All engravings were by F. D. Manley except that in regard to the 6d Kookaburra the bird and stump were engraved by F. D. Manley and the background and lettering by T. C. Duffell.

1937-38 Types as Figs. 1 to 11.

Perf. 13½ x 14 (vertical designs); 14 x 13½ (horizontal designs).

½d orange — Kangaroo

1d green — Queen Elizabeth

1½d maroon — King George VI

2d red — King George VI

*3d blue — King George VI

*4d green — Koala

5d reddish mauve — Merino Sheep

6d brown — Kookaburra

9d sepia — Platypus

1/- dull green — Lyrebird

1/4d magenta — King George VI

* For printings on chalk-surfaced paper see text.

CHAPTER TWO

The Higher Values of the First King George VI Series

Perforation Changes in the Lower Values

The higher values comprised denominations of 1/6d, 5/-, 10/- and £1, all being of larger format than those of the lower values. There was no 2/- stamp. It had been intended earlier that portraits of the King and Queen should appear on a 2/- stamp but in November 1937 it was decided that this subject should be transferred to the 10/- stamp and that Parliament House, Canberra, previously selected for the 10/-, be utilized for the 2/-.

A number of designs showing Parliament House had been prepared and the programme had provided that the 2/- stamp should appear on 1 December 1938. However, up to the middle of August 1938 a design had not been approved. Two of the unadopted designs are shown at Figs. 61 and 62.

In view of the time aspect and because only small stocks of the 2/- Kangaroo stamp were on hand the immediate situation was met by authorising a further printing of the 2/- Kangaroo stamp sufficient to last until March 1939, by which time it was thought that a suitable design would have been approved and the stamp put into production.

However, this part of the programme remained unimplemented. The 2/- Kangaroo continued to be printed and remained current until replaced by a new 2/- definitive stamp in 1948. Printings of the 2/- Kangaroo made from new plates in 1946 displayed marked differences from those printed from earlier plates*.

The 1/6d Mercury and Globes: The 1/6d stamp of 1934 depicting the figure of Mercury between two globes (Fig. 13) was adapted to the series by the preparation of new plates suitable for the rotary presses. The initial printing was made, in September 1937, on watermarked chalk-surfaced paper. Distribution was commenced on 4 October 1937 and the stamp became available at various post offices later in the same month, there being no specific date of issue.

* Described in the Australian Post Office booklet footnoted in the previous Chapter.



FIG. 13



FIG. 14



FIG. 15



FIG. 16

The 5/- Queen in Coronation Robes: Earlier, this denomination had been intended to show a pastoral scene. However, after new Dorothy Wilding portraits of Their Majesties in Coronation dress had been received from London in August 1937, and designs based on these photographs considered over the following three months, it was decided in November 1937 that the three high values should depict Their Majesties, singly on the 5/- and 10/- and together on the £1. The 5/- stamp (Fig. 14), in a colour designated as a shade of carmine, and printed on chalk-surfaced paper, was issued on 1 April 1938.

The 10/- King George VI in Coronation Robes: This stamp (Fig. 15), printed on chalk-surfaced paper and in a colour termed violet, although better described as dull purple, also made its appearance on 1 April 1938.

The £1 King George VI and Queen Elizabeth: The portraits shown together on this stamp were the same as used for the 5/- and 10/- stamps. The £1 stamp (Fig. 16) in a colour officially described as blue-black, and printed on chalk-surfaced paper, was issued on 1 November 1938.

Reference to the high-value stamps on ordinary watermarked paper is to be found in Chapter Four.

The Plate and Perforation Changes

The measure of $13\frac{1}{2} \times 14$ which had been adopted for the perforating of the lower values of the initial series was not entirely satisfactory in practice. The paper used was of hard texture and clean separation was not easy, an aspect which caused some public complaint. The remedy required that there be lesser areas of paper along the lines of separation.

However, improvement in that direction could not be introduced quickly as this aspect was but one of a number of technical modifications which experience to then had found to be necessary. It had been realized that the sizes of some of the printing plates originally made for the various values were uneconomical in that full advantage was not taken of machine capacity. Again, there were problems associated with the spacing of stamp impressions on some of the plates. It was decided, therefore, that plates, as necessary, should be of larger dimensions, and standardized, so that maximum printing output could be achieved.

In the laying down of the new plates a very fine degree of precision was required. All stamp impressions had to be exactly to size and all had to be spaced exactly on the plates. The overall operation necessitated that some of the original dies be varied slightly in dimensions before the new plates could be made. This also had particular relation to the successful subsequent operation of new perforating dies, which had the measure of $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$. It was also bound up, in respect of some of the values, with the Post Office requirement for coils suitable for new stamp vending machines obtained from England.

While careful measurement will show that in the main the stamps perforated $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$ vary slightly in size from that of their predecessors of similar designs, perforated $13\frac{1}{2} \times 14$, the easy and normal means of distinction is the gauge of the perforations.

The process of changing over to the new perforation, so far as stamps of the initial series were concerned, involving as it did the making of new plates in each instance, became a lengthy task because of other intervening factors.

The war tax of $\frac{1}{2}$ d per article, introduced in 1941, and referred to at length subsequently, not only brought about various changes of colour in existing values but set a priority for the manufacture of new plates for these. At the

same time there was an issue of three provisional stamps and, over 1942-44, six new definitives in as many designs.

The new 1d and 2d plates had been made and the stamps issued in 1938. By 1940 and 1941 plates for the 3d, 1/-, 1½d and ½d, in that order, had been brought into use and by 1943 those for the 6d, 4d and 9d values. The final plate, made early in 1946, was for the 5d stamp. A new 1/4d plate was not made.

In the notes which follow it is more convenient to deal with the changes in order of appearance, rather than in denominational sequence.

FIG. 17



The Stamps:

The designs of the 1d Queen Elizabeth stamp (Fig. 17) and the 2d King George VI stamp (Fig. 18) not only incorporated changes to strengthen the lettering and to remove the white areas behind the portraits but, as comparison will show, other areas of the original dies were reworked. The announced date of issue for both stamps was 1 August 1938, but in error they were both placed on sale in Sydney, and elsewhere in New South Wales, about the middle of July 1938.

The 1d stamp became available about May 1939 in coil form, as did the 2d. The 2d also appeared in 1938 in booklets containing 12 stamps.

The next stamp of the group was the 3d. In this instance a pressing need had arisen for a new 3d printing plate, the Note Printing Branch having reported, in December 1938: 'One of the present copper plates has stretched, and it seems reasonable to suppose that the defect will develop with use until the plate will no longer be serviceable. To accommodate the stretch, we had to make a suitable perforating die.' At this time also it was decided that a new die should be cut and that the head representation thereon should accord with that of the 1½d, 2d and 1/4d stamps.

Distribution of stamps of the new printing (Fig. 19) was commenced by the Note Printing Branch on 9 October 1940, and as a specific date of issue had not been fixed, they normally became available at post offices as earlier stocks were exhausted; in some instances, later in the same month.

Following the 1941 postal rates change, a large part of the 3d blue residual stocks was disposed of by supplying them for use by Australian troops in the Middle East and Malaya.

Supplies of the 1/- Lyrebird stamp (Fig. 10) with the changed perforation were first distributed from the Note

FIG. 18



FIG. 19



Printing Branch on 18 February 1941, and the stamp was available at many post offices during the following month.

The 1½d King George VI stamp (Fig. 3) with the new perforation, and in a slightly different shade of colour, became available during November 1941. The colour was later officially designated as plum. The stamp had a very short life as one of the effects of the rates change in the following month, as will be related, required that its colour be changed.

The new plate for the ½d Kangaroo stamp (Fig. 1) was put into manufacture in September 1941. One of the requirements in this case, in the expectation that there would be a heavy demand for ½d stamps following the rates change, was that the stamps would be suitable for making up into coils for use in vending machines. The stamp became available, in both coil and sheet form, in January 1942.

Distribution of the 6d Kookaburra stamp (Fig. 8) with changed perforation commenced on 4 May 1942 and it was available at some post offices by the end of that month.

The 4d Koala stamp (Fig. 6) from new plates became available by October 1942, followed by the 9d Platypus (Fig. 9) in August 1943.

The final stamp of the group from new plates, the 5d Merino Sheep (Fig. 7) was first distributed on 15 January 1946. In this instance the production of the plate had been deferred until it was certain that the denomination was to be continued. It was maintained as a current stamp until 1950, becoming obsolete in 1952.

'Coil' Stamps: Where stamps were also issued in coil form such is noted in the text. The special 'coil' perforation was first used with the modified 1d Queen Elizabeth and 2d King George VI stamps of 1938. It comprised, in the horizontal line, larger holes than usual, gauge being the normal $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$. Somewhat later, in 1942, the form of the 'coil' perforation was changed to show holes larger than normal in the centre and normal-sized holes at each end. The gauge remained at $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$.

Summary

Designers and Engravers: H. Barr was the designer of the 5/- and 10/- stamps and for the first design of the £1, the latter being redesigned by F. D. Manley. The 1/6d stamp was designed by F. D. Manley.

The 5/-, 10/- and £1 stamps were engraved by F. D. Manley. The 1/6d was jointly engraved by E. Broad and F. D. Manley. The modified inscriptions on the 1d and 2d stamps were engraved by T. S. Duffell. Other engraving associated with stamps described in this chapter was the work of F. D. Manley.

1937-38 Types as Figs. 13 to 16. Chalk-surfaced paper.

Perf. $13\frac{3}{4} \times 13\frac{1}{4}$ (vertical designs) and

$13\frac{1}{4} \times 13\frac{3}{4}$ (horizontal designs)

1/6d dull purple — Mercury and Globes

5/- claret — Queen Elizabeth

10/- dull purple — King George VI

£1 dull blue — King George VI and Queen Elizabeth

1938-46 Types as Figs. 1, 17, 3, 18, 19, 6 to 10.

Perf. $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$ (vertical designs) and

$14 \times 14\frac{3}{4}$ (horizontal designs)

$\frac{1}{2}$ d orange — Kangaroo

1d green — Queen Elizabeth

$1\frac{1}{2}$ d red-brown — King George VI

2d red — King George VI

3d blue — King George VI

4d green — Koala

5d reddish-mauve — Merino Sheep

6d brown — Kookaburra

9d sepia — Platypus

1/- dull green — Lyrebird

CHAPTER THREE

The War Postage Tax and the Stamps of 1941-44

Following provision in the 1941 Federal Budget for a rise of $\frac{1}{2}$ d in the general postage rates, as a war tax, the Postmaster-General stated on 19 October 1941 that new $2\frac{1}{2}$ d, $3\frac{1}{2}$ d and $5\frac{1}{2}$ d postage stamps would be issued. He indicated also that a special supply of $\frac{1}{2}$ d stamps was being prepared to meet requirements until the new stamps were ready. The public demand was also to be met by the conversion of 1d stamp vending machines to $\frac{1}{2}$ d usage.

The new postage charge became effective on 10 December 1941, following the passage of the necessary legislation. An additional $\frac{1}{2}$ d for each postal article had to be paid, the only important exceptions being in respect to articles to and from members of the Armed Services.

Ten new stamps came into being as a consequence. Three were provisionals, first announced by the Postmaster-General in December 1941, and four were colour changes affecting existing denominations. The other three were the new $2\frac{1}{2}$ d, $3\frac{1}{2}$ d and $5\frac{1}{2}$ d definitives.

When the first announcement was made, in October 1941, it was expected that the new definitives would be available by 10 December, or a day or two later, and certainly in time for the heavy Christmas demand. However, it was soon seen that the printing situation was such that it was very unlikely that the requirement could be fully met. In the circumstances it was decided that three provisional $2\frac{1}{2}$ d, $3\frac{1}{2}$ d and $5\frac{1}{2}$ d stamps would be provided for interim use.

Official first days of issue were not associated with the provisionals, the four stamps in changed colours or the three new definitives.

The Postmaster-General had said that owing to the necessity of conserving paper supplies, the new stamps would be issued to post offices only as supplies of other stamps became exhausted. For that reason no arrangements were made for the simultaneous issue of the new stamps at all post offices.

The colour of some of the new stamps had to accord to the colour scheme fixed by the International Postal Convention for stamps representing the basic rates of international postage. Thus the stamp for the single rate international letter ($3\frac{1}{2}$ d) had to be blue and for a postcard ($2\frac{1}{2}$ d) red. The stamp representing the postage ($1\frac{1}{2}$ d) for a single unit weight of printed papers was required to be green.

In consequence, the colour of the existing $1\frac{1}{2}$ d stamp was changed while, to avoid confusion, colour changes had also to be made to the 1d, 2d and 3d stamps, as subsequently detailed.

The position on 10 December 1941, so far as stamp collectors were concerned, proved confusing and frustrating. Some of the new stamps were on sale in some post offices, but not in others. In many instances collectors could not obtain copies of all the new issues, except over periods of days. From a subsequent survey, it became clear that the three provisionals, and the four stamps in new colours, were in



FIG. 20



FIG. 21



FIG. 22

fact all issued, at one post office or another, on 10 December so that day may be regarded as the date of issue for the seven stamps.

The Provisionals:

Because the three definitives were not expected to be ready in adequate quantity by 10 December — and such proved to be the case — a decision was made to provide provisionals as a stop-gap measure. The sketches for the forms of overprint were approved in November and it was practicable to commence distribution of initial stamp supplies by the end of that month.

The provisionals are unusual, from the philatelic view, in that as a group they exhibit three types of surcharge (Figs. 20 to 22). In the case of the 2½d on 2d, the surcharge consists of a circular blocked outline impression in dull blue, this allowing the red colour of the basic stamp to appear through the new expression of value. In contrast, the form of the 3½d surcharge is bi-coloured. The outline block, practically square, contains the new denomination in the centre in an olive-yellow colour. The surround is black, as are the four bars which obliterate the original expression of value at left. The form of the 5½d surcharge, as will be seen by the illustration, is of very simple pattern. It is printed in purple, as are the five bars which obliterate the expression of '5d' at the bottom left of the stamp.

The basic 2d and 3d stamps were of the 14½ x 14 group described in the previous chapter. The basic 5d stamp was perforated 14 x 13½, the sheets being printed from the original plates.

The Colour Changes:



FIG. 23

The 1d green Queen Elizabeth stamp of 1938 was changed to a colour officially designated plum but which may be described as red-brown. The stamp was also issued in coils, being still available in that form some years later.

The 1½d King George VI stamp of 1941 became green in colour. In its red-brown colour, perf. $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$, it had had a very short life, as earlier mentioned.

The 2d red King George VI stamp of 1938 had its colour changed to what was officially termed purple. The colour is generally defined in catalogues as mauve. It was also issued in coil form.

The 3d blue King George VI stamp, issue of 1940, was changed to a colour officially termed red-brown but which may be better described as dark brown.

The New Definitives:

The intention to issue three new definitive stamps had been first announced in October 1941. On 5 January 1942, the public was advised that the stamps were about to appear, being reminded at the same time that there were no determined dates of issue. It was intended that the new stamps be placed on sale at individual post offices only as stocks of the surcharged stamps became exhausted. By late January 1942 the stamps had become readily available.

The designs for the three stamps had been first put in hand as early as November 1940 as the Post Office realized that with the prevailing war conditions a rise in postal rates was inevitable. As will be seen from the illustrations (Figs. 23 to 25) the designs represent significant departures from the simplicity of form evident in the 1937-38 series.

The three-quarters face presentation of King George VI utilized for the 2½d stamp, and based upon a Peter North portrait, is set within a frame of eucalyptus leaves and gumnuts conventionally treated. Two unadopted designs are shown at Figs. 64 and 65. The new 3½d stamp appeared in booklet form in 1942.

The same portrait was used for the 3½d stamp but in this design it is set within a circle. At the lower corners of the design appear two wrens, the female on the left and the male bird on the right.



FIG. 24



FIG. 25

The 5½d stamp depicts an emu, the frame each side comprising a conventionalized rendering of the Australian scented Sun Orchid. Earlier, some consideration had been given to depicting a jabiru, in lieu of the emu, and the design contemplated is shown at Fig. 63.

Small supplies of the 2½d stamp were first distributed from the Note Printing Branch on 13 December 1941, and of the 3½d and 5½d on 16 January 1942.



FIG. 26

The principle developed with the designs of the new 2½d and 3½d definitives — that stamps showing royal portraits should include some Australian symbolism — was maintained when further changes were being contemplated early in 1942. By that time the 1d stamp portraying Queen Elizabeth, which prior to the introduction of the war postage charge in December 1941 had been used quite extensively, was in comparatively small demand, being mainly required for mail to and from members of the Armed Services. The same rates change, moreover, had promoted a great increase in public requirement for the 1½d King George VI stamp.

So that this position could be corrected and taking into account that His Majesty was portrayed on several of the low value stamps and Queen Elizabeth only on the 1d, it was decided to issue a new 1½d stamp, with a portrait of Her Majesty as the main feature, and at the same time, to redesign the 1d stamp.



FIG. 27

A number of different designs for new 1d and 1½d stamps were prepared at the Note Printing Branch over the next few months, the final designs gaining approval in August 1942. In both instances the same representation of Her Majesty, based on a Dorothy Wilding portrait, was employed, with differing frame treatments.

The design of the 1½d stamp (Fig. 26) includes the flower and foliage of the New South Wales 'Flannel Flower' in the top left and right corners. This stamp, in green colour, was generally available at post offices on 1 December 1942.

The 1d stamp (Fig. 27) had representations of the leaves and flowers of the native Fuchsia or Currajong in the top left and right corners.

The official colour was plum. The stamp first became available on 1 January 1943. It was subsequently available in coil form from stamp vending machines.



FIG. 28

The last change to be made was in respect of the 2d stamp. In this instance the same portrait of King George VI as depicted on the 2½d was utilized. It was set within an upright oval frame placed at the right to allow the presentation of a gum-tree as a frame at the left, the tree dominating a rural landscape across the lower part of the stamp (Fig. 28).

The design was approved in May 1944 but the issue of the stamp was not hastened because of the large stocks of current 2d stamps on hand. It was finally decided that the larger post offices would be supplied with small stocks of the new stamp, to be available only upon request, on and after 4 December 1944. This date is to be regarded as the official date of issue.

As there was not a particularly heavy demand for 2d stamps at that time, both types of 2d remained on concurrent sale until well into 1946. The new 2d stamp did not become available in coil form for some time, it being necessary to use up stocks of the earlier 2d first.

The effect of the various changes in the lower values was to enhance the overall appearance of the revised current series in the small size. The only low-value portrait design not changed was the 3d, it being considered that this design was in harmony with the new pattern.

The 1/4d stamp, in the same design as the 3d, was not in question as it had become obsolescent. The need for this value had practically disappeared with the rates increase of December 1941. However, substantial stocks were on hand and it continued to be supplied to post offices as a supplementary value to be used wherever possible. Even so, stocks did not become exhausted for some years.

About this time, 1944, consideration was being given to the provision of a 1/3d stamp in the new 2d design and although a design modification was made (Fig. 66) the project was not pursued.

None of the changes touched the high value portrait stamps, the 5/-, 10/- and £1, nor at that time were any alterations contemplated.

Summary

Designer and Engraver: The designer of the overprint lettering for the three provisionals was F. D. Manley who also designed and engraved the new 2½d, 3½d and 5½d definitives (1942) and the 1d, 1½d and 2d definitives (1942-44).

1941 (a) Provisionals: Stamps of 1938 (as Figs. 18, 19 and 7) surcharged with new values by letterpress (Figs. 20 to 22).

Perf. $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$ (2½d and 3½d); $14 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ (5½d)

2½d on 2d red

3½d on 3d blue

5½d on 5d reddish-mauve

(b) Colour Changes: Types as Figs. 17, 3, 18 and 19.

Perf. $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$

1d red-brown — Queen Elizabeth

1½d green — King George VI

2d mauve — King George VI

3d dark brown — King George VI

1942-44 New Definitives: Types as Figs. 23 to 28.

Perf. $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$

1d brown-purple — Queen Elizabeth

1½d green — Queen Elizabeth

2d bright purple — King George VI and Gum-Tree

2½d red — King George VI

3½d blue — King George VI

5½d dark blue — Emu

CHAPTER FOUR

The 1946 Stamp Design Competition: the Stamps of 1947-49

The Stamp Design Competition of 1946 arranged by the Australian Post Office was reflective of the official view of the time that Australian stamp designs needed to be improved and to be significantly Australian in character. Basically, this was a continuation of the policy which had brought about desirable design innovations in respect of the new 1942-44 definitives. Emphasis was now being placed on design requirements of broader concept.

In his public announcement of 30 July 1946, concerning the competition, the Postmaster-General said that 'with the object of widening the field of choice of designs for new issues of postage stamps from time to time, it had been decided to give an opportunity to the public generally, including artists, designers, etc., who may have ideas regarding suitable subjects, by inviting them to submit suggestions for designs which will serve to advertise Australia in other countries by depicting our local industries, activities, outstanding works, achievements, or other suitable subjects'.

The Postmaster-General, after listing the prizes and naming the members of the special board being set up to adjudicate on the merits of the designs submitted, said that 'the Department was confident that the action proposed would produce postage stamp designs which would achieve the

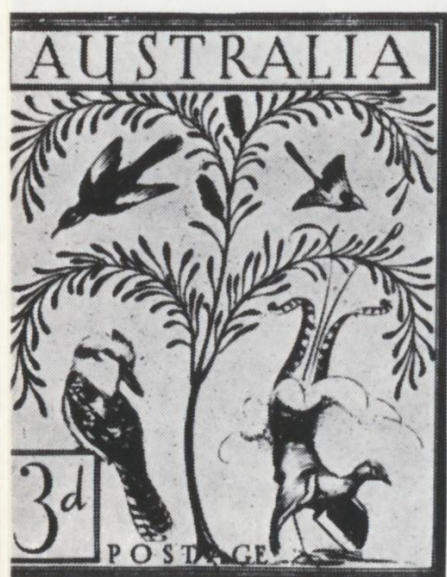


FIG. 29



FIG 30



FIG. 31

objectives and would also enable some designs which had outlived their purpose to be replaced by more fitting and appropriate designs'. The extended date for the closing of entries in the competition was 1 November 1946.

The names of the eight successful entrants, with photographs of their prize-winning designs, were made known in March 1947 (Figs. 29 to 36). Of the eight designs, two only, as subsequently related, were utilized for new stamps.

The successful entrants were:

Fig.

29 Mr. Harold Abbott, N.S.W.

30 Mr. D. Cameron, Vic.

31 Mr. M. Flynn, W.A.

32 Mrs. Jean Hunt, Vic.

33 Mr. Frank D. Manley, Vic.

34 Mr. Frank S. Rodriguez, N.S.W.

35 Mr. G. Sellheim, N.S.W.

36 Mr. Gayfield Shaw, N.S.W.

FIG. 33



FIG. 32



FIG. 34

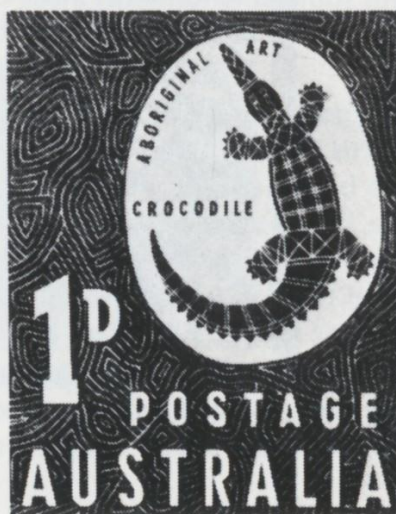


FIG. 35



FIG. 36

While this outcome might not appear to have been particularly rewarding, taking into account that 663 designs had been submitted by 226 entrants, the competition, in fact, had very far-reaching effects.

One emerging aspect was the valuable report submitted to the Postmaster-General by the adjudicating board, this offering guidelines and new approaches to the problems of stamp design.

Consequent upon this report came a decision by the Postmaster-General to appoint a standing advisory committee to advise him on stamp design matters generally. From that time the Post Office Stamp Advisory Committee, while its membership has changed from time to time over the years, has played a highly significant role in respect to the selection of artists to prepare stamp designs and in advancing designs to stages at which they could be recommended for adoption.



FIG. 37

The Stamps of 1947-48:

The first tasks of the Stamp Advisory Committee were to reconsider the suitability for stamps of the eight prize-winning designs, and to consider also the preparation of a new design, portraying Princess Elizabeth, which the Government had decided should be issued.

The two competition designs selected for immediate attention comprised the Head of Bull subject (Fig. 33) and the Aboriginal Art design (Fig. 35). The former was the work of Mr. F. D. Manley, who had entered the competition in a private capacity and not as an employee of the Note Printing Branch. The second design had been submitted by Mr. G. Sellheim of Sydney. With some amendments, these designs were utilized for 1/3d and 2/- stamps issued in 1948.

The 1d stamp portraying Princess Elizabeth: Following approval by His Majesty King George VI of the proposal that such a stamp be issued, and the receipt of approved photographs, it was practicable to commence work on the design late in April 1947. The photograph utilized in the preparation of the design had been obtained from the Dorothy Wilding studio.

A final design was evolved and approved locally early in June 1947 and final die proofs received royal approval in September 1947.

It had been decided that the stamp would be of definitive status, replacing the 1d Queen Elizabeth stamp of 1943. As a special tribute to the occasion, it was issued on 20 November 1947, the date of the marriage of Her Royal Highness, The Princess Elizabeth, to His Royal Highness, Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. The colour of the stamp was officially stated to be a shade of brown but it is more exactly described as purple (Fig. 37).

At that time considerable stocks of the 1d Queen Elizabeth stamp were on hand and both stamps continued on concurrent sale until stocks of the earlier issue became exhausted.

The 1/3d Hereford Bull: This was one of the two prize-winning designs adopted. However, various minor modifications were required and the design in its final form was not approved until August 1947. The significance of the design subject lay in its association with cattle-raising, an important Australian primary industry.

The stamp (Fig. 38) is of larger size and printed in a colour officially designated carmine-brown. The selected denomination was regarded as more practical than the 1/4d for use in connection with telegrams and parcels. The 1/3d stamp was issued on 16 February 1948.

The 2/- Aboriginal Art: This, the other prize-winning design adopted, also underwent various modifications before the final design was approved. The subject of the design was defined as aboriginal art in the form of a crocodile and, like the 1/3d, the stamp was in the larger size. It replaced the 2/- Kangaroo of 1946. The colour of the new stamp was described as dark chocolate. It also appeared on 16 February 1948 (Fig. 39).



FIG. 38



FIG. 39

Changes in Paper

i) Watermarked Chalk-surfaced Paper: This class of paper had been first introduced for use in 1935 with certain of the commemorative stamps of that year. It was subsequently employed in various printings of the 3d, 4d, 1/6d, 5/-, 10/- and £1 stamps of the initial King George VI definitive series, as related earlier. The paper had always posed certain technical difficulties in machine operation and when supplies became exhausted, towards the end of June 1947, no further stocks were ordered.

By that time the use of the paper had been restricted to the 1/6d, 5/-, 10/- and £1 stamps. The subsequent printings of these denominations were consequently made on ordinary watermarked paper and in this form became available about February 1948 for the 1/6d and 5/-, about November 1948 for the 10/- and about April 1949 for the £1.

ii) Unwatermarked Paper: As early as 1946 it had been decided that because of the increasing cost of stamp paper, low-value denominations would be printed on unwatermarked paper. The decision was not implemented until 1948, by which time stocks of the new paper had been received from England. Special tests then made led to the conclusion that the appearance of stamps was greatly enhanced by their being printed on the unwatermarked paper. It was then defined that this paper should be used for all definitive stamps of values lower than the current letter rate.

The first stamp to appear on the unwatermarked paper was the 1d Princess Elizabeth. Initial supplies were despatched from the Note Printing Branch on 23 July 1948, and the stamp was available in many post offices during the following month. It subsequently appeared in coil form. About September 1952, in an effort to dispose of excessive stocks, sheets of the stamp with the special 'coil' perforation were placed on sale at post offices as ordinary 1d stamps.

The next on the new paper was the 2d purple King George VI (Fig. 28). Initial distribution from the Note Printing Branch commenced on 20 December 1948, and it was on post office sale during the following month. Some sheets of this stamp, with the special 'coil' perforation, were distributed as part of ordinary 2d stocks about May 1950. It was also available in coil form from stamp vending machines.

The two remaining values of the group, the 1½d Queen Elizabeth and the ½d Kangaroo, appeared on the unwatermarked paper later in 1949. Supplies of the former were first

distributed on 8 August 1949, and of the ½d on 9 September 1949. The ½d stamp also became available in coil form as supplies of the similar stamp on watermarked paper became exhausted.

The Coat of Arms Series: The Post Office had for some time considered that the designs of the 5/-, 10/ and £1 stamps introduced in 1938 and depicting Their Majesties in Coronation robes had become outmoded but during the war years it was not practicable to effect any changes.

By 1947, following the establishment of the Stamp Advisory Committee, it was possible to pursue this objective and in September 1947 the Postmaster-General was able to announce that a new high-value series was in course of preparation. He also indicated that a £2 stamp would be reintroduced to meet postage requirements for heavy parcels and bulk postage payments.

Initially, thought was given to depicting the separate Coats of Arms of the Australian States but as the new series was to be limited to four stamps this course was not practicable. It was then decided that the Coat of Arms of the Commonwealth of Australia would appear on all four stamps.

Various designs incorporating the Coat of Arms were considered late in 1947 and early in 1948. By June 1948 three versions of a principal design had been approved.

So far as the presentation and immediate surround of the Coat of Arms were concerned, the versions were the same. However, the two variants selected for the 5/- and 10/- stamps had differing ornamental patterns at top and base while the third version was selected for the £1 and £2 stamps.

Following the release of press photographs of the 5/- design in March 1949, some controversy concerning the form of the Coat of Arms developed in the philatelic and lay press. It was contended that the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, as shown, was incorrect in that the proper forms of the Coats of Arms of some of the States were not depicted.

The Postmaster-General, in a statement in April 1949, explained that the design was based on the then current Commonwealth Coat of Arms which had been granted by Royal Warrant in September 1912. The amendments made to the Coats of Arms of some States after that date had not been incorporated in the Commonwealth Coat of Arms by Royal Warrant.



FIG. 40



FIG. 41



FIG. 42

The four stamps of the series were printed in a new larger size, such being required to show the Coat of Arms to full advantage, and were issued on different dates, the 5/- on 11 April 1949, the 10/- on 30 October 1949, the £1 on 28 November 1949, and the £2 on 16 January 1950 (Figs. 40 to 43).

The 1/6d Mercury and Globe: The 1/6d stamp of the 1934 type in large horizontal format, which had been adapted for rotary press printing by the manufacture of new plates and included in the initial King George VI series, had never fitted comfortably into the machine-handling patterns at the Note Printing Branch.

As the demand for the 1/6d denomination was substantial, its printings were a delaying aspect in overall production. In an effort to improve the situation the Note Printing Branch proposed, in November 1944, that the stamp be replaced by another of medium size.

Although designs submitted at the time by the Note Printing Branch for such a stamp were considered, the matter was left in abeyance because of the prevailing war conditions.

The proposal was revived in 1948, following the issue of the new 1/3d and 2/- stamps in medium size. Various new designs were considered and a final design approved in February 1949. This design was based on that of the earlier 1/6d stamp but with Mercury presented against a background of one globe instead of two (Fig. 44).

Work on the production of this stamp was delayed for some months because of uncertainties associated with proposed changes in postal rates. However, the effect of the July 1949 changes did not detract the need for the stamp and it was issued on 1 September 1949.



FIG. 43

Summary

Designers and Engravers: The 1d Princess Elizabeth stamp was designed by R. H. Harrison and the 2/- by G. Sellheim.

The 1/3d, 1/6d (Mercury and one Globe) and the four values of the Coat of Arms series were designed by F. D. Manley.

The 2/- stamp was engraved by G. Lissenden and F. D. Manley. The remainder of the stamps noted immediately above were engraved by F. D. Manley.

1947 Type as Fig. 37.

Perf. $14 \times 14\frac{3}{4}$

1d purple — Princess Elizabeth

1948-49 Types as Figs. 38, 44 and 39.

Perf. $14\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{3}{4}$

1/3d brown-purple — Head of Hereford Bull

1/6d grey-black — Mercury and Globe

2/- chocolate — Aboriginal Art

1948-49 New printings on ordinary watermarked paper
Types as Figs. 13 to 16.

Perf. $13\frac{3}{4} \times 13\frac{1}{4}$ (vert. designs); $13\frac{1}{4} \times 13\frac{3}{4}$ (horiz. designs).

1/6d dull purple — Mercury and two Globes

5/- claret — Queen Elizabeth

10/- deep purple — King George VI

£1 deep dull blue — King George VI and Queen Elizabeth

1949-50 Types as Figs. 40 to 43.

Perf. $14\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$

5/- carmine — Coat of Arms

10/- purple — Coat of Arms

£1 blue — Coat of Arms

£2 green — Coat of Arms

FIG. 44



Unwatermarked paper

1948-49 Types as Figs. 1, 37, 26 and 28.

Perf. $14 \times 14\frac{3}{4}$ (1d); remainder perf. $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$

$\frac{1}{2}$ d orange — Kangaroo

1d purple — Princess Elizabeth

$1\frac{1}{2}$ d green — Queen Elizabeth

2d bright purple — King George VI

CHAPTER FIVE

The 1949-1951 Postal Rates Changes and New Stamps

The purpose of the new postal rates legislation which became effective on 1 July 1949, was to remove the $\frac{1}{2}$ d war postage tax imposed in December 1941 and, in lieu, to increase the general postage rates by $\frac{1}{2}$ d. For the most part, the ruling rates of postage remained unchanged but some supplementary charges increased. The base registration fee was raised from 3d to 6d, this bringing about the need for an $8\frac{1}{2}$ d stamp to pay combined postage and registration charges. The intention to issue such a stamp was announced in July 1949.



FIG. 45

One of the winning designs of the 1946 stamp design competition showing an aborigine with a kangaroo over his shoulder (Fig. 36) was seriously considered for the $8\frac{1}{2}$ d stamp. However, it was not adopted. Various other designs, incorporating an aborigine's head, were then prepared at the Note Printing Branch and a final design in that theme was approved in August 1949, and relevant die proofs in January 1950.

Due to the intervention of other factors, work on the production of the $8\frac{1}{2}$ d stamp was delayed and it was not issued until 14 August 1950. Of the usual small size, it was printed in a colour described as rich brown (Fig. 45).

The design of the stamp created a good deal of public interest at the time. The aborigine shown was a member of the Central Australian Wailbri tribe who had the rather strange name of 'One Pound Jimmy', his social or group name being Djungarai. The photograph of 'One Pound Jimmy' taken by Mr. Roy Duncan, staff photographer of 'Walkabout', was first published in that magazine. It was subsequently made available to the Post Office for the purposes of the stamp design. 'One Pound Jimmy' died in 1965.

New Royal Portrait Stamps 1950: As the representations of Their Majesties appearing on the then current low-value stamps had been unchanged for many years, the Post Office obtained from London in August 1949, new Dorothy Wilding portraits of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth for the purpose of new designs. As previously, the King was to be portrayed on the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d stamp and Queen Elizabeth on the $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. Both designs were prepared at the Note Printing Branch, and with die proofs, were approved by His Majesty late in 1949.

In the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d design His Majesty is pictured in profile in naval uniform facing to his right. Her Majesty the Queen,

in evening dress, jewelled necklace and coronet, is facing to her left in the 1½d design. An interesting feature of both designs is the decorative panel at the left side of the 2½d and on the right side of the 1½d. This panel is composed of an arrangement of the leaves and flowers of the Australian red flowering gum.

The 2½d stamp (Fig. 46) in red colour and printed on the usual watermarked paper was issued on 12 April 1950. The 1½d stamp (Fig. 47) in deep green colour was printed on unwatermarked paper, in accordance with the existing practice, and was issued on 19 June 1950.

FIG. 46



Postal Rates Increases 1950: Increases in postal rates, effective on 1 December, 1950, lifted the general charges by ½d, the domestic base letter rate becoming 3d, and the first, second and third class international base rates 5½d, 3d and 2d. Other changes in the tariff affected charges for parcels, registration and telegrams. The effect on postage stamps was considerable and the changes intended to be made included the discontinuance of some denominations.

Colour changes envisaged the 1½d green Queen Elizabeth stamp (Fig. 47) becoming violet and the 2½d red King George VI stamp (Fig. 46) becoming brown. With regard to new stamps, the 2d bright violet King George VI stamp (Fig. 28) was to be replaced by a 2d green Queen Elizabeth stamp. In lieu of the 3d brown King George VI stamp (Fig. 19) there was to be provided a 3d red in the same design as the 2½d. The 5½d depicting an emu was to be dropped in favour of a new 5½d portraying His Majesty. Denominations intended to be discontinued were 3½d, 5d, 8½d and 1/3d.

FIG. 47



The intended changes were put in hand but were only partially completed when further postal rates increases, operative from 9 July 1951, caused the remainder of the programme to be suspended or revised.

The 1½d Queen Elizabeth stamp (Fig. 47) was duly printed in violet, as determined, but before an issue date could be arranged, the further postal rates changes of July 1951 were introduced. As the latter removed the requirement for a stamp of 1½d denomination, the whole of the printing in violet, comprising some six million stamps, was subsequently destroyed.

The 2½d red King George VI stamp (Fig. 46) was printed in brown on unwatermarked paper and issued on 23 May 1951.

FIG. 48



The new 2d green Queen Elizabeth stamp in the same design as the 1½d but with a larger form of denominational expression (Fig. 48), and also on unwatermarked paper, appeared on 28 March 1951. It was subsequently available in coil form.



FIG. 49

The new 3d red King George VI stamp in the same design as the 2½d, but with a larger expression of value (Fig. 49), became available on 28 February 1951. It was also issued in coil form. Additionally, this stamp was to be made up into booklets of 12 stamps. However, before the manufacture of the booklets could be completed, the postal rates changes of July 1951 intervened. To avoid wastage, the large quantity of stamps which had been printed from a special booklet plate were distributed from the Note Printing Branch in September 1951, as ordinary 3d stamp stock and placed on regular post office sale.

The 5½d stamp portraying King George VI did not eventuate because of the July 1951 rates change. A design had, in fact, been approved but the cutting of the die had not commenced. This design was subsequently used for a 7½d stamp issued in October 1951.

The 3½d denomination, which had been temporarily discontinued, was revived by reason of the July 1951 rates changes. The 5d was discontinued completely and the small stocks on hand were quickly exhausted. The 8½d and 1/3d stamps had gained a temporary respite but when it was seen that they could not be fitted into the new rates structure they became redundant. Stocks, however, continued to be sold at post offices in an effort to exhaust supplies.

The 1951 Postal Rates Increases: Despite the major increases in postal rates in December 1950, the government of the day found it necessary to increase rates substantially a few months later, these coming into effect on 9 July 1951.

As a result, postage stamps of new denominations of 4½d, 6½d, 7½d, 1/0½d and 2/6d became necessary. It was also decided to alter the design of the existing 3½d stamp, which met the domestic base letter rate, and to change the colour of the 3d stamp. The denominations of 1½d, 5d, 5½d, 8½d and 1/3d were dropped completely, although, as mentioned earlier in respect of some of these, sales were continued in an effort to exhaust stocks.



FIG. 50

The first new stamp to be issued was the 7½d. The design had been approved earlier, being then intended for a 5½d stamp which did not eventuate. The design, a representation of His Majesty facing to his left, was based on a Dorothy Wilding photograph. As 7½d now represented the international base letter rate, the stamp was printed in blue (Fig. 50). It was issued on 31 October 1951.



FIG. 51

The colour of the current 3d red King George VI stamp (Fig. 49) was changed to green to meet U.P.U. requirements, as 3d now represented the charge for the first unit of printed papers in the international post. In conformity with practice, it was printed on unwatermarked paper and appeared on 14 November 1951. Subsequently, it became available in coil form.

The sculptured profile form of the head of King George VI used on the new 3½d stamp had been based on another Dorothy Wilding photograph. This stamp, in brownish red, was issued on 28 November 1951 (Fig. 51). Later it was made up for sale in booklets containing 12 stamps. The booklet was to have been placed on general sale on 1 July 1952, but in some post offices became available in June 1952.



FIG. 52

The death of His Majesty the King and the accession of Queen Elizabeth the Second on 6 February 1952, did not terminate the issue of stamps portraying King George VI.

The Post Office had announced in December 1951 that new 4½d and 6½d stamps bearing His Majesty's portrait would be issued late in February 1952, while the remaining two stamps necessary to complete the programme occasioned by the July 1951 rates changes — the 1/0½d and 2/6d — had been advanced to the printing stage.



FIG. 53

As all new stamps were required for use as quickly as possible it was decided in the circumstances that no variation would be made in regard to their intended issue. The 4½d and 6½d stamps, in the same design as the new 3½d, were issued on 20 February 1952 (Figs. 52 and 53). The 4½d was primarily intended to meet the rate for a postcard to foreign countries and in conformity with the U.P.U. colour pattern was printed in red. The 6½d was in brown and its main usage was to meet the airmail rate for a ½ oz. letter within Australia.

The 1/0½d stamp, mainly required to pay the combined postage and registration fees on an ordinary letter, was in



FIG. 54



FIG. 55

the medium size, the head of King George VI shown thereon being in a sculptured form which followed the pattern set by the new 3½d, 4½d and 6½d stamps. It was printed in dark blue and appeared on 19 March 1952 (Fig. 54).

The new 2/6d stamp was also issued on 19 March 1952. The same aboriginal head as had been used for the earlier 8½d stamp was adopted for the design, but was shown in larger size. This stamp, like the 1/0½d, was in the medium size, and printed in brown (Fig. 55).

The final stamp of the King George VI period was the 6½d green, this appearing on 9 April 1952. This stamp was the same in design as the 6½d brown and was a colour change replacement. The 6½d brown at that time had been on sale for only a few weeks but it was found that it was sometimes confused with the 3½d reddish-brown stamp, both being of similar design.

Appendix One to this booklet contains a list of the definitive stamps which were currently on general issue in sheet form immediately before the appearance, on 21 April 1953, of the first definitive stamps portraying Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second.

Summary

Designers and Engravers: The 1½d and 2d Queen Elizabeth stamps and the 2½d, 3d, 3½d, 4½d, 6½d and 1/0½d King George VI stamps and the 8½d and 2/6d Aborigine were designed by F. D. Manley. The 7½d King George VI stamp was designed by E. R. M. Jones.

The 1½d, 2d, 2½d and 3d stamps were engraved by F. D. Manley; the 3½d, 4½d and 6½d by G. Lissenden; the 7½d, 8½d and 2/6d by F. R. M. Jones and the 1/0½d by D. Cameron.

1950-52 Types as Figs. 45, 46, 49 to 53.
Perf. $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ d red — King George VI
3d red — King George VI
 $3\frac{1}{2}$ d brownish-red — King George VI
 $4\frac{1}{2}$ d red — King George VI
 $6\frac{1}{2}$ d brown — King George VI
 $6\frac{1}{2}$ d green — King George VI
 $7\frac{1}{2}$ d blue — King George VI
 $8\frac{1}{2}$ d brown — Aborigine

1952 Types as Figs. 54 and 55.
Perf. $14\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{3}{4}$
 $1/0\frac{1}{2}$ d dark blue — King George VI
2/6d brown — Aborigine

1950-51 **Unwatermarked paper**
Types as Figs. 46 to 49.
Perf. $14\frac{3}{4} \times 14$
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ d green — Queen Elizabeth
2d yellow-green — Queen Elizabeth
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ d brown — King George VI
3d green — King George VI

Appendix One

The definitive postage stamps which were currently on issue in sheet form immediately before the appearance on 21 April 1953 of the first of the Queen Elizabeth the Second definitive portrait stamps were a medley of early and later issues and comprised the following:

Fig.

1	$\frac{1}{2}$ d orange — Kangaroo
37	1d purple — The Princess Elizabeth
47	* $1\frac{1}{2}$ d green — Queen Elizabeth
48	2d yellow-green — Queen Elizabeth
46	$2\frac{1}{2}$ d brown — King George VI
49	3d green — King George VI
51	$3\frac{1}{2}$ d brownish-red — King George VI
6	4d green — Koala
52	†* $4\frac{1}{2}$ d red — King George VI
25	* $5\frac{1}{2}$ d slate blue — Emu
8	6d brown — Kookaburra
53	†* $6\frac{1}{2}$ d brown — King George VI
53	† $6\frac{1}{2}$ d green — King George VI
50	$7\frac{1}{2}$ d blue — King George VI
45	* $8\frac{1}{2}$ d brown — Aborigine
9	9d chocolate — Platypus
10	1/- grey-green — Lyrebird
54	† $1/0\frac{1}{2}$ d dark blue — King George VI
38	* $1/3$ d brown-purple — Hereford Bull
44	$1/6$ d grey-black — Mercury and Globe
39	2/- chocolate — Aboriginal Art
55	† $2/6$ d brown — Aborigine
40	5/- carmine — Coat of Arms
41	10/- purple — Coat of Arms
42	£1 blue — Coat of Arms
43	£2 green — Coat of Arms

* Consequent upon the postal rates increase of 9 July 1951, stamps of denominations of $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, $5\frac{1}{2}$ d, $8\frac{1}{2}$ d and $1/3$ d became redundant and no further printings were made. However, to deplete existing stocks the stamps remained available at post offices for a further two years. Distribution to post offices was discontinued as from 31 July 1953. Distribution of the $4\frac{1}{2}$ d and the $6\frac{1}{2}$ d brown King George VI stamps also ceased from the same date. The latter had been replaced by the $6\frac{1}{2}$ d in green colour but had been continued on sale to exhaust stocks. The $4\frac{1}{2}$ d was discontinued because of insufficient demand.

† These five stamps were issued after the accession of Queen Elizabeth the Second.

Appendix Two

Some Unadopted Designs



FIG. 56



FIG. 59



FIG. 58





FIG. 60



FIG. 61



FIG. 62

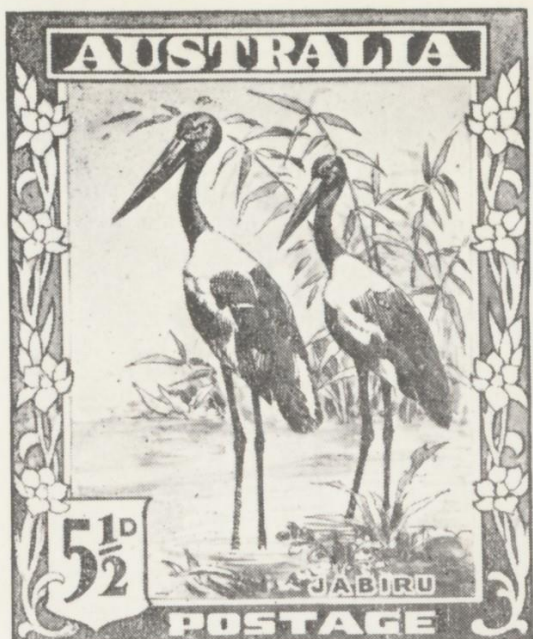


FIG. 63



FIG. 64

FIG. 65

FIG. 66



