

INTRODUCTION

The past year has seen extensive changes in Australian stamps, including the disappearance of two designs familiar for more than twenty years, the 9d Platypus and the 1/ Lyre Bird. The two new series depicting Australian animals and flowers are taking shape, and the situation has been complicated by the changes in postal rates on 1 October 1959. Some seventeen new numbers have been added to the Catalogue.

A particularly interesting development is the acquirement by the Note Printing Branch of photogravure equipment. The present recess printing process is fortunately not being abandoned, but in future the Post Office will select whichever of the two processes seems the better suited to a particular design. Bi-coloured and multi-coloured stamps can be expected, and we are told that amongst the first such stamps intended is a series depicting Australian birds.

The study of our past and present issues continues, and the recently published *George V Halfpenny* by Messrs Dix and Rowntree provides, among other things, a very welcome addition to our knowledge of the difficult Plate 3.

For this edition of the Catalogue we have re-arranged and re-numbered the Kangaroo issues to bring them into line with issues in the George V design. They are now listed by values instead of chronologically as hitherto. The George V issues have been listed in this way since our 1953 edition, and the obvious advantage in ease of reference was immediately appreciated. For the student also, as he follows the history of a particular stamp, such an arrangement has its advantages.

We recognise that the listing of certain of the Kangaroo issues is in need of revision and we hope to give attention to this in future editions. Apart from the ½d value there has been no such revision in the present edition. In the listing of this value it will be noticed that we have omitted the very scarce "AUSTBALIA" variety. Philatelic opinion has always been divided on its status, and until the variety is proved to be a *plate* flaw we do not feel that its listing can be justified.

The stamps of the Australian Commonwealth provide a rich and fascinating field for both collector and student. We trust they will find this edition of the Catalogue as useful as its predecessors.

In issues that have been re-written in recent years it will be noticed that varieties are listed in a definite order.

Shades: Listed under the letters A, B, C, etc.

Paper varieties: Wmk. inverted, sideways or reversed. Paper thick or thin, etc.

Listed under the letters a, aa, ab, etc.

Separation varieties: Double perf., imperf., coil joins, etc. Listed under the letters b, ba, bb, etc. Diagonal and other freak perforations are not listed.

Printing varieties: Offset, printed on the gum, slurred or kiss prints, double prints, dry ink, ink stripping, ink clogs (where such have become popular), etc. Listed under the letters c, ca, cb, etc. Varieties due to paper creases or folds, or to threads or other foreign matter adhering to paper or printing plates are not listed.

Plate varieties: Flaws, retouches, re-entries, etc. Listed under the letters d, e, f, etc. Where a plate variety is found in several states these are listed, e.g., as d, da, db.

Imprints: Listed under the letters z, za, etc.

Reference is made in the lists to various settings of the Harrison and Ash imprints on surface-printed issues. For the Harrison imprint the two settings are N of HARRISON over MP and over M of STAMP. For the Ash imprint (roman type) the two usual settings are N of JOHN over N and over A of AND. There is a third setting found in F34, D74 and D77 in which the N of JOHN is over the space between NOTE and AND.

All stamps listed in this Catalogue, apart from the early Postage Dues and the 1/ and 2/ Olympics (q.v.), were printed in Melbourne, by government agency. A Stamp Printing Branch of the Commonwealth Treasury Department was established in 1909. With the retirement of the Commonwealth Stamp Printer, J. B. Cooke, in May 1918, the Stamp Printing Branch was abolished. From that date the printing of Commonwealth postage stamps has been the responsibility of the Note Printing Branch. This was originally a branch of the Treasury Department. In May 1926 it was transferred to the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

Throughout the Catalogue the term "unused" refers to stamps which are reasonably well-centred, have full gum with no creases, intact perforations, and are of fresh appearance generally. The term "used" implies "fine used" condition, in other words reasonable centring, light cancellation, and no stains, creases, thins, or other forms of damage. For stamps that do not measure up to these specifications prices should be reduced according to condition. The prices for varieties are for those in the cheapest shades unless specifically stated otherwise.

Except where otherwise stated the pricing of imprint and plate number blocks is for "blocks of four." To ascertain the catalogue value of an imprint or plate number *pair* deduct the value of two unused singles from that of the imprint block of four. Imprints of high values are usually seen only with pairs, and even as such many are rare.

It will be understood that in the case of extremely rare items the prices listed are intended as a guide only. Prices paid for rarities are usually a matter of negotiation.

PLEASE NOTE: We are not a stamp dealing firm and do not supply stamps listed in this catalogue