

## INTRODUCTION

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The publishers are cognisant of the fact that the standard handbook on the stamps of the Commonwealth of Australia has not been published since 1968 and is out-of-print, and now contains much information that is out-of-date and inaccurate. No new edition of this work seems likely in the near future, and this catalogue now serves as the major work of reference on Australian Commonwealth stamps.

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The previous editors were:

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Pre-decimal issues have four price columns, using the following symbols:

UNMOUNTED MINT

MOUNTED MINT

USED

USED ON COVER

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**Mint.** Unmounted mint prices are given only for the basic stamp in each of its shades, and for OS punctures. Other varieties of the stamp may exist in this state, but for pre-1937 issues are relatively scarce, and it is not possible to identify which listings exist in this state. The previous practice of listing and pricing all varieties as unmounted mint has therefore been discontinued, for fear that this could encourage expert re-gumming of such stamps. The value of genuine unmounted mint items which are not priced may be computed from the ratio between unmounted mint and mounted mint for the basic stamp.

**Centring.** Prices for single stamp listings in this catalogue are for reasonable centring, with perforations clear of design. Perfectly centred stamps, particularly those of the reign of King George V, sell for a premium, whilst those much off-centre (i.e., with perforations touching design) sell for discounted prices. The variation in prices generally is in the range of 70% to 130% of those prices given.

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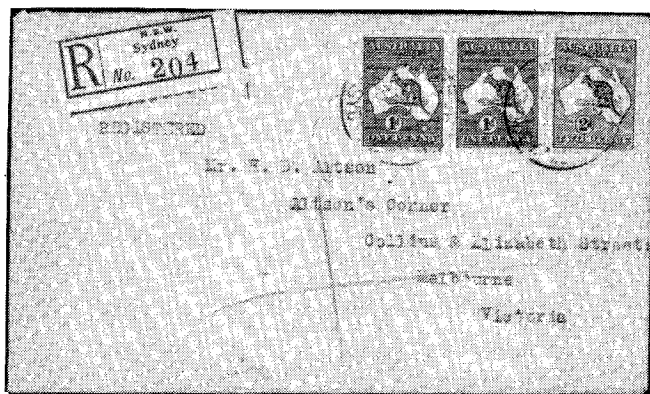
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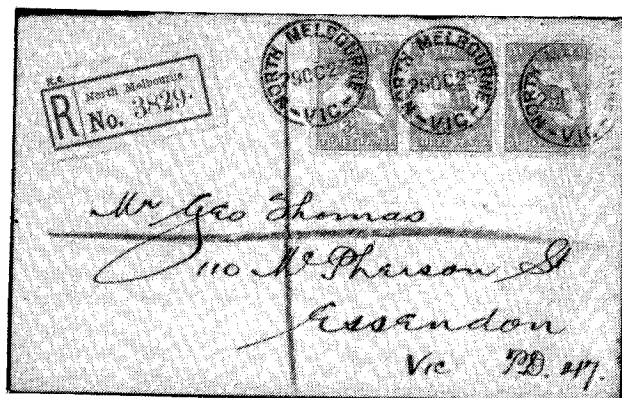
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Nos. 4 (x 2) + 5

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Base price on cover  
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Base price of No. 19 on cover  
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Each section has been arranged according to what is considered to be the most logical system, and that providing the user with the easiest access. Thus, the Kangaroo and King George V Sideface listings are value by value, whereas the later listings are basically chronological.

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"OS" overprints have now been given a separate listing following that of the basic stamps. These bear the number of the basic stamp followed by (OS). For example, 22(OS) is the 6d Kangaroo, Small Multiple Watermark, overprinted OS.

Prefix letters have been retained for those classes of material outside the general listing of stamps: B for stamp booklets; D for Postage Due stamps; E for the essays of the Early Federal Period, 1901-1913 (Section 1).

## ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS USED IN THIS CATALOGUE

★ ★	Mint unmounted, original gum	f.d.c.	First day cover
★	Mint previously mounted	imperf.	Imperforate
◊	Used	opt.	Overprint
☒	Used on cover	perf.	Perforation
c.d.s.	Circular datestamp	wmk.	Watermark
c.t.o.	Cancelled-to-order		

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1976. G.M.E. Seats became General Manager of the Note Issue Department, and directed the move to new Note Printing Works at Craigieburn, 25km north of Melbourne.

1981. D.R. Parr became General Manager.

Since 1977 a number of private security printing companies have been contracted to print Australian Commonwealth stamps, and exclusively so since 1981. Further details of these companies are given in the relevant Sections.

## WATERMARKS

Six types of watermarked paper were used for Commonwealth stamps between 1913 and 1965.



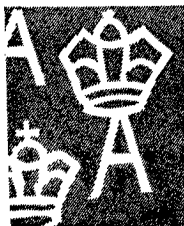
**TYPE 1**  
(First Watermark)  
Mesh of paper horizontal



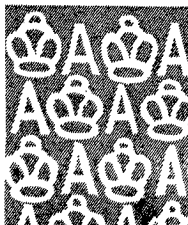
**TYPE 2**  
(Second Watermark)  
Mesh of paper vertical



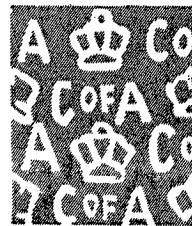
**TYPE 3**  
(Third Watermark)  
Mesh of paper vertical



**TYPE 4**  
(Large Multiple Watermark)



**TYPE 5**  
(Small Multiple Watermark)



**TYPE 6**  
(C of A Watermark)

Beginning in 1948, the use of watermarked paper was phased out for those denominations below the current basic letter rate (2½d). This policy was later extended, and after 1956 only those denominations of 5/- and above were printed on watermarked paper. All decimal issues have been

## INTRODUCTION

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printed on unwatermarked paper.

The early Postage Due issues up to 1922 were printed on other watermarked papers. These are treated in the appropriate Section.

## OFFICIAL PUNCTURES

This Catalogue lists only such Official stamps as were used by Federal (i.e., Commonwealth) Government Departments. Such Departments used stamps punctured OS from 1902.

The first Kangaroo stamps for Federal Official use were punctured Large OS. The letters were 14mm high and the puncture so weakened the stamp that from the end of 1913 this puncture was gradually replaced by the Small OS puncture. A medium-sized OS was used for three issues in 1927-29. The OS overprint was introduced in 1931. In February 1933 it was decided that no further stamps would be overprinted or punctured for Federal Official use.

The Small OS puncture is 7.5mm high, 15.5mm wide, 12 holes to "O" and 11 holes to "S". On commemoratives, it was used for the 1928 3d Kookaburra and 1930 Sturt set.

The Medium OS puncture is 10mm high, 14mm wide, with 12 holes each to the "O" and "S". This type was used only for the 1927 1½d Canberra, 1929 1½d W.A. Centenary, and 1929 3d Air Mail.

No stamps on C of A watermarked paper have been punctured OS for Federal Departments. Any such stamps so perforated were used by State Departments.

Collectors are warned that scarce OS punctures and varieties (double punctures and similar) have been skilfully forged and such items are difficult to expertise. Forged overprints are also known, of which some are very dangerous.

Stamps punctured by State Government Departments for official use do not rank as Commonwealth issues, and we do not include these in this catalogue. State punctures were as follows:

**New South Wales:** OS over NSW, 1902 to 1933; OS ("S" with 12 holes), 1933; G over NSW, from 1933. GR (Government Railways) was in use from 1895; and GSB over NSW, very soon replaced by GSB alone (Government Savings Bank), was in use from 1907.

**Queensland:** Normal stamps at first, but then OS up to 1933. Thereafter no official punctures.

**South Australia:** SA, 1903 to 1912 at least, then OS up to 1933. Thereafter no official punctures.

**Tasmania:** Has always used T.

**Victoria:** OS, 1902 to 1933; thereafter VG.

**Western Australia:** WA, 1903 to 1915 at least, then OS to 1933; thereafter W over A. PWD (Public Works Department) was also in use for a short period prior to 1904.

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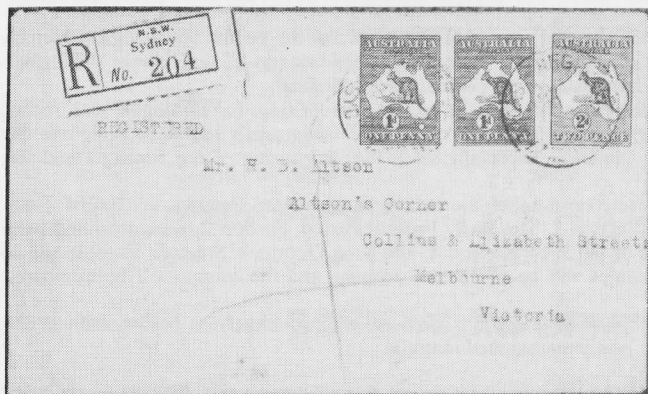
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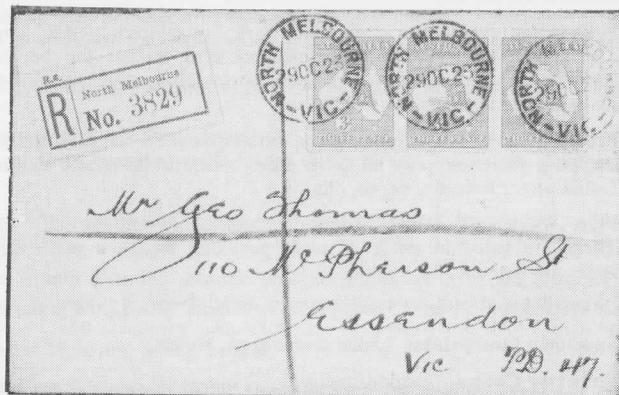


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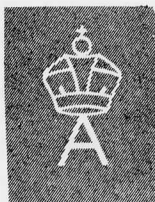
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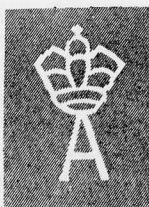
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## WATERMARKS

Six types of watermarked paper were used for Commonwealth stamps between 1913 and 1965.



**TYPE 1**  
(First Watermark)  
Mesh of paper horizontal



**TYPE 2**  
(Second Watermark)  
Mesh of paper vertical



**TYPE 3**  
(Third Watermark)  
Mesh of paper vertical



**TYPE 4**  
(Large Multiple Watermark)



**TYPE 5**  
(Small Multiple Watermark)



**TYPE 6**  
(C of A Watermark)

Beginning in 1948, the use of watermarked paper was phased out for those denominations below the current basic letter rate (2½d). This policy was later extended, and after 1956 only those denominations of 5/- and above were printed on watermarked paper. All decimal issues have been

## INTRODUCTION

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printed on unwatermarked paper.

The early Postage Due issues up to 1922 were printed on other watermarked papers. These are treated in the appropriate Section.

## OFFICIAL PUNCTURES

This Catalogue lists only such Official stamps as were used by Federal (i.e., Commonwealth) Government Departments. Such Departments used stamps punctured OS from 1902.

The first Kangaroo stamps for Federal Official use were punctured Large OS. The letters were 14mm high and the puncture so weakened the stamp that from the end of 1913 this puncture was gradually replaced by the Small OS puncture. A medium-sized OS was used for three issues in 1927-29. The OS overprint was introduced in 1931. In February 1933 it was decided that no further stamps would be overprinted or punctured for Federal Official use.

The Small OS puncture is 7.5mm high, 15.5mm wide, 12 holes to "O" and 11 holes to "S". On commemoratives, it was used for the 1928 3d Kookaburra and 1930 Sturt set.

The Medium OS puncture is 10mm high, 14mm wide, with 12 holes each to the "O" and "S". This type was used only for the 1927 1½d Canberra, 1929 1½d W.A. Centenary, and 1929 3d Air Mail.

No stamps on C of A watermarked paper have been punctured OS for Federal Departments. Any such stamps so perforated were used by State Departments.

Collectors are warned that scarce OS punctures and varieties (double punctures and similar) have been skilfully forged and such items are difficult to expertise. Forged overprints are also known, of which some are very dangerous.

Stamps punctured by State Government Departments for official use do not rank as Commonwealth issues, and we do not include these in this catalogue. State punctures were as follows:

**New South Wales:** OS over NSW, 1902 to 1933; OS ("S" with 12 holes), 1933; G over NSW, from 1933. GR (Government Railways) was in use from 1895; and GSB over NSW, very soon replaced by GSB alone (Government Savings Bank), was in use from 1907.

**Queensland:** Normal stamps at first, but then OS up to 1933. Thereafter no official punctures.

**South Australia:** SA, 1903 to 1912 at least, then OS up to 1933. Thereafter no official punctures.

**Tasmania:** Has always used T.

**Victoria:** OS, 1902 to 1933; thereafter VG.

**Western Australia:** WA, 1903 to 1915 at least, then OS to 1933; thereafter W over A. PWD (Public Works Department) was also in use for a short period prior to 1904.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE THIRD EDITION (1999)

Interest in the pre-1913 essays is at its highest level for many years and this has brought more material onto the market than has been seen for some time. A few additions have been made to this section, the most important of which is the previously unrecorded essay for the 1911 Fullface George V design. Some corrections to existing listings have been made, and it has been possible to include new illustrations and improve some existing ones. The 1901 "C.A." overprints, mentioned in previous editions, are now listed in full; some question must remain as to their status, but these items are now generally regarded as contemporary. The 1911 Competition essays have been reorganised to make the listing easier to use.

In the Kangaroo stamps themselves, there were some errors in the previous editions regarding the quantities of stamps printed and/or issued. These arose due to different recording systems used by the archival sources, which were not recognised when the figures were first extracted. The numbers have been reviewed and those now presented are as accurate as present research will allow.

A closer study of cancelled-to-order stamps (as sold in collectors' sets) has suggested that a number of such stamps listed in previous editions did not in fact exist, and these have been deleted. More research is required in this area, however. Added to the listings are cancelled-to-order OS punctures and overprints sold in the same manner.

The previous explanations of the Type C SPECIMEN overprint have caused some confusion. The account given in the introduction to this edition has been accepted by the experts as correct, and the catalogue now lists not only the Type C1 overprint, but also the variant (C1a). Various newly discovered archival sources have now provided what is believed to be a complete list of all printings of the SPECIMEN overprints, and an analysis of these figures, to allocate overprint types to watermarks, has been incorporated. The quantities produced of some of these stamps are extremely small. In the C of A watermark, there is a new listing for the Type D overprint in forms of 30.

No monogram listings have now been extended to separate listings of strips of 3 from each corner. The various states of the imprint in the 9d C of A watermark are now illustrated.

Alterations to the listing of plate varieties in the lower values are not extensive. In the bicolours, the listing of plate varieties has been reviewed, and the insignificant "clipped tail" variety has been deleted. At the same time a number of varieties have been added, particularly some of the more prominent value plate flaws. A note has been added in the introduction to this section on the transposition of the kangaroo plate. A recently-published study of the £1 grey has enabled the listing of this value to be greatly extended.

### Market

Since the publication of the second edition (1996) a considerable increase in demand for pre-war Australia has been evident world-wide. For issues encompassed in this section of the catalogue demand has impacted upon prices on a broad scale, with many rises amongst the basic stamps to 1/-, including for fine used in which grade stocks are reported by the Trade to be difficult to maintain. Attractive covers are proving more elusive to obtain than previously accepted and availability nowadays is almost the exclusive domain of auctions. The higher denominations, with their greater accessibility via auctions, dealers and to an increasing extent the internet, have remained more steady, with some price corrections particularly in the case of constant varieties in the bicolours, where resistance to paying other than a token premium above the basic stamp price has become apparent.

The forces of supply and demand in this edition, however, are most evident in the more specialised material. Errors and major varieties, and monograms (and no monogram pieces) and imprints, especially the earlier Harrisons, have generally firmed up, often considerably. Few collectors were aware of just how few monogram pieces appear to have survived in the bicolours, and since we introduced the census of known items in the first edition (1993), very few new discoveries have been added to the previous totals. Even the 2/- brown monograms and imprints are far rarer than previously suspected.

The most substantial price increases have occurred amongst the essays and proofs. Here the supply of a given item is often limited to a single example, and as an increasing number of items have been offered at auction since the inaugural listing in the first edition, a more accurate assessment of market value is emerging in these fields.



# INTRODUCTION TO THE FOURTH EDITION (2004)

This much-enlarged new edition includes for the first time those Australian States' stamps issued under the authority of the Commonwealth Postmaster-General's Department between 1901 and 1912. These issues were produced by four different printing establishments, using paper and equipment that differed between each other and from that which was standardised with the introduction of the Kangaroo stamps in 1913. These issues are complex, and although a certain amount of research has been undertaken in the past, that work has been unevenly distributed and has concentrated on the more popular issues. Some new research has been incorporated here, including fresh archival data, and thanks are due to all those who have collaborated on this project. Their names are listed in the acknowledgements. There will undoubtedly be many corrections and additions to the current listing in future editions, but it is hoped that catalogue users will appreciate this first attempt at a truly specialised catalogue of this fascinating period of Commonwealth stamps.

The Kangaroo issues themselves have not been neglected. Most notably, extensive revisions and additions have been made to the plate variety listings of a number of values. Those for the ½d, 1d, 2d, 2½d and 3d are based on the published and unpublished researches of Greg Pope, and for the 9d on the published work of David Banwell and Bob Parsons. The latter includes perhaps the most interesting of all the new listings, the substituted clichés on the 9d in Third and later watermarks. John Bozic has also made numerous suggestions and pointed out a number of corrections to previous editions.

The plate varieties on the bicoloured high values have also been completely revised based on the work carried out in the 1960s by W.M. Holbeach which was unfortunately not published and never reached the wide audience it deserved. The sliced "P" variety has been added to the Type C SPECIMEN overprints.

Throughout the listings, wherever possible, the line drawings of the plate varieties previously used have been replaced by scanned images.

There have been relatively few major discoveries affecting the footnotes, but the popularity and demand for monograms and imprints has resulted in the appearance on the market of a number of these rarities which has resulted in revision of the numbers known. The most remarkable of these was the appearance of a Harrison imprint block of 4 of the 2/- brown Third Watermark, whose existence had been doubted.

## The Market

Since the publication of the Third Edition (1999), the demand for fine and rare material in the Kangaroo and Map issues has been unprecedented. The appearance on the market of several significant long-term holdings has further stimulated this market, resulting in price levels undreamed of previously. The greatest strength has been in monograms and imprints, essays and proofs, and major printing and perforation errors. The rarity of the high value monograms and imprints has been recognized for some time, and their popularity has been translated to many of the lower denominations, where the supply in many cases is not significantly greater. Essays, proofs, and major errors have also shown significant price increases and continue to attract great interest on the infrequent occasions examples become available. The last two years has seen intense activity for certain abnormal watermark varieties, and while the current high prices could be seen to be disproportionate to their philatelic importance, of their rarity there is no question. Also evident for some time now is an increasing demand for fine single stamps, with considerable premiums being paid for perfection.

Perhaps as a corollary to the strength of the Australian Commonwealth market, there has also been a considerable increase in interest in Australian Colonial stamps, including the Federal Period now covered in detail in this catalogue. Some of this activity may be the result of an increasing awareness that the States' issues of this period are, in reality, Commonwealth issues. Demand is uneven across the States, with perhaps Queensland and Western Australia the strongest. The few essays and proofs available for the 1901-12 issues of all States are keenly sought after, as are many of the individual stamp rarities. The most spectacular of these is the Queensland 6d "Figures in Lower Corners", which has shown a remarkable price increase over recent years. Probably the key stamps of this period are the rare perforation varieties of each State. The difficulty of these items is generally unrecognized, and significant price movement could be expected if only a few more collectors enter this area.



## INTRODUCTION TO THE FIFTH EDITION (2013)

Our Fifth Edition coincides with the centenary of the issue of the Kangaroo and Map series, and this edition sees considerable revision to a number of aspects of the catalogue.

A thorough revision of the plate varieties has been made to all values from 2d to £2. This has been undertaken with a great deal of input in particular from John Bozic, Richard Guy and Gordon Towell, who have devoted many hours to organising their holdings and identifying the varieties which should be added to the catalogue. Earlier editions were relatively deficient in their listing of plate varieties in a number of values, especially the 4d, 5d, 6d, 9d, 1/- and 2/-. To some extent this was due to a lack of published work on the subject, and while this largely remains the case, the original research of these collectors has enabled the inclusion of a large number of new varieties. Work remains to be done, in particular in regard to the positioning of a number of these varieties, and in some instances the their occurrence on the different watermarks, but all the listed flaws are believed to be constant, at least over a part of the printing.

The plate varieties on the bicoloured high were revised and extended in the previous edition, but these have been examined again and a number of corrections and additions have been made.

The 'SPECIMEN' overprints have been looked at again, and it has been decided that there remains some confusion with the nomenclature of the various varieties of the Type C overprint. These have therefore been renamed into a logical sequence; the detailed notes in the Introduction should be consulted.

There has been a considerable surge in interest in the cancelled-to-order stamps, and for the First Watermark stamps, the various dates are separately listed and priced. These various dates were created for different purposes and a number of these are very scarce, especially taking into consideration that sufficient of the date must appear on a stamp for its unambiguous identification. Again, a full explanation appears in the Introduction.

To round out the treatment of SPECIMEN stamps, also included for the first time in this edition, are the various forms of receiving authority handstamps that have been applied to Kangaroo stamps sent to the U.P.U. Also, a number of additions have been made to the listing of the rare 'display' Specimen handstamps.

The States' issues of 1901-12 have been omitted from this edition. Although some revision of the listings in the fourth edition are needed, it is felt that the listing provided there continues to serve collectors well for that area.

All the new Kangaroo material included in this issue means that the Kangaroo section of the catalogue is some 50 pages larger than in the previous edition.

### The Market

Since the publication of the Fourth Edition (2004), the demand for fine and rare material in the Kangaroo and Map issues has continued to be very strong. The auction of the Sir Gawaine Baillie collection in 2005 saw new levels reached. Later, the sale of the Arthur Gray collection at auction in 2007 was the most extensive holding to appear on the market for many years and included a large number of the most important Kangaroo pieces which had not been in the market place for many years. The result was that many record realisations were set. Subsequently, the price levels reached in this auction have generally been maintained, and this has been reinforced by the recent sale of the Hugh Morgan collection.

The only area which appears to have lessened in interest are the essays and proofs, where prices have remained steady for a number of years. It would seem that many of the current generation of serious collectors do not include these in their area of interest. In particular, the essays of the 1901-12 period, with a few exceptions, have not moved upward significantly since the Fourth Edition. There is more interest in the Kangaroo essays directly related to the issued stamps, but even here buyers are selective.

Although investors have always taken an interest in the Kangaroo issues, this aspect has surged in recent years, and might be expected to attract further attention in the centenary year. The demand is especially strong for superb stamps - well-centred and unmounted mint - and this grade of material has seen very large increases. For many stamps, the number of available examples in the required condition is limited, and prices may be expected to continue to increase as long as the demand continues. Buyers must bear in mind, however, that the incidence of regumming is increasing, and it is likely that in the future demand for certificates of genuineness for this highly-priced material will also increase. Likewise, demand has increased for rare 'OS' punctures particularly in the high values, a number of which are great rarities. Care must once again be taken, since faking of 'OS' punctures has been occurring for many years.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SIXTH EDITION (2017)

The Sixth Edition is the first to be printed in full colour, as far as practicable.

Further revision have been made to the listings. A careful examination of the plate varieties has been made to all values from ½d to 2/-. This has been undertaken especially by John Bozic, Richard Guy and Gordon Towell, who have spent a great deal of time on the project, continuing their similar work for the previous edition. A number of errors have been identified in the previous listing, with regard to both incorrect identifications of varieties (especially wrong placement of varieties between Cooke and Harrison plates), and incorrect plate positions. These have now been corrected and it is hoped that few if any errors persist in this regard. In addition, a number of previously unpositioned varieties have been plated and now placed in the correct positions in the listings. New plate varieties have been added throughout, and it is believed we are now nearing finality in terms of the listing of plate varieties consistent with the scope of the catalogue. More work is still needed on the plating on the unpositioned varieties, and in confirming the existence of certain plate varieties on different watermarks. The same applies to the high value bicoloured denominations, where a few additions and corrections have been made.

The listing of the cancelled-to-order stamps introduced in the previous edition has been made in its present form. Although other dates exist information on the purpose of these is lacking. This may not be forthcoming, but pending further research it has been decided not to further complicate the listings.

No change has been made to the information in the notes regarding the rarity of various items, particularly with regard to the numbers extant of various rarities such as monograms and imprints. These numbers had been derived from an extensive survey of the literature and of auction catalogue records. The considerable demand for this material in the past decade has undoubtedly resulted in a number of previously unrecorded examples of such rarities coming onto the market, and in a number of instances the quantities stated in the notes are now out of date - these figures should, in any case, have always been treated as a minimum number. It is hoped that the work to update all these figures can be undertaken for a revision in the next edition.

### The Market

Since the publication of the Fifth Edition several major holdings of Kangaroo stamps have appeared on the market. This includes the legendary Stuart Hardy collection, as well as several holdings which have resulted in a recycling of many major pieces from the Sir Gawain Baillie, Arthur Gray and Hugh Morgan collections. Although demand remains strong, the emphasis on quality is more important than ever, and this has resulted in a softening of prices for any less than perfect stamps. This demand is emphasising the real scarcity of premium material, not only for the basic stamps, but also for SPECIMEN overprints and other specialist material. An outcome of this demand is a parallel demand for certificates to guarantee such stamps with regard to gum and perforations. The same applies to 'OS' punctures (particularly in the high values), where quality is even more of a problem, and in terms of centering perhaps an unrealistic expectation. Care must once again be taken, since faking of 'OS' punctures has been occurring for many years.

One area where demand has lessened considerably is that of essays and proofs, particularly of the pre-Kangaroo material, since most of the major collectors of this material are now gone, and have not been replaced. There is more interest in the Kangaroo essays directly related to the issued stamps, but even here buyers are selective. The prices of the pre-1913 essays have been lowered to reflect this situation.

Considerable interest continues in the cancelled-to-order stamps, and the number of collectors in this area has increased significantly since the last edition. The relative scarcity of the various dates varies considerably, and this is now being reflected in the prices being paid for these stamps. It is likely there will continue to be some volatility in this area before demand settles down.