

# The so-called DUNEDIN Framed Circular Datestamp

The earliest record of this Datestamp is shown on Plate F, in the publication issued in 1926 by Ray Collins, entitled “The Cancellations of New Zealand”



In October 2013, an item was offered at a Wellington Auction, which appeared to be the original item from which Ray Collins had drawn the above impression.

Reference to Volume VII of the Postage Stamps of New Zealand, published by the RPSNZ in 1988, page 106, stated that this datestamp had not been confirmed, strangely enough because it did not appear on the “Dunedin Proofs”, meaning of course the “Ferguson and Mitchell Proof sheets” also “so-called” being in fact the three sheets discovered by Ray Collins in 1996, carried out by a young Post Office Cadet!

However a closer inspection of the item now being offered for sale, confirmed that it was in fact not a Dunedin datestamp but a Dunstan datestamp.



Illustrated in the “Collins Discovery Sheets”

There is a saying that things that go round, come round, and I believe that the writer of the article which appeared in the NZ 2005 National Stamp Show Catalogue, will now have to wipe the egg off his face.

## A Long Lost Friend

In *The Cancellations of New Zealand*, (published in 1926), Mr R J G Collins illustrated an 11 DEC 63 Dunedin date stamp of the type shown as FFA 3.2 in *The Postage Stamps of New Zealand*, Vol. VII, page 166. The accompanying text in Vol. VII states that verification of this date stamp has not been confirmed. For those readers not in possession of Vol. VII the FFA means First Framed Arc, the first series of framed date stamps with the Office name in an arc.

This type is also described as the *Otago Series* as there are 29 date stamps recorded, all of which have the office name in an arc at the top and OTAGO. N.Z. in an arc at the base.

The 1869 New Zealand Post Office List shows that 33 Post Offices in Otago had been issued with date stamps; of these 33 only Dunedin, North Taieri, Port Molyneux and Taieri Ferry are not known to have used the type FFA 3.2. Until now!



Sorting through some recently purchased stock in July 2005, Len Jury came across the piece shown above; went to the hand book to check the postal markings and failed to identify the date stamp dated DEC 11 63. (Stamp dealers are apparently able to understand pictures and to read prices but comprehending words requires too much time). A check via Mr Jury's usual problem solvers identified the mark and finally, after it had disappeared from sight for some 79 years, we can confirm that this type was indeed used in the Dunedin Post Office.

The proof of the 30th date stamp in this series raises the prospect that the remaining 3 Post Offices may also have been issued with this type. What is of much more immediate interest however is the worn state of the example shown. This example of the date stamp has varied and worn lettering and numbers and was obviously used quite frequently, which begs the two questions. Which department of the Dunedin Post Office was it issued to and why is this the only example ever seen on postage stamps?

Page 19

Extract...

“Len Jury came across the piece shown above; went to the hand book to check the postal markings and failed to identify the date stamp dated DEC 11 63. (*Stamp dealers are apparently able to understand picture and to read prices but comprehending words requires too much time*). A check via Mr. Jury's usual problem solvers identified the mark and finally, after it had disappeared from sight for some 79 years, we can confirm that the type was indeed used in the Dunedin Post Office.”

NOT SO

I wonder who “we” are that confirms that this was a DUNEDIN Datestamp. I truly hope that the writer made some of the comments in jest, and I can only recommend that Len changes his “usual problem solvers” especially as the item was withdrawn from the Wellington Auction sale.

It so happened that Len Jury was the Chairman of the 2005 Exhibition and was so involved that he probably didn’t read this article, I too was just as busy in my capacity as Chairman of the Jury, and my note made at the time was “Why was it used?”

The postage stamps had both been cancelled with the Dunedin Duplex, dated 7 December 1863, so why was there an extra Dunedin datestamp dated 11 December 1863?

As a postal historian, it had to be a different location and must have been a receiving datestamp. Dunstan is some 151 miles from Dunedin, the 7 Dec. was a Monday and the 11 Dec. a Friday, and the mail service was only twice a week.

Having reread the statement in the Volume VII of the Postage Stamps of New Zealand, published by the RPSNZ in 1988, page 106, I am more confused than ever, especially as in my opinion the Collins sheets are not “Proof Sheets”

Extract page 106

“The 1869 list of offices from the Dunedin Post Office archives records that the following offices also had Datestamps – North Taieri, Port Molyneux and Taieri Ferry. *These require confirmation as they are not among the “Dunedin Proofs” and no examples have yet been reported.*”

We now have the “DUNEDIN POST OFFICE RECORDS” being questioned, because for some reason our cadet has not made impressions on his “Play sheets”!

Have fun.

Gerald J. Elliott  
26 January 2014  
Celebrating 59 years today in NZ