Preamble

What a fantastic word etcetera (etc.) is, it has no barriers and I can include in this short article just about anything which comes to mind, irrespective of its connection or otherwise to my title!

When I was first invited to write something for this forthcoming publication, I understood that I had a free hand, any subject as long as it was to do with Postal History, and no restriction on the size and scope of the subject.

I immediately started on “The History of the Post Office Otago” mainly on account of the research that I had been carrying out over the last four years with the collaboration of the late Robin Startup, Greg Francis and John Watts. 120 pages later, you can imagine my surprise when I learnt that the time limit had been shortened and a maximum of 20 pages was the current optimum!

So, contrary to anticipated normal beginnings, I shall now start with some interpretations, under “etc”

Interpretations

PROVENANCE

Dealers mainly use this term when they are offering material for sale by Auction, and it is included in the description of the item in the Catalogue.

The reason for its inclusion is to give the prospective purchaser details of its “Pedigree” and its historical background, in fact albeit a Genealogy Family Tree, in other words a feeling of confidence that it is the genuine article!

However, contrary to what you may think it implies, it is certainly not a guarantee, in any shape or form, it is purely a record.

The definition in the Oxford Shorter Dictionary reads: - “The fact of coming from some particular source or quarter” Although by inference to the word PROVEN which happens to be the first six letters of Provenance, one is led to believe that it is “Shown to be True” this is in complete contradiction to the actual facts and doesn’t prove anything

CERTIFICATES OF AUTHENTICITY
These are more usually issued by prestige Philatelic Societies like the “Royal”, as well as the Dealers Associations for example the BPA Expertising Ltd., as well as individual Philatelists, professional and amateur.

Nearly all certificates virtually start off with a similar statement; “The Committee is of the opinion that the…” (BPA). “We have examined the attached…sent in by…and are of the opinion…” (RPSNZ). One individual Philatelic Expert, heads his certificates as “CERTIFICATE OF OPINION”, and then virtually states as per the RPSL Certificates “I have examined…submitted by…of which a photograph is attached and am of the opinion that…

Fees charged vary, whereas those from an individual expert are less than those charged by the “Royals” due of course to the fact that each item is examined in most cases no less than three philatelists.

What do certificates actually imply and why are they issued? There is obviously more than one answer. To be truthful a Certificate enhances the value of the item, and although it is only an opinion it appears to prove its authenticity. It provides a certain guarantee for the vendor, when selling and many buyers are hesitant to purchase expensive items without a Certificate, irrespective of its possible non – validity! There are also these days the requirement by the members of the Expert Committee at F. I. P. Stamp Exhibitions to ask for Certificates for Postal History Covers, especially where the adhesives are not tied to the cover, a state that in the case of early New Zealand Chalon Head issues, is normal.

Certificates, what do they imply? The answer is quite simple, nothing more than “an opinion.” This in most cases provided by experience, and very often by reference to similar items and a depth of research. It is said that two heads are better than one, and this is invariably correct. The big problem is when there is disagreement between Certifiers.

The late Robson Lowe, who was in my opinion the doyen of Postal History, told me that if I needed a Certificate, then I should collect something else! (Matchbox labels or even cheese labels!)

A Certificate is not a guarantee of Authenticity, only an opinion, which as I develop this short article will be confirmed beyond reasonable doubt.

I would rather not deal with the definition of an “Expert”.

RESEARCH
What is research, at Stamp Exhibitions, marks are given for personal research, and if the subject has been extensively researched and recorded all ready, you are not penalized and still get the marks! Research is the study of historical facts and details of any chosen subject or item. The level of research will be the result of the type of information available; basically only primary and contemporary information should be used. Unfortunately in many cases original documentation has been lost or destroyed, in which case secondary information has to be used as a last resort.

Generally secondary information should only be used as a catalyst to find the initial and primary information. There is sometimes a tendency to make up a story around an item, just to glamorize it; this should be avoided as the truth will out! The other more serious thing is that it is ten times more difficult to correct erroneous information; however much you publicize the correction, the error gets repeated time after time!

An example of this incorrect information is the recorded so called fact that John Davies who printed the Chalon Head issue of New Zealand in 1862 was the “Government Printer” this is completely untrue, he was in fact the Postage Stamp Printer on the staff of the Postmaster General’s Department.

Whilst it is true that from June 1867 he worked in the Stamp Printing Branch at the premises of the Government Printer. The Stamp Printing Branch did not come under the Government Printer’s full control until October 1890. The Postmaster-General had retained the administrative control of the Branch.

As far as researching Postal History covers, there is far more than just looking at the adhesive. Postal Rates and Postal Routes have to be checked as well as the Postal markings. Fortunately with the development of the Internet and with such sites as Papers Past, contemporary Newspapers can now be checked at your finger tips, which include both Postal Notices as well as Shipping Intelligence. Regarding Shipping Intelligence, I found that projected sailings have to be checked to confirm that the dates given coincide with the actual departures.

Addresses can also these days be readily checked on Goggle Earth/Maps, and the amount of information on some individuals (Addressees) is quite amazing and informative. With research the only thing that you need is time! But in every case the results can be most rewarding. I find that when reading the various contemporary papers the biggest problem is getting diverted from your own sphere of research and being sidetracked to something quite different but nevertheless quite exciting!

FAKES & FORGERIES

Fake To tamper with for the purpose of deception
Forgery The making of a thing in fraudulent imitation of something.
The above definitions are as given in the Oxford Shorter Dictionary, whereas L. N. Williams in his publication “Fundamentals of Philately” page 21 states: -

**Forgeries**  Fraudulent imitations of stamp designs, overprints, surcharges, or cancellations… that includes other items such as

**Fakes**  (Genuine stamps or covers which have been tampered with, usually for a fraudulent purpose).

In a discussion with Robin Gwynn, whilst I was working on the 2009 publication on the Chalon Head Issues, I mentioned how fortunate New Zealand Philately was with very few if none fraudulent covers, and then two turned up almost immediately.

I will now illustrate and discuss that cover in this article, and no doubt my reasoning in first dealing with the definitions will become obvious.

7 April 1858 Dunedin to London, arrival date 2 July 1858
The adhesive is the 1/- value, John Richardson Printing on white Paper SG 16.

This cover was originally part of the collection of H. Gordon Kaye offered for sale at a Robson Lowe Auction, and it was advertised with a Certificate of Authenticity.

The second time that it was offered for sale was by Spink Shreves Galleries, on 19 February 2009, Lot 1106 the Joseph Hackmey Collection held in New York, together with the Provenance of the Gordon Kaye Auction. April 1991.
However at this stage, although offered for sale and knocked down, it was obviously queried and withdrawn pending the issue of a further Certificate of Authenticity.

Before I give you details of the second Certificate, I will record the particular details of the cover; in fact it is a very important cover for at least two reasons

- The 1/- value Chalon SG 16 on White Paper has been cancelled with a cds 7 April 1858, which is the earliest known use of this adhesive. By the way it is a genuine postage stamp. Because of this early date it led Robert Odenweller in his book on the Chalons published in 2009 to suggest the possibility of this value having been used for the Dunedin Bisects. Currently the Bisects have only been recorded on the Richardson Blue paper printing of the 1/- value, as well as the London Printing by Perkins Bacon, SG 3a and SG 6a

- The Dunedin unframed datestamp, 7 April 1858, is the latest known use of this relatively rare datestamp, illustrated in the RPSNZ Handbooks, Volumes III and VII.

There is only one problem, being that the illustration of the datestamp is incorrect!

The actual datestamp has two dots between the lettering not two short lines.

This time the B. P. A examined it. Expertising Limited, who issued the following Certificate.
The Certificate

We now have a cover that has had two Certificates, one good one bad, and the Provenance of being in the Gordon H. Kaye Collection.

Details on the Certificate, are interesting in as much as the fact that it mentions “forged obliterations” which basically refers to the DUNEDIN Datestamp. As this is a copy of the datestamp illustrated in the Handbooks, and until now its authenticity has never been queried, so what other information did the BPA have to make this judgment?
I think that their decision was made on details of the previously forged and faked items which were submitted to them in 1961, when publicity was given in the publication “Philately” all of which came from the same source.


It was assumed at that time, that these were the work of De Thuin, however having checked the book published by the American Philatelic Society on the De Thuin Fakes “The Yucatan Affair”. I am sure that these Fakes are the work of an English Forger, whose identification is known by members of the trade.

1 The One Penny adhesive is the Davies Printing of 1862 and not the Perkins Bacon London Printing SG1.
2 The One Shilling Bisect is the Richardson printing on White Paper, issued in 1858, and unknown used as a Bisect. As well as that irregularity, all New Zealand Bisects were from Dunedin and never used in Auckland.
OTAGO One Shilling Bisect

There is always the possibility that Forgers will try and fake a Dunedin Bisect, and there is one particular cover that has puzzled philatelists and the Philatelic Dealers for many years.

This following cover has always been an enigma!

R1  (Letter dated 21 June 58)
17 July 1858 Otago unframed cds. One Shilling Value Bisect, printed by John Richardson on Blue Paper. (Earliest recorded use) 20 December 1858, London Paid cds.

Provenance

Dale-Lichtenstein Collection: Harmer Rooke Auction 22 (27 October 1992), offered minus the strip of three 2d stamps as lot 93.

This is the only known cover with a one shilling bisect addressed to a foreign destination.
Postal Markings on the R1 Bisect cover:

- Manuscript red 1/4 implying that One Shilling and Four pence was paid. This amount is based on the standard postage rate of 6d, NZ to UK plus 8d for the postage rate, UK to Bremen, plus 2d extra for the “advertising” fee.
- Manuscript figure red “8” indicating that Eight pence credit is due to UK Post Office from the NZ Post Office
- Handstruck letter red “P” within oval, applied in London to confirm that postage is paid.
- 17 July 1858 Otago unframed cds
- 20 December 1858. London Paid cds.
- Bisect 1/- cancelled with the PB obliterator No 18
- 2d value Chalon strip of three, cancelled with the PB obliterator No 18.

The Otago Witness Issue 350, 44 August 1858, page 4 Contained the following General Post Office, Otago, Notice dated 12 August 1858 signed by ARCHD Barr Pro Postmaster

LETTERS FOR ABROAD DETAINED FOR PAYMENT OF SEA POSTAGE

This Letter “Muller, Rev. L. ,Bremen, Germany.” Is listed above 4th line down

This Notice confirms the reason for the extra 2d above the Postal Rate NZ to Germany via the UK that was 1/- and 2d.

Postal Route; Otago to Melbourne - ss Lion 7 September 1858 Melbourne to the UK - E & A Royal Mail Company Victoria (left Sydney 11 October 1858), 18 October 1858. The Niagara to Southampton 18 December 1858.

Two similar 1859 covers also sent by the Rev. Wohlers on Ruapuke Island. Both have strips of three 2d Value adhesives, and addressed to Bremen, together with similar postal markings, but no 1/- bisect
No Otago cds, however the adhesives are cancelled with the Perkins Bacon No. 18 Obliterator used at Otago.

- Manuscript red 1/4 implying that One Shilling and Four pence was paid. This amount is based on the standard postage rate of 6d, NZ to UK plus 8d for the postage rate, UK to Bremen, plus 2d extra for the “advertising” fee.
- Manuscript figure red “8” indicating that Eight pence credit is due to UK Post Office from the NZ Post Office
- Handstruck letter red “P” within oval, applied in London to confirm that postage is paid.
- The rate was 6d + 8d = 1s 2d (plus 2d Advertising charge) = 1s 4d.
- Circa February 1858 cds has not been applied
- 21 May 1859. London Paid cds.
- 2d value Chalon strip of three, cancelled with the PB obliterator No 18.
- The Advertisement has not been located

The *Lord Ashley* left Otago on 26 February 1859 for Melbourne. The P&O Line, *Emeu* left (Sydney 14 March) Melbourne on 17 March 1859, the *Emeu* broke a shaft and the mail was transferred at Mauritius on to the P&O *Granada*. The P&O *Pera* carried the mail to Southampton arriving on 20 May 1859.

2 April 1859 Bluff Harbor
Endorsed “Ruapuka NZ”

Manuscript red 1/4 implying that One Shilling and Four pence was paid. This amount is based on the standard postage rate of 6d, NZ to UK plus 8d for the postage rate, UK to Bremen, plus 2d extra for the “advertising” fee?

Handstruck figure red “6” indicating that sixpence credit is due to UK Post Office from the NZ Post Office (The rate had changed from 8d to 6d 1 July 1859)

The rate was 6d + 8d = 1s 2d (plus 2d Advertising charge) = 1s 4d.

BLUFF HARBOR cds April 2 1859
OTAGO cds April 8 1859
9 August 1859. London Paid cds
11 August 1859 Bremen Framed rectangular ds
2d value Chalon strip of three, cancelled with the PB obliterator No 18.

The Ocean Queen left Port Chalmers for Sydney on 19 April 1859
The Columbian left (Sydney 14 May) Melbourne on 19 May 1859, however she had engine trouble and the mails were delayed. The Ripon carried the mail to Southampton arriving on 6 August 1859.
With the current information, together with the two similar 1859 covers, both from the Rev. Wohlers on Ruapuke Island, and all have strips of three 2d Value adhesives, the question now is: -

“Was the Bisect added and is it the Fake”?

![The cover with the bisect removed](image)

Why would the Post Office treat this cover different from the other two covers that appear to be in exactly the same condition, i.e., sixpence paid in postage stamps, and underpaid by Eight pence, and all charged 1/4d.

Another unexplained matter is the previously earliest dated Bisect cover

**L2** (24 April 1857) 24 August 1857 BISECT London Print SG 3a

![London arrival date 10 December 1857. OTAGO NEW ZEALAND Datestamp on reverse](image)
The date was originally deciphered as being April 24 1857. However there was later some doubt about this date, especially as the cover L3 did not arrive in London until 10 December 1857, on the same service as the cover posted in September 1857.

Another confirming factor is that it was not until 9 May 1857 that the 27 March 1857 Notice concerning the pre payment in New Zealand for mail to the UK and via the UK, was published in the Otago Newspaper.

*Otago Witness* Issue 284, 9 May 1857, Page 6

**IMPORTANT POST OFFICE NOTICE**

The May date is virtually confirmed by the date of the first recorded Bisect L1 11 May 1857

Robert Odenweller in his 2009 publication has suggested that the correct date of posting was August 24, however, the Letter “P” in the datestamp appears to me, to be quite clear and the date is most likely to be September (SP). As Robert Odenweller has incorrectly shown the abbreviated letters “SE” for September instead of the correct letters “SP”, this was probably not considered an alternative.

The *Thomas and Henry* left Otago on 26th. September 1857 for Melbourne. The European and Australian Royal Mail Company *Simla* left (Sydney on 11 October 1857), Melbourne on 16 October 1857, with the *Tamar* arriving at Southampton on 9 December 1857.

Another intriguing item is a rare postage stamp and its cancellation.
Considered at one time to be more rare than New Zealand SG 1, this One Penny value, printed in the change of colour (Brown) and issued in October 1872.

The Certificate above confirms that this item is Genuine

HOWEVER

New Zealand SG1 40
SS 140 One Penny Brown, printed on Large Star Watermark. Cancelled with the rare “Headquarters” Obliterator. There are nine “Headquarters” covers recorded, used at Tauranga, from 18 May 1864 to 1 September 1864, six being dated July 1864.

The Letters “HEADQUARTERS” was excised and copies recorded confirm that it was used at Tauranga from 11 December 1866 until 26 June 1872.

Another intriguing item is a Soldier’s Letter Concession Rate cover

3 March 1866 – WANGANUI – 14th Regiment
c. 3 March 1866 - Wanganui. Corporal John Thomas No. 1413, 14th Regiment. Correctly countersigned, by Lieut. - Colonel W. C. Trevor, the Officer in command, to qualify for the Soldier’s 1d Letter Concession Rate

Wanganui 3 March 1866, Wellington 9 March 1866, Liverpool 19 May 1866
(The date posted at Wanganui appears to be obscure and could be either the 3 or 6 March)

The mail would normally travel from Wanganui to Wellington on the Storm Bird, from Manukau and New Plymouth, however the Storm Bird arrived at Wellington on the 10 March 1866, a day later than the Cobb & Co. coach from Wanganui arrived on the 9 March 1866, as the Wellington datestamp.

The mail for England via Australia was carried on the N. Z. S. Co. Albion, which left for Melbourne on 12 March, via Nelson, Hokitika, and Otago.

For the record this was the last mail run of the Albion, as the Mail Contract for the next three months, was obtained by the P., N. Z. & A. R. M. Co. At Melbourne the mail was placed on the P&O Ellora which left on 26 March,
the P&O *Ripon* carried the mail on the last leg; Alexandria 5 May to Southampton, where it arrived on the 18 May 1866.

Robert Odenweller wrote an extensive article about this cover in the *New Zealand Stamp Collector*, Volume 52, No. 2, June 1972. He noted the discrepancy between the cancellation (New Plymouth 9) on the postage stamp and the circular datestamp Wanganui) on the reverse. As an opinion, he suggested:

“that maybe when passing New Plymouth, a spare No. 9 obliterator was borrowed by the 14th Regimental Postal Officer.”

In a “Postscript” Robert, having seen two further covers, from Corporal John Thomas, an earlier cover dated January 1866 and a later cover dated April 1866, which incidentally had a clear No. 8 (Wanganui) Obliterator cancelling the postage stamp, he concluded that the No. 9 (New Plymouth) obliterator had been returned.

However having personally recorded eight covers written by John Thomas, all posted at Wanganui; 13 October 1865, 4 December 1865, 4 January 1866, 3 March 1866, 5 April 1866 (2), and 3 August 1866 (2) and having owned six of the eight covers, I can confirm that the colour of the adhesive cancelled with the New Plymouth No. 9 obliterator, is completely different to the adhesives on the other adjacent covers!

The cover is illustrated in Robert Odenweller’s 2009 publication, *The Postage Stamps of New Zealand 1855-1873*, page 134.

Adhesive cancelled with the New Plymouth Perkins Bacon No. 9 obliterator.

Whilst the adhesive is genuine, in my opinion it does not belong.

Another faked item offered for sale that also has a dubious cancellation

New Zealand SG 6 - 1857
John Richardson Printing Blue Paper
Lot 176

WALTER FUERST PHILATELY
6 December 2013 International Auction


Jahr: 1857
Beschrieb:

Katalogwert: 4600
Startpreis CHF: 900

Semi-Translation
NEW ZEALAND, 1 Sh. green to blue, with centered Balkenst. D (Dunedin), back slightly flawed (thin spot). Mark with wide margins, glorious präsentierend Attest Sismondo (2009)

In my opinion, the adhesive is a forgery, whilst it has the appearance of a Jeffrey’s Forgery, however to the best of my knowledge these were always watermarked with the large star and on white paper.

The barred obliterator is unknown and also appears to be a forgery.

New Zealand SG 6 - 1857
John Richardson Printing
Blue Paper,
In the One Shilling value, the most prominent feature is the “8 o’clock flaw. (There appears to be evidence of this flaw in the above forgeries)

**Die Proof (8 o’clock flaw)**

**New Zealand Crowned – Circle**

**PAID AT CHRISTCHURCH**
Only recorded used on Chalon Head Postage Stamps
(unknown used on cover)

It came as some great surprise to read in a September 2013 Auction Catalogue.

However, the excitement was very short lived when a copy of the item was received and confirmed that it was in fact “PAID/AT/PORT VICTORIA NEW ZEALAND”

The cover

This obviously is not a Fake or a Forgery. But is an example of an incorrect statement that will eventually become fact!

Faked Cover & Repaired Adhesives

Cover ex John Richards and Marcel Stanley Collections
The Great Britain adhesives originally affixed to the cover have been removed and replaced by two repaired New Zealand Chalon Head issue. The 6d value (Red Brown) is torn in two and the top left hand corner repaired. The 6d value Black Brown) has added margins all round and faked perforations.

The “Dunedin” cds of 12 October 1863 is forged, as is the Auckland obliterator “1” in an oval of bars. Part of the address has also been removed.

Forgers invariably make errors and in this case there are several. The obliterations if genuine, would have received an Auckland Datestamp and not a Dunedin one, likewise if the Dunedin cds was genuine then the obliterator would be numbered “18”.

The dates indicate a total transit time of only 23 days, which is impossible except by Air! The earliest P&O sailing from Melbourne was the 24 October 1863 with the mail arriving at Southampton on the 18 December 1863.
This article was originally prepared 29 January 2014 for the Anniversary Publication of the Postal History Society of New Zealand. Since that time in co-operation with Andrew Gould we proved beyond reasonable doubt that the Bisect R14 was also faked! ¹

Whilst the cover and adhesive are both completely genuine, including the receiving datemark of 12 February 1859, all the so called “LONDON Tombstone PAID Datemark and the Otago obliterator No. 18 are Forgeries. Robert Odenweller wrote an extensive article on the R-14 entire, under the heading “The Auckland Shilling Bisect” published in the London Philatelist, in 1970². In conclusion Robert conceded that his was only a possible explanation and theory and welcomed any correspondence, as it so happens, it has taken forty-five years to solve the puzzle.

¹ Fact, Fiction or Forgery article Gerald Elliott & Andrew Gould NZ Stamp Collector Volume 95, No. 1 – March 2015