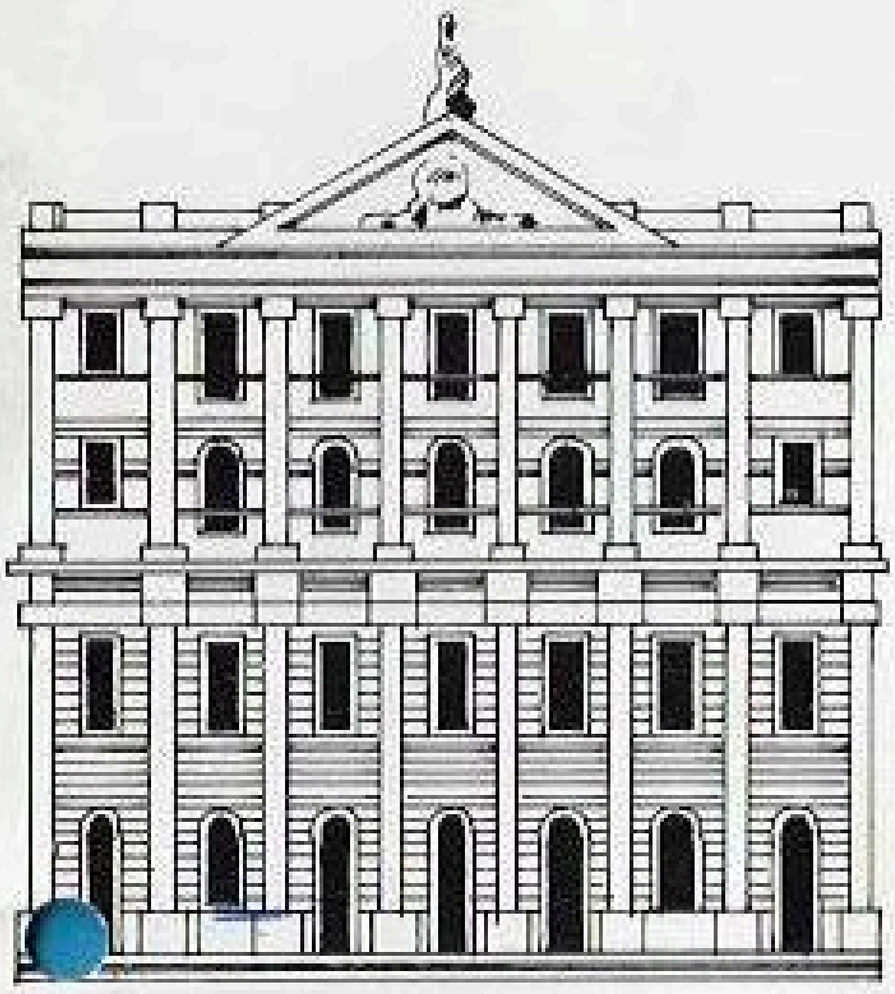
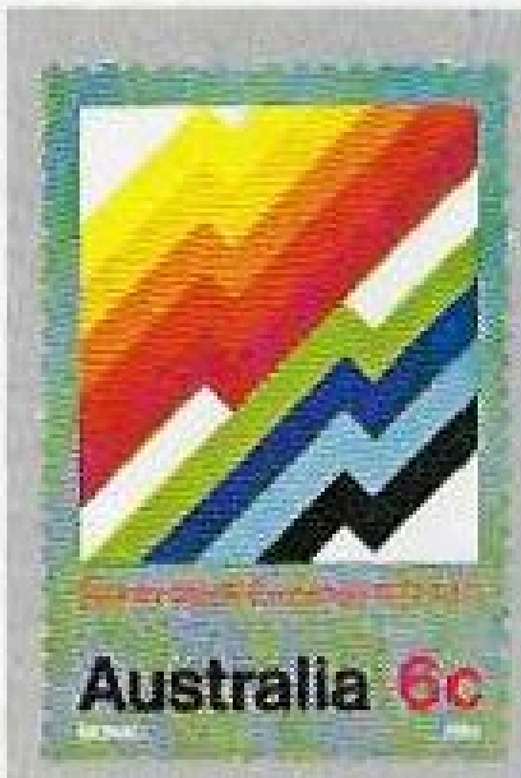
PHILATELIC BULLETIN

Australian Post Office April 1971





Vol. 18 — No. 5
Whole No. 107
April, 1971

Published in the last week of
February, April, June, August, October and December.
Forwarded by surface mail free,
or by air mail if postage is prepaid.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Bulletin Mailing List—

Box 259, Post Office, South Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia 3205

Mail orders for stamps — Overseas and Victorian clients ONLY

Philatelic Bureau, 374 Bourke St., Melbourne.
Victoria, Australia 3000

Australian Residents other than Victoria:

Philatelic Sales Section, capital city of State of residence:
Box 3344, GPO Sydney, 2001
GPO Brisbane 4000
GPO Adelaide 5000
GPO Perth 6000 or
GPO Hobart 7000

Enquiries which do not relate to mailing list
or to stamp sales —

Stamps and Philatelic Section,
Australian Post Office Headquarters,
199 William St., Melbourne,
Victoria, Australia 3000

Information herein may be reproduced in other journals provided that the source is acknowledged

CONTENTS

51 A.N.A. and Stock Exchange Stamps
53 1972 Famous Australians Stamp Booklet
53 Norfolk Island Birds
54 Western Samoa Miniature Sheet
54 Postage Stamp Quantities
55 Short Notes
57 W.A. Railway Centenary
57 Production of Engraved Stamps

A.N.A. AND STOCK EXCHANGE STAMPS

The 6c stamps for the centenaries of the Australian Natives' Association and the Sydney Stock Exchange, announced in the February Bulletin, are illustrated on the cover of this issue. The cover also shows other features associated with the two stamps.

The A.N.A. — and federation

One hundred years ago, few colonial-born Victorians held positions of authority in the affairs of their colony. On 24th April, 1871, a public meeting of people born in Victoria formed a patriotic society to protect the interests and to promote the welfare of Australians. Known at first as the Victorian Natives' Society, the organisation changed its name to the Australian Natives' Association in 1872, and widened its scope to admit native-born of all the Australian colonies.

Besides aiming to develop Australia, the A.N.A. was a friendly society, encouraging thrift and providing medical benefits and educational facilities for its members.

Coincidental with the beginning of A.N.A., and before, tentative suggestions were made that the Australian Colonies, then separate entities, should join in a federation. William Charles Wentworth had suggested a federal authority as early as 1857, and other suggestions crystallized into a strong federal movement in the last three decades of the 19th century. This became the foremost ideal of the A.N.A., which campaigned vigorously for almost 30 years before Federation became a reality.

At an inter-colonial A.N.A. conference in Melbourne in 1890, resolutions passed included a motion that there should be a governor-general and two Houses of Parliament; and that matters such as defence, post office, customs and railways should be transferred to a federal government. Nine of twelve proposals made at this meeting were embodied, ten years later, in the Federal Constitution.

In the years following the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia, the A.N.A. continued to promote issues of national importance, and one such proposal by the Association was for the formation of the Royal Australian Navy, in the years before World War I.

Australia Day, the public holiday

commemorating the landing at Sydney Cove by Governor Phillip on 26th January, 1788, was also the outcome of an A.N.A. proposal for unifying the various foundation celebrations in the several States.

Currently, the A.N.A. is interested in environmental pollution, road safety, national parks, water resources and similar matters of national importance. Many A.N.A. members achieved distinction in public life, including Sir Alexander Peacock, Premier of Victoria; Sir Isaac Isaacs, Governor-General; Sir John Monash, leader of the Australian armies in 1914-18; and three who became Prime Minister: Alfred Deakin, J. H. Scullin and S. M. Bruce.

The back cover of this Bulletin recalls the historic moment of Federation, and some philatelic aspects of the event. In the 1890s the unifying movement had gathered momentum; various colonial government meetings were held; the necessary colonial and British legislation changes were made; and the electors of Australia made known their views through a referendum. On 17th September, 1900, Queen Victoria signed a proclamation indicating the union of the six colonies, and the Commonwealth of Australia came into being on 1st January, 1901.

The first Federal Parliament was officially opened in the Exhibition Building, Melbourne (the federal capital, Canberra, was still in the future) by the Duke of York, later King George V, and this was depicted on a 5½d stamp issued in 1951 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Commonwealth. The stamp is shown at the bottom of the back cover. Its design was portion of a very large canvas, 18 ft. 6 in. by 11 ft. 9 in., which a well-known artist of the period, Tom Roberts, was commissioned to paint. Roberts had to arrange a number of sittings in Australia and in London, and the cost of the picture, including his fee of £2,000 and his travelling expenses, amounted to £3,500. The painting shows several hundred recognisable portraits of the dignitaries present. After hanging in St. James' Palace, London, for many years, it was presented to the Australian Government in 1960, and now hangs in Canberra.

The centre photograph shows Tom Roberts

at work on the picture, and above it is a pen and ink "key drawing" identifying some of the subjects. Nos. 1 and 2 are the Duke and Duchess of York; No. 85 is Sir Edmund Barton, Prime Minister; No. 86 is Sir John Forrest, the first Commonwealth Postmaster-General; and No. 89 is Mr. Alfred Deakin, then Attorney-General and later Prime Minister.

As noted above, the 1951 stamp showed only the central part of the painting. Other notable people of the period shown on the canvas, but outside the area covered in the stamp design, were Sir George Reid, then Leader of the Opposition and later Prime Minister; and Messrs. J. C. Watson, W. M. Hughes and A. Fisher, each of whom was also Prime Minister in later years. Mr. I. Isaacs, later Sir Isaac Isaacs, was also amongst those depicted in the painting.

On the Bulletin cover, four stamps of the recent Prime Ministers booklet series are shown: the Reid, Watson. Deakin and Barton portraits. Barton was earlier shown on one 3d value of the 1951 Commonwealth Jubilee series, and Sir Henry Parkes, one of the prime movers in the Federation movement, appeared on a companion 3d design. Sir John Forrest (Lord Forrest of Bunbury) was commemorated on a 1949 stamp. As noted elsewhere in this Bulletin, Sir Isaac Isaacs will be included in the next Famous Australians series, which will also show W. C. Wentworth, who was featured on the 1963 stamp commemorating the first crossing of the Blue Mountains. Sir John Monash, mentioned above as an A.N.A. member, was the subject of a 1965 stamp.

The Sydney Stock Exchange

The front cover shows the stamp for the centenary of the Sydney Stock Exchange, and an exterior and interior view of the Exchange a century ago.

In 1828, Matthew Gregson was authorized by the Bank of New South Wales to transact business in its shares; Gregson thus became the first Australian stockbroker. However, he remained active only until 1830.

In 1835, William Barton began trading as a stock and share broker, and for nearly forty years maintained a leading position in the field. Coincidentally, he provides a link with the A.N.A. stamp and Federation, as Edmund Barton, the first Commonwealth Prime Minister, was his son.

The number of brokers in Sydney increased, and similar businesses were established in other cities. In Sydney, a Brokers' Association was formed, with quarters at 390 George Street, on the site of the present General Post Office. In May 1871 the members of this Association formed the Sydney Stock Exchange, and one of its earliest members was William Barton. It operated in the Sydney Exchange Company building, later known as the Royal Exchange.

In a Sydney journal in 1873, the building was described at length, and in terms commensurate with its architecture:

"There is no institution in commercial cities which so accurately defines their mercantile status as does the Exchange. Here may be counted, as it were, the heart-beats of trade, and by its pulsations, quickened or depressed, the actions of the mercantile centres are guided. Essentially is this the case where free-trade is the policy of the country, as in New South Wales. Experience has proved that the various interests which tend to the prosperity of a nation never succeed without a free interchange of commodities, and this principle of free-trade can never be so successfully upheld as when it is encouraged by the fostering influences of 'Change. Here, 'where merchants most do love to congregate,' the mind is carried beyond the narrow limits of its own immediate sphere; ideas are enlarged, and

those feelings of universal brotherhood which tend to bring man nearer unto man are daily developed. The Sydney Exchange was opened on the 30th of December, 1857. The proportions of the original building are — length, 104 feet; width, 92 feet; height, 60 feet. It is constructed entirely of stone, and consists of a basement floor, and two upper floors. The style is Roman-Corinthian, the design excellent, and the building forms one of the chief architectural ornaments of the city. A light partition, seven feet high, has been carried from pillar to pillar, along the entrance side of the hall, leaving ample space for access to the various offices on the ground floor, and also upstairs. In the centre of the principal room is the shipping board, upon which is posted the shipping intelligence of New South Wales and all intercolonial ports, and on each side of this register are fixed two long desks, one to receive all local journals, the other for newspapers from neighbouring colonies. Here are brought the latest files of newspapers, immediately on the arrival of steamers, and thus the delay caused by the usual postal routine is avoided. On the right hand side are situated the manager's offices, and also those of the shipping reporter. The telegraph wires have been brought into the building, the appliances of this department being very complete, and near it the telegraph boards are placed, on which are posted telegrams from all parts of the colonies, and other important items of information. On the left of the manager's office, desks are fitted, containing the shipping register, in which will be found much information regarding the arrival and departure of intercolonial steam-boats, &c. Round the room are tables, on which are laid the latest files of European or foreign papers, so indicated as to be found immediately. The library contains the most valuable modern works on matters connected with trade and shipping. The walls present a most brilliant appearance, being utilised as advertising mediums, and shine forth in all the glory of crimson, blue, and gold.''

The New South Wales mining booms of the 1870s gave place to the fabulous silver discoveries of Silverton and the Barrier range in the eighties, enabling the Exchange to prosper and develop.

As indicated in the quotation, the electric telegraph was an early innovation; and in 1896 the Committee added a further aid to communication, a telephone . . . the forerunner of the electronic network which serves the financial world today.

In 1901 the Sydney Stock Exchange moved to a new building in Pitt Street.

Highpoints of the twentieth century were the steadily-developing listing requirements laid down in the interests of investors, which as early as 1914 were a significant factor in relations between the Sydney and Melbourne Exchanges. In 1924 a conference called to consider the first model Companies Act met in the Sydney Exchange call room.

In 1964, the Sydney Exchange led the world in adopting a fully-integrated, computer-based accounting service for member firms. At present, the Exchange has a staff of more than 150, and an annual expenditure of more than one million dollars, and share trading has grown to thirteen million shares in a single day.

1972 FAMOUS AUSTRALIANS STAMP BOOKLET

The subjects for the third booklet in the Famous Australians stamps series, to appear in 1972, were recently announced by the Postmaster-General, Sir Alan Hulme.

The stamps in the booklet will portray Dame Mary Gilmore, writer and poetess; Sir Isaac Isaacs, jurist and first Australian-born Governor-General; Marcus Clarke, author of the novel "For the Term of His Natural Life"; and William Charles Wentworth, who made the first Blue Mountains crossing in 1813 with Blaxland and Lawson, and was later prominent in the campaigns for self-government in colonial New South Wales. The centenary of W. C. Wentworth's death occurs in 1972.

Nearer to the date of issue, further particulars of the series will be announced.

NORFOLK ISLAND BIRDS

The 2c Norfolk Island Thickhead, 5c Green Parrot, 15c Norfolk Island Pigeon and 50c Red Parrot stamps were issued on 24th February, 1971, and were illustrated in the February Bulletin. This was the third set of four values of the new definitive series to be issued by Norfolk Island. When the last three values (20c, 30c and $1) are issued on 16th June, 1971, a special folder will be provided, containing all 15 stamps in the series and information about the birds depicted. The following notes on the subjects have been supplied by the Norfolk Island Administration.

The Norfolk Island Thickhead is recognized as being the friendliest of all the Norfolk Island birds and for this reason it is also known locally as the "Tamey". It can be coaxed quite close with imitations of its own song.

The Norfolk Island Green Parrot is also known as the Red-fronted Parakeet, Green Parakeet or Norfolk Island Parakeet. The species is becoming rarer with the increase

in settlement. Lieutenant Philip Gidley King recorded in 1788 that these birds were very destructive to his crops.

Now extinct, the Norfolk Island Pigeon was a tame bird which was taken for food from the earliest time of settlement on Norfolk Island. Its extinction was further hastened by officers of the island's garrison who shot the bird for sport.

The Red Parrot is one of the most decorative of all the parrots. It flies in pairs or small flocks and nests in holes in pine trees, chimneys and in any other convenient place well off the ground. Also known as the Crimson Rosella, Mountain Lowry or Pennant's Parakeet, it is one of the commonest birds on Norfolk Island.

WESTERN SAMOA MINIATURE SHEET

As reported in the February Bulletin, Western Samoa issued a miniature sheet on 12th March, 1971. The issue marked Western Samoa's participation for the first time in Interpex, an international philatelic exhibition held annually in New York. The date of the issue coincided with the opening of the exhibition.

The miniature sheet measures 137 mm x 80 mm and contains only one stamp, a 70 sene value, 87 mm x 29 mm. Perforations extend across the sheet vertically but the horizontal perforations are the width of the stamp only.

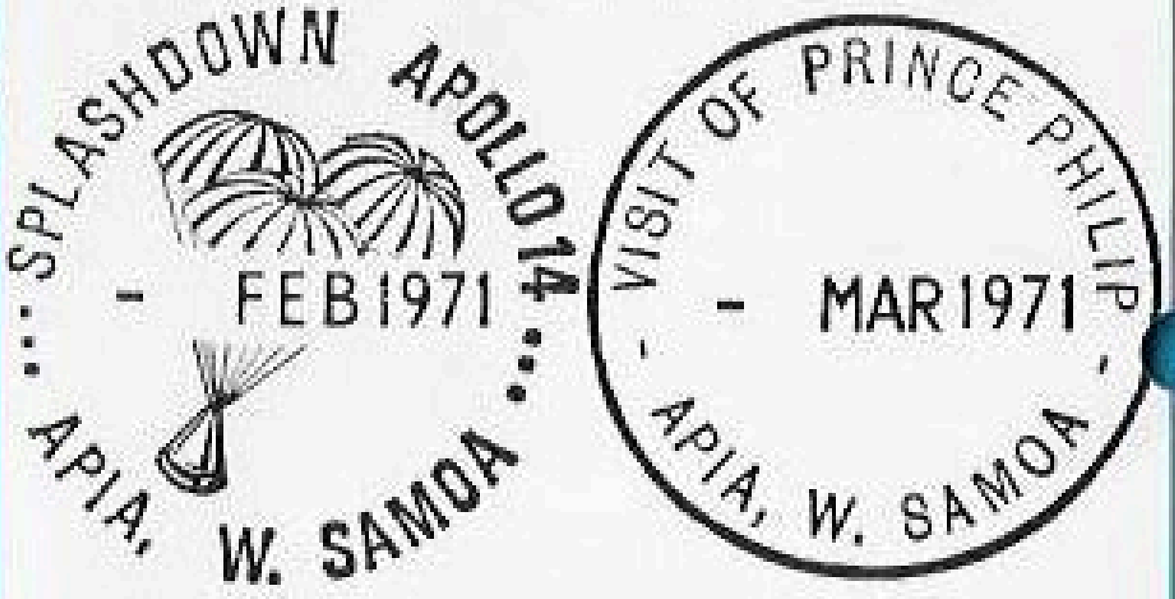
Mr. E. W. Roberts of Adelaide designed the miniature sheet as well as the illustrations on the special large size first day covers used at Apia. Printing was by four colour photogravure by Helio Courvoisier S.A., Switzerland. The paper used was an unwatermarked paper specially treated with humidity-resistant gum. The price of the miniature sheet in Australian currency is 88c.

An illustration of the miniature sheet appeared in the February Bulletin. The design shows a fautasi, or Samoan longboat, being rowed in Apia Harbour. The shoreline of the Apia commercial and administrative centre appears in the background. Samoa's link with the philatelic exhibition in the United States is emphasised by small replicas in the stamp design of the first stamps issued by Samoa and the United States. These were the Samoa Express 3d red of 1877 and the 5c brown Benjamin Franklin of 1847. The skyline of New York is pictured in the top margin of the miniature sheet above the stamp.

The fautasi was once the usual means of travel for Samoans. Up until 1890 there were no roads outside Apia which could be considered usable by vehicles; there were only bush paths which, unless frequently used, were quickly covered with undergrowth after torrential rains. There was little need for roadways or paths as practically all inter-village communication was by canoe.

In 1768 during his world voyage the famous French explorer, Louis Antoine de Bougainville, was so impressed with the number of canoes in the island group that he named it Navigators' Archipelago.

The proposed Western Samoa issues for the remainder of this year are:
June — Tourism Series, set of four stamps;
August — Legends Series, set of four stamps;
October — Christmas, set of four stamps.



Two recent commemorative postmarks are illustrated (without exact dates, as the impressions were supplied to this journal in February). One marks the splashdown of the Apollo 14 astronauts, who boarded a waiting aircraft at Tutuila, Samoa, and the other marks the visit of H.R.H. Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, to Western Samoa. Souvenir covers for both events are available from the Philatelic Bureau, Apia, Western Samoa. A postmarked Splashdown cover, with a 20 sene Astronaut stamp (1969 issue) attached, costs 38c Aus., and a Royal Visit cover, with 3 sene definitive, cost 17c Aust.

POSTAGE STAMP QUANTITIES

The following figures indicate the quantities of Australian Commonwealth definitive postage stamps and other material delivered by the Note Printing Branch, Reserve Bank of Australia, to the Postmaster-General's Department during the financial years 1967-68 and 1968-69.

1967-68

Denomination		*No. of Stamps*
1c	Q.E.II	44,503,000
2c	Q.E.II	8,200,000
3c	Q.E.II	8,200,000
4c	Q.E.II	106,415,400
5c	Q.E.II	422,309,000
5c	Thornbill	78,230,850
6c	Honeyeater	4,150,000
6c	Kangaroo Paw	1,059,000
7c	Humbug Fish	11,860,000
8c	Coral Fish	3,650,000

Denomination		No. of Stamps
9c	Hermit Crab	13,751,000
10c	Anemone Fish	13,162,500
13c	Avocet	10,450,000
13c	Pink Heath	2,109,000
15c	Galah	4,207,500
15c	Blue Gum	1,059,000
20c	Golden Whistler	13,576,000
20c	Desert Pea	2,409,000
24c	Kingfisher	650,000
25c	Scarlet Robin	12,880,900
25c	Cooktown Orchid	2,359,000
30c	Ibis	7,705,000
30c	Waratah	1,559,000
40c	Tasman	4,750,800
50c	Dampier	5,650,000
75c	Cook	667,500
$1	Flinders	2,116,400
$2	Bass	720,000
$4	King	252,500

Postal Stationery, Coils and Booklets

4c	Envelopes (small)	1,704,000
5c	Envelopes (small)	6,095,100
4c	Envelopes (large)	311,000
5c	Envelopes (large)	903,100
24c	Regn. Envelopes	107,000
25c	Regn. Envelopes	309,100
4c	Lettercards	274,000
5c	Lettercards	1,190,100
4c	Lettersheets	110,000
5c	Lettersheets	34,100
9c	Aerogrammes	3,526,000
10c	Aerogrammes	15,842,100
10c	Aerogrammes (Xmas)	2,420,100
10c	Aerogrammes (ECAFE)	21,400
4c	Wrappers	210,000
5c	Wrappers	968,000
3c	Coils of $,000 stamps	1,388 (1,388,000 stamps)
4c	Coils of 1,000 stamps	1,750 (1,750,000 stamps)
5c	Coils of 250 stamps	452 (113,000 stamps)
5c	Coils of 1,000 stamps	12,996 (12,996,000 stamps)
50c	Booklets	94,000
60c	Booklets	1,924,000
$1	Booklets	7,995,000

1968-69

Denomination		No. of Stamps
1c	Q.E.II	10,700,000
2c	Q.E.II	8,099,800
3c	Q.E.II	4,900,000
4c	Q.E.II	1,100,000
5c	Q.E.II	559,200,000
6c	Honeyeater	1,217,500
6c	Kangaroo Paw	2,790,000
7c	Humbug Fish	6,350,000
8c	Coral Fish	3,731,600
9c	Hermit Crab	15,515,000
10c	Anemone Fish	16,740,000
13c	Avocet	492,500
13c	Pink Heath	7,860,000
15c	Galah	1,645,000
15c	Blue Gum	6,796,000
20c	Golden Whistler	550,000
20c	Desert Pea	13,600,000
24c	Kingfisher	100,000
25c	Scarlet Robin	1,120,000
25c	Cooktown Orchid	7,080,000
30c	Ibis	550,000
30c	Waratah	19,425,000
40c	Tasman	5,535,000
50c	Dampier	6,844,800
75c	Cook	968,700
$1	Flinders	2,339,500
$2	Bass	946,300
$4	King	218,100

Postal Stationery, Coils and Booklets

5c	Envelopes (small)	7,515,685
5c	Envelopes (large)	1,486,000
25c	Regn. Envelopes	180,000
5c	Lettersheets	12,000
5c	Wrappers	1,076,000
5c	Lettercards	1,587,000
10c	Aerogrammes (Xmas)	2,504,100
10c	Aerogrammes (2 flap)	5,400,000
10c	Aerogrammes (3 flap)	16,724,450
5c	Coils	18,555 (18,555,000 stamps)
50c	Booklets (Q.E.II)	27,000
$1	Booklets (Q.E.II)	2,812,000
$1	Booklets (Fam. Australians)	6,365,800

SHORT NOTES

Further to reference in the December 1970 Bulletin, 4,196 articles, including 76 registered, were postmarked with the special postmarker used at the temporary post office for the 28th International Congress of Orientalists at Canberra from 6th to 12th January, 1971.

A temporary post office was provided at the Masonic Centre, East Melbourne, from 22nd to 26th February, 1971, for the convenience of delegates to the 5th International Congress of the International Confederation for Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. A total of 4,027 covers, including 29 registered, were postmarked at the temporary post office. An illustration of the postmarker impression is shown on page 56.

An old telegraph station located three miles outside the town of Alice Springs and dating from the early days of the Overland Telegraph Line has been restored as a

museum. A posting box was installed at the telegraph station from 8th to 21st March, 1971, and all letters posted there were taken to Alice Springs Post Office and postmarked with a special postmarker celebrating the centenary of Alice Springs. The town was founded during the construction of the central section of the Overland Telegraph Line linking Adelaide with Darwin. An impression of the postmarker is illustrated above.

□ □ □ □

A letter receiver has been provided at the Canberra War Memorial as a facility to visitors. Letters posted in the letter receiver are transported to the Canberra City Post Office and processed with a special postmarker (illustrated). The facility began on 8th February, 1971.

Collectors in Australia may obtain impressions of the postmarker by forwarding fully stamped and addressed envelopes under prepaid cover to the Postmaster, Canberra City, A.C.T. 2601.

Overseas collectors should forward fully addressed but unstamped covers to the Philatelic Bureau, 374 Bourke Street, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, 3000, with a remittance to cover the cost of the stamps to be affixed.

□ □ □ □

Philatelic mail was carried on Lufthansa's inaugural flight from Sydney to Bombay on 6th April, 1971. All covers carried on this flight were processed with a special postmarker. The facility was restricted to one-way covers addressed to India and return covers to Australian addresses.

□ □ □ □

The Christmas Island 1970 Christmas stamp was withdrawn on 23rd April, 1971.

□ □ □ □

The 6c Christmas 1970 stamp is being withdrawn from sale on 30th April, 1971. The Australia-Asia series will be withdrawn on 6th July, 1971.

□ □ □ □

Further to reference in the February Bulletin, 4,638 articles, including six registered, were postmarked and carried on the centenary train which ran from Launceston to Deloraine on 10th February, 1971, to mark the centenary of the first railway in Tasmania. An impression of the postmarker is shown above.

□ □ □ □

Further to earlier reference, 2,713 articles, including 21 registered, were posted at the temporary post office for the Fifth Commonwealth Education Conference, Canberra, 3rd-17th February, 1971.

□ □ □ □

All three stamps of the Australia-Asia series were printed on Wiggins Teape coated unwatermarked paper incorporating Derby Luminescence. Each stamp measured 50 mm x 30 mm (47 mm x 27 mm excluding perforations) and the usual number of cylinders — four — was used for each value. Colours were: 7c, yellow, pink, mauve, black; 15c, pink, green, mauve, black; 20c, yellow, green, mauve, black.

The 4c, 5c and 6c Floral Emblems coil stamps were all printed on Wiggins Teape coated unwatermarked paper incorporating helecon. All three stamps were of the usual small size, 24.05 mm x 20.25 mm, and four cylinders were used for each. The normal coil perforations were employed: ten holes at .040'' diameter, and six holes at .035'' diameter. Colours were: 4c, yellow, violet, green, grey; 5c, yellow, green, brown, grey; 6c, yellow, violet, green, grey (same as 4c).

□ □ □ □

When this Bulletin went to press in early March, it was expected that commemorative stamps for the Antarctic Treaty and the 50th anniversary of the Royal Australian Air Force would appear during June, 1971. However, full details will be forwarded to readers as usual via Stamp Preview.

□ □ □ □

Clients' attention is drawn to the various addresses for philatelic services listed inside the front cover. To avoid delays in filling orders and in answering enquiries, letters should be directed to the relevant address.

□ □ □ □

POSTMARKER FOR W.A. RAILWAY CENTENARY

A philatelic mail will be carried on a special vintage train from Bunbury to Busselton, Western Australia, on Sunday, 6th June, 1971, to mark the centenary of railways in Western Australia. A special postmarker will be applied to all covers lodged at Bunbury for carriage on the train.

The first railway in Western Australia was built by the Ballarat Timber Company. Its first train ran on 1st June, 1871, from Lockeville in the south-west of the State through 12 miles of jarrah forest to Yokonup. These two centres are now known as Lockville and Yoganup. The original track no longer exists and the excursion will travel over the closest existing route stopping at Wonnerup, a station which was on the original line, for a short ceremony before returning to Bunbury.

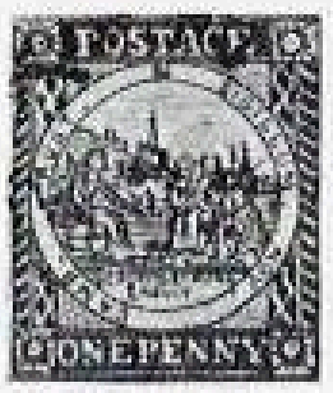
Collectors in Australia who desire to have covers carried on the vintage train should forward them within a fully paid outer wrapper to the Postmaster, Bunbury, W.A. 6230, to reach him by 5th June, 1971.

Covers may be addressed to any destination and must be prepaid. The top left hand corner of the envelope should be endorsed "Rail Centenary".

Normal postage rates will apply to articles for addresses within Australia. For overseas addresses the appropriate postage rates apply. Covers intended to be carried from Australia to overseas addresses by air mail should be prepaid with the correct air mail charges.

PRODUCTION OF ENGRAVED STAMPS

Printing of stamps by photogravure was described in the Philatelic Bulletin in a series of articles which commenced in our August 1969 issue, and finished in the Bulletin for April 1970. The engraving process, which has continued without much change for more



than a century, should perhaps have been described before photogravure; but as most of the recent Australian stamps have been gravure printed and interest in that method of printing was current, engraving was then passed over. The following notes, also necessarily serialized because of their length, will cover the elder and more traditional engraving process.

Great Britain introduced the adhesive stamp in 1840, and the first Australian stamps appeared in 1850 — those of the Colonies of New South Wales and Victoria. Van Diemen's Land, later to be called Tasmania, followed in 1853, Western Australia in 1854, South Australia in 1855, and Queensland (newly separated from New South Wales) issued its first stamps in 1860.

The 1850 issues were engraved. In the following half-century, the various colonial stamp printers produced stamps from engravings, by lithography, and by letterpress. Upon Federation in 1901, the six separate Colonial postal departments were amalgamated as a Federal Department, and although the first uniform series of Commonwealth stamps did not appear until 1913, Federation did bring about some changes in stamp printing arrangements.

In 1902, the Victorian stamp printer began producing stamps for Western Australia and Tasmania. State Government printers in Sydney and Brisbane continued, as before, to print stamps for their respective States.

The South Australian Stamp Printing Branch continued in action until 1909, when it was closed and much of its equipment moved to Melbourne; its head, Mr. J. B. Cooke, was placed in charge of the newly-created Stamp Printing Branch of the Commonwealth Treasury Department, producing stamps for South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia and Tasmania.

In 1912, Mr. T. S. Harrison came from England to organise the Note Printing Office being established by the Federal Govern-

ment, and in 1915 his establishment and Mr. Cooke's were combined. Mr. Cooke retired in 1918, and all stamp printing was then transferred to the Note Printing Branch.

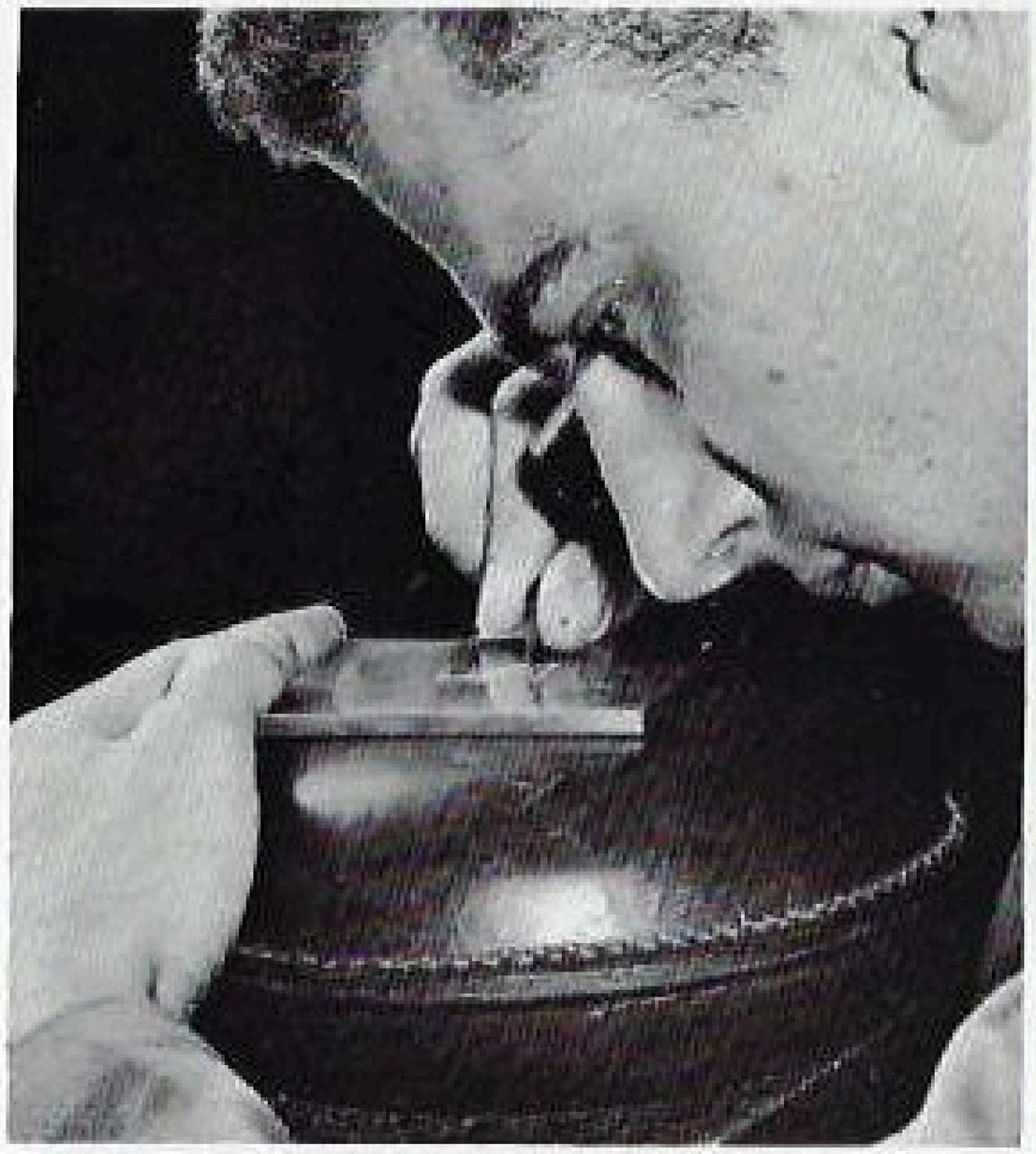
In 1926, the Note Printing Branch was transferred to the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, and moved to its present location in a five-storey building in Victoria Parade, Fitzroy, Melbourne. Mr. John Ash managed the establishment until 1940, and Mr. W. C. G. McCracken until 1963. Mr. W. H. Wilcock succeeded Mr. McCracken, and after his retirement in 1969 Mr. H. R. Longmuir became General Manager of the Note Issue Department (a reorganisation in 1969 resulted in stamp printing coming under what is now known as the Printing Division of the Note Issue Department).

Besides producing stamps for the Postmaster-General's Department, the establishment produces about 300 million banknotes per year, as well as Commonwealth bonds and other security documents.

Mr. Harrison engraved the dies for the first Commonwealth recess-printed stamps, issued in 1913. These were printed on a Hoe flat-bed press, on damped, ungummed paper; interleaved, dried, gummed and single-line and single-sheet perforated by foot pedal machine. However, letterpress continued in general use until the Canberra commemorative of 1927.

In the thirties, rotary intaglio printing on dry paper was introduced, permitting the use of pre-gummed paper, and larger size sheets — up to 640 stamps per sheet. Perforation was by the comb method, on Grover perforaters, five sheets at a time.

Intaglio is the term generally used for this process, but it is also referred to in stamp magazines as taille douce, direct plate, steel plate engraving, or copper plate. Like photogravure, intaglio is a form of recess printing — that is, the printing image is recessed, and is below the surface of the plate. The lines and dots forming the design are hand-cut, the whole plate is inked, and excess ink is then wiped off, in a series of operations analogous to the inking and doctor blade of a gravure cylinder. In intaglio, the plate is then forced against the paper, under considerable pressure, so that the ink is sucked out of the grooves, and lies on the paper in quite perceptible humps and ridges of varying heights. By this means, considerable variations in tone can be achieved in a one-colour design; in fact, some monocolour engravings may appear to be printed in several different shades. The true ink colour can be gauged only from the "solid" portions of the design. As solids are really cutaway areas, it is not possible to have a solid of any great dimensions, and where a background of dark tone is required (e.g., the current series of Queen Elizabeth II stamps) the area is cross-hatched to retain the ink.



The first New South Wales stamps of 1850 were engraved, but as no practicable method was available for reproducing the design mechanically, the printing plate comprised 25 stamps, each separately engraved. Overseas, the reproduction problem was solved by a process invented by Jacob Perkins; his method was later introduced into Australian stamp printing.

Perkins' process was based upon the fact that steel can be softened, and then re-tempered to extreme hardness. The following steps are involved:

1. A small (approx 6 in. square) plate of steel is heat-softened;
2. After cooling, the design is engraved by hand on the steel;
3. The steel die is then hardened by tempering;
4. A softened steel cylinder is rocked back and forth over the hardened die, picking up a reversed impression of the design;
5. The cylinder is then hardened, and the relief image on its face is impressed the required number of times into a printing plate.

Although modern metallurgy has modified and improved the components, the technique is still basically the same for present-day engraved stamps.

As with gravure, the first requirement is an approved design, but unlike gravure designs, which are prepared in the colours suggested for printing, most designs for Aus-

tralian engraved stamps are prepared as wash drawings, in black or sepia, with tones ranging from light to dark. Selection and approval is exactly the same as for photogravure designs; the Stamp Advisory Committee evaluates preliminary sketches, and makes recommendations to the Postmaster-General. If approved by the Minister, the design is then passed to the Note Issue Department for engraving.

Engraving is a very exacting craft; there are perhaps fewer than 100 stamp engravers in the world. In some overseas countries, engravers specialize — one man may cut the frame or background, another may do the portrait or central motif, and a third will complete the lettering. Australian practice is usually for one engraver to do the whole design.

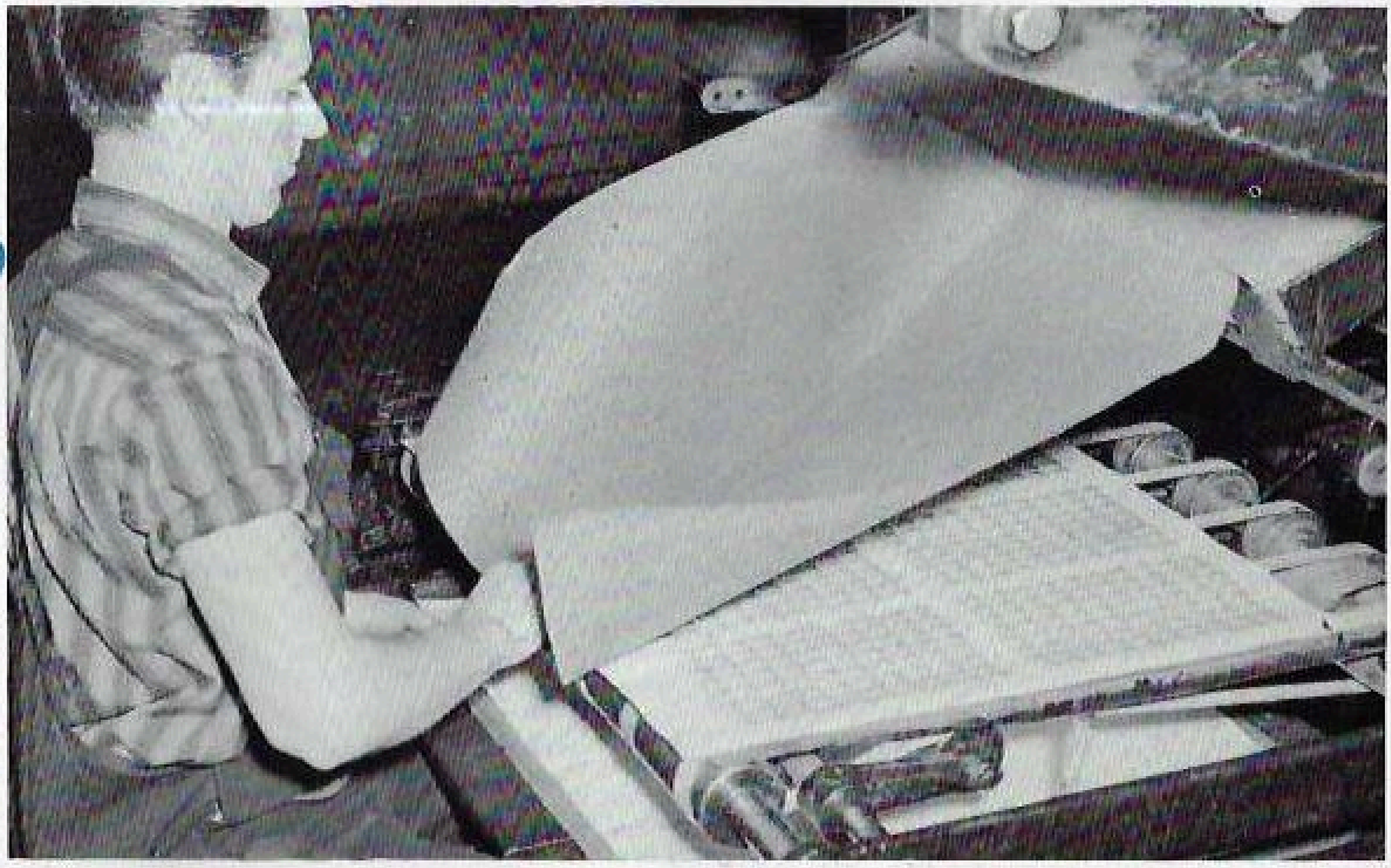
Before cutting a die, the Australian engraver prepares a "key drawing", an exact facsimile of the approved design, about six times stamp size, but with the original brush-painted continuous tones converted into a pen and ink line drawing, in which the tones are indicated by various arrangements of thick lines for heavy tones, broken lines and stipples for intermediate tones, and very light dots for faint tones. Each line and dot on the drawing represents a cut to made later on the die.

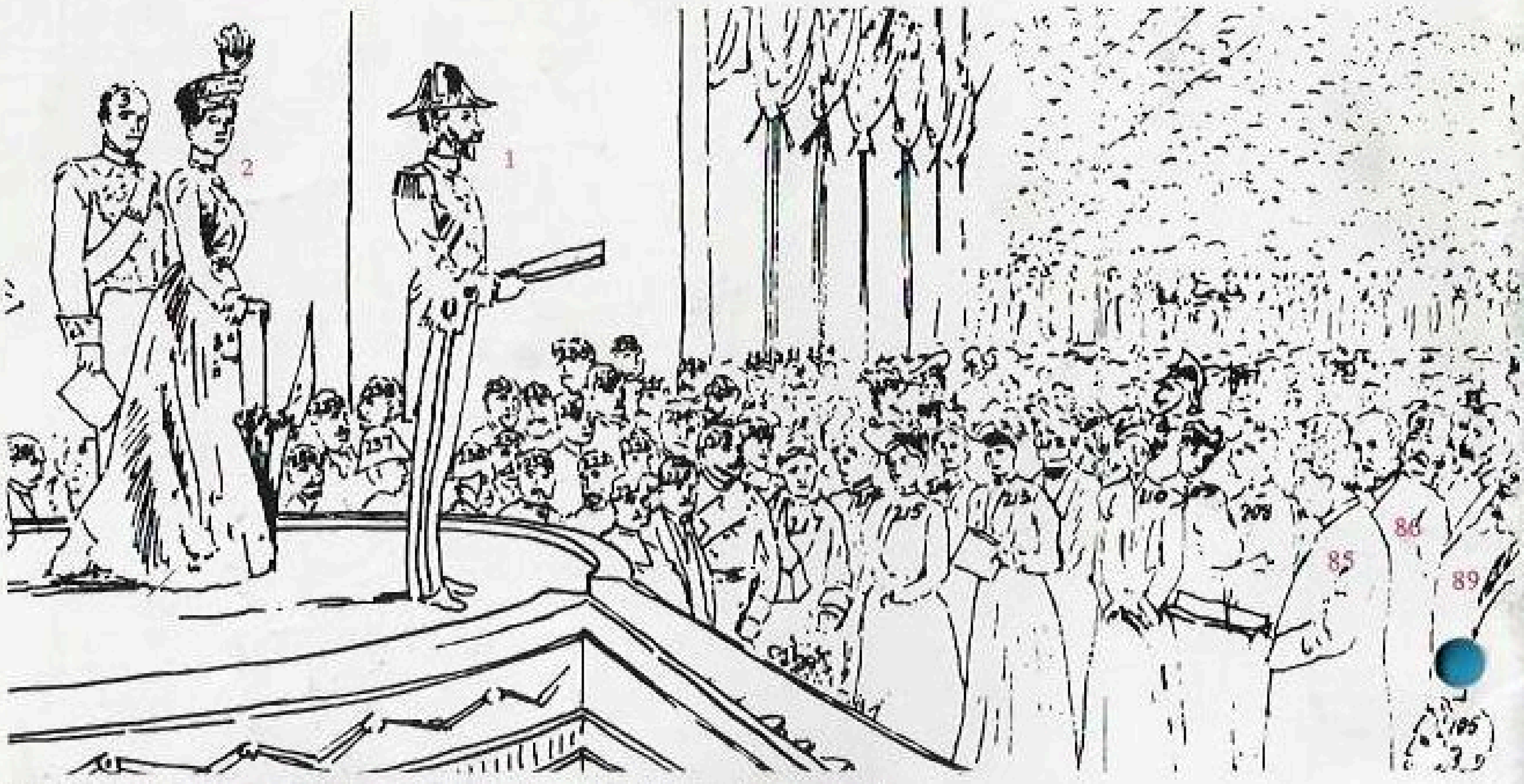
The key drawing is then photographed, and transferred at actual stamp size and in reverse onto the softened die blank. The usual method is to coat the blank with a photo-sensitive chemical, and print the design photographically. The engraver then begins cutting, using small engraving tools known as gravers or burins. These have a variety of vee points and rounded points. Working under a magnifying glass, the engraver follows the lines of his key drawing, cutting heavy lines deeply and widely, and faint lines and dots perhaps half of one-thousandth of an inch deep — at which times he literally holds his breath, as one false cut could ruin the work. It takes approximately one month to complete a die, and most dies are entirely hand-worked, although machines are used for straight-line ruling and cross-hatching.

Progress proofs can be made easily in a small hand press, to check the work done at any stage, although such proofs are kept to a minimum because of the relative softness of the die and its liability to scratching or other damage. When the cutting is complete, a proof (in black, for optimum reproduction) is submitted to the Postmaster-General's Department for approval. After approval, the die is then hardened by heating and immersion, and further proofs, in colour, may be made without fear of damage.

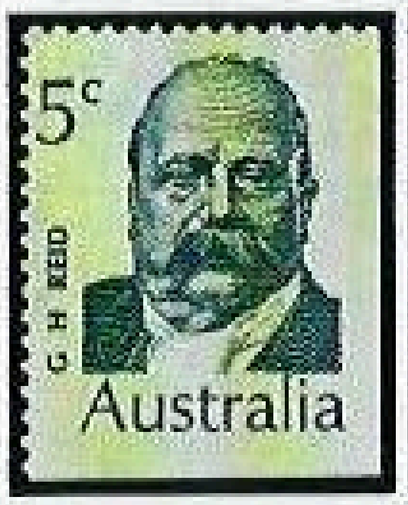
The die is then placed in a transfer press, and the transfer roller passed over it. The roller is a cylinder of softened steel, a few inches in diameter and slightly wider than the stamp. The press exerts a pressure of many tons, and the roller is rocked back and forth, under this pressure, until its face is forced into the full depth of the channels and dots of the original die.

(To be continued)





6c Australia
RICHARD BECK


5c
G H REID
Australia

5c
EDMUND BARTON
Australia

5c
J C WATSON
Australia

5c
ALFRED DEAKIN
Australia

FOUNDATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH
5½d
AUSTRALIA

FOUNDATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH
3d
AUSTRALIA

FOUNDATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH
3d
AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA
2½d