

represented to the Department how great would be the convenience to his isolated community of a post-office providing facilities for the receipt and despatch of mails (including parcels) and the purchase of postage-stamps. The Department readily agreed to the proposal, and the agency was opened on the 29th November, 1902, in Mr. Cuthbert's charge. A money-order office was opened on the 16th October, 1903, and a branch of the post office savings-bank on the 8th May, 1907.

After the mail-steamers ceased to call at Fanning Island the mails were forwarded from Auckland by indirect routes unless a direct boat happened to be available, but, notwithstanding the absence of direct sea connections, New Zealand was still in the best position to supply the postal needs of the island.

It was, of course, inevitable that the office at Fanning Island should pass eventually to the control of the Administration of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony to which it belongs, but officers of the Department regret that the transfer involved the severance of the bond of fellowship which for thirty-six years existed between them and members of the cable staff on their lonely island in mid-Pacific.

POSTAGE-STAMPS, ETC.

KING GEORGE VI STAMPS.

King George VI stamps in the denominations of 1d. and 1½d. were placed on sale on the 1st and the 26th July respectively. The effigy on both stamps is similar to that of the ½d. King George VI stamp which was issued on the 1st March, 1938.

BOOKLETS OF KING GEORGE VI STAMPS.

On 1st July a booklet of 1d. stamps was placed on sale and in November two booklets, one containing 1½d. stamps and the other 1d. and ½d. stamps, were issued. It is not intended to obtain further supplies of the booklet containing 1d. stamps only.

PICTORIAL STAMPS.

The 1d. and 1½d. pictorial stamps were withdrawn from sale on the 30th June and the 25th July respectively.

New plates were used to print supplies of 2d. and 4d. stamps.

" OFFICIAL " STAMPS.

The 1d. and 1½d. pictorial stamps overprinted " Official " were withdrawn from sale on the 30th June and the 25th July respectively.

King George VI 1d. and 1½d. stamps overprinted " Official " were issued on the 1st and the 26th July respectively. The 2½d. pictorial stamp similarly overprinted was placed on sale on the 26th July.

In July the overprint " Official " on the 5s. fiscal stamp was changed from block to italic letters.

AIR-MAIL STAMPS.

The 1d. air-mail stamp was withdrawn from issue on the 31st December. The remaining values of the set—3d. and 6d.—will remain on sale until stocks are exhausted.

HEALTH STAMP.

The 1938 health stamp of the value of 2d. (1d. for postage and 1d. for the Health Camp Fund) was issued on the 1st October and withdrawn from sale on the 15th February. The design had for its subject two small children playing on a lawn, with a hedge and a New Zealand tree-fern in the background. Mr. J. Berry prepared the design from suggestions and material supplied by Messrs. G. Bull and S. Hall. The stamp was engraved and printed by Messrs. Bradbury, Wilkinson, and Co., Ltd., England.

Once again the campaign to promote the sale of health stamps, undertaken by Health Camp Committees throughout the Dominion in co-operation with officers of the Department, was highly successful. During the four and a half months they were on issue, stamps to the value of over £10,000 were sold. The " health " value of the stamps, £5,145, together with donations amounting to £1,882, was distributed among the Health Camp Committees according to the amounts raised in their respective districts. It is gratifying to record the generous response made annually by the people of the Dominion to the health-stamp appeal, which is now established as the principal source of revenue for the maintenance of children's health camps in New Zealand.

STATIONERY.

Halfpenny and 1d. embossing dies bearing a portrait of His Majesty King George VI were brought into use in October. The ½d. die is used for embossing quantities of envelopes for private persons and the 1d. die for impressing envelopes for sale to the public.

NIUE AND COOK ISLANDS STAMPS.

The Niue 1s. and 2s. stamps and the Cook Islands 1s., 2s., and 3s. stamps bearing a portrait of His Majesty King George V were withdrawn from sale on the 30th April.