

New stamps of the denominations 1s., 2s., and 3s. for both Niue and the Cook Islands were issued on the 2nd May. The 1s. value bears a portrait of His Majesty King George VI, while the 2s. and 3s. denominations depict scenes appropriate to the islands. The borders for each value and the centres for the 2s. and 3s. stamps were drawn by Mr. J. Berry. The vignette for the 1s. stamps and the necessary dies and printing-plates were the work of Messrs. Bradbury, Wilkinson, and Co., Ltd., England, and the stamps were printed by the Government Printer, Wellington.

CENTENNIAL POSTAGE-STAMP ISSUE.

Following Government's decision that a special set of postage-stamps be issued to commemorate the Dominion's Centennial celebrations in 1940, artists were invited to submit designs in accordance with specifications embodying memorable events in the Dominion's historical and industrial development. The specifications were prepared by the National Historical Committee, which was set up by Government as part of the Centennial organization. Subsequently, a Stamps Sub-committee, consisting of three members of the National Historical Committee, two officers of the Department, and two prominent New Zealand philatelists, was appointed by the National Historical Committee to select the most suitable designs for inclusion in the issue. The designs selected were as follows:—

- (1) The landing of the Maoris; the main migration of about 1350—½d. denomination.
- (2) A Maori Council, representing Maori institutions and importance of Maori contributions to Polynesian culture—7d. denomination.
- (3) Abel Tasman's discovery of New Zealand, 1642—2d. denomination.
- (4) Captain James Cook's rediscovery of New Zealand, 1769—1d. denomination.
- (5) The landing of the New Zealand Co.'s immigrants on Petone Beach, 22nd January, 1840—3d. denomination.
- (6) The Treaty of Waitangi, 6th February, 1840—2½d. denomination.
- (7) The hoisting of the British flag at Akaroa, 11th August, 1840—5d. denomination.
- (8) The period of gold-mining (1862) and the development of the industry—9d. denomination.
- (9) The first overseas shipment of frozen mutton from New Zealand (despatched from Port Chalmers to London on the 15th February, 1882)—6d. denomination.
- (10) The progress of transport in New Zealand—4d. denomination.
- (11) One hundred years of New Zealand history under the British Crown—1½d. denomination.
- (12) The giant kauri tree, Tane Mahuta; symbolizing the whole period of New Zealand history—1s. denomination.

Nine of the successful designs were submitted by Mr. J. Berry, Wellington, and the remaining three (those numbered 1, 5, and 10) by Mr. L. C. Mitchell, Wellington.

It will be seen that the subject of each design is worthy of representation in an issue that will commemorate an event of national importance—the completion of the first hundred years of established government in New Zealand.

Very careful consideration was given to the designs before the final selection was made, and no pains have been spared to ensure that the set, when completed, will be highly satisfactory in every respect.

Messrs. Bradbury, Wilkinson, and Co., Ltd., England, were entrusted with the engraving and printing of the stamps. The die proofs have been approved and the printing is now proceeding.

The stamps will be placed on sale at all post-offices in the Dominion on the 2nd January next and will remain on sale for the full period of the Centennial celebrations.

HONEY-SEALS.

At the request of the Internal Marketing Division of the Primary Products Marketing Department, the Post Office arranged for the production of the adhesive seals to be affixed by apiarists to containers of honey in accordance with the Honey Marketing Regulations 1938.

The seals, the denominations of which are ¼d., ½d., 1d., 2½d., 5d., and 2s. 6d. were printed at the Government Printing Office from typograph line-etched plates prepared by Messrs. Coulls, Somerville, Wilkie, Ltd., Dunedin. They were placed on sale by the Internal Marketing Division on the 1st December, 1938, the date on which the regulations became operative.

STAMP-VENDING MACHINES.

To meet the convenience of the public, machines vending two ½d. stamps for each 1d. inserted were introduced during the year, and 185 of these machines have been installed throughout the Dominion. The number of machines vending 1d. stamps has increased to 300.

INSPECTION.

The values at every accounting office were audited by departmental Inspectors at least once during the year. In addition, Inspectors, with a view to maintaining the required standard of efficiency and to ensuring uniformity of procedure, examined closely all phases of the work undertaken at the offices visited.