

NEW SOUTH WALES ENVELOPES

Dingle Smith & Michael Blinman

The Unissued 1855 Proofs and Essays

The production of stamped envelopes in New South Wales was first suggested by R.P. Raymond, the Inspector of Stamps, in March 1855. Approval to proceed with designs for 1d, 2d, 6d and 1/- impressed stamped envelopes was given on 30 June 1855. The four values correspond to the ½ ounce local rate (1d), inland rate (2d), rate to UK via Southampton (6d) and the 1 ounce rate to UK via Southampton (1/-). Dies were produced and associated machinery and paper ordered from London. The dies were used to produce essays but envelopes using these dies were never issued. In 1864 the 1d die(s) were subsequently used for the first newspaper wrappers and in 1880 the 2d dies were used to produce essays for the first registered envelopes. It was not until 1870 that the first New South Wales envelopes with stamped impressions were issued.

Envelopes were produced bearing the indicia in a variety of colours, both with and without a Specimen Type B1 added (see Fig. 1). Proofs of the individual stamps are known on glazed and unglazed paper in various colours.

A comprehensive account of the 1855 dies and their use is given in Diserio and Blinman (2013). They suggest that the original drawings and production of the dies for the 1d, 2d, 6d and 1/- envelopes were partly undertaken by JC Thornthwaite in Australia and partly in London. A more recent study by Hancock (2017) discusses the origin of the dies with a convincing argument that the original dies were engraved in London by William Wyon for use for The City Medal in 1837. After Wyon's death in 1851, further modification of the original master die was undertaken by Warren De La Rue, son of Thomas De La Rue. Hancock (2017, p.6) states:

'The embossed heads on the four NSW envelopes requisitioned in 1855 exactly match the dies used for the envelopes of India [1856] and Ceylon [1857] which were printed by De La Rue in London. It is probable that De La Rue were also involved in the preparation of the NSW dies. The same master die was used by De La Rue for the first embossed envelopes of Victoria in 1869 and for the embossed stationery of many other British colonies including Tasmania in 1883.'

The study by Hancock also provides a fascinating account of the loss of the '*Dunbar*', the ship carrying the dies and associated printing equipment to Sydney. The ship was wrecked at South Head in August 1857, it is possible the dies were salvaged but not the associated equipment.

Diserio and Blinman discuss whether there was a master die for the Queen's Head with others for the outer parts of the design. For the 1d, later used for the newspaper wrappers, there are certainly differences in the positions of the 'stars' in the outer part of the design which suggests at least two dies. Diserio and Blinman also point out that some of the envelope essays are on pre-existing envelopes and others on pre-cut envelope paper. The former are distinguished by an impression on the reverse of the envelope made by the embossing of the stamp, for the latter the envelopes are ungummed. The issue of these envelopes never came to fruition because "the machinery then used rendered the process too costly" (Sydney Morning Herald, 29 June 1882).



Fig. 1 Examples of the four 1855 envelope essays

For further detail of these handsome stamps and illustrations of many of the essays and proofs the reader is referred to Diserio and Blinman (2013).

The 1d orange was used for the first issue of Wrappers in 1864 and the 2d in various colours for essays of the Registered Envelopes in 1880 together with a large number of 'colour trials' of the 2d stamps. These are listed elsewhere in the appropriate catalogue sections. It should be noted that strikes of the 2d stamp often in pairs and in a wide range of colours are also known. All are often described as 'printers waste' although they are likely trial strikes associated with the projected use of the 2d values (in pairs) on the flaps of the essays for the registered envelopes of 1880.

Post Office Issues

The first stamped envelopes impressed with a 1d stamp were issued in 1871, a 2d envelope in 1881 and a ½d in 1892. A 5d envelope was proposed in 1892, but was not issued (discussed in more detail in the STO section). The three issued values, although with changes in the design of the stamps, remained in use until replaced by Australian Commonwealth postal stationery in 1913. The paper used for the envelopes is normally unwatermarked although the early issues have uncoloured 'tresse' embossed on the flap.

Classification by Use

The stamped envelopes printed by the New South Printing Office were produced for three sets of clients. These were for:

- sale to the public;
- stamped to order (hereafter sto) predominantly for commercial users –discussed later
- official use by a range of government departments and agencies – Until late 1880 the stamped envelopes were only obtainable from post offices and stamp vendors. The first change was the production of envelopes restricted for use by Government agencies, these were marked 'O.S.' (On Service). In common with other catalogues these are described in a separate section as *New South Wales Official Envelopes*.

Sale to the public

The first stamped envelopes, issued in January 1870, were solely for sale to the public via post offices and licensed stamp vendors. It is thought unlikely that at this time the New South Wales Printing Office manufactured the envelopes on which the impressed stamps were printed. Bell and others considered that blank envelopes already cut, folded and gummed were purchased from locally-based stationers. However, as early as 1870, the Government Printer, Thomas Richards, in a report of possible cost reducing measures, suggested that manufacturing envelopes in one of the branches of the Government Printing Office would result in significant cost reductions. Later the Government Printing Office is known to have had its own machinery for producing envelopes but the degree to which this was used is uncertain. Certainly, the Government Printing Office, by 1880, was producing at least some envelopes for its own use.

The New South Wales Government Printer ceased to issue envelopes impressed with NSW stamps in 1913 when they were replaced by Commonwealth of Australia issues, these are described in detail by Kellow (2018).

Classification of Stamped Envelopes

Classifications of all forms of postal stationery take into account the impressed stamps and the material on which the stamp is printed. For envelopes the 'material' is particularly complex and includes the following components:

1. Size;
2. Type of paper including colour, watermarks and, for the early New South Wales envelopes, ornamental tresse;
3. Knife patterns used to cut the paper for use as envelopes;
4. Additional printed information or instructions;
5. Other features such as gumming.

A limitation with earlier catalogues listings is that they do not consider all of these categories and rely mainly on size although some of the German publications from the 1920s are much more detailed than those published later in English language publications.

Size and Knife Patterns

The basic measures of size for envelopes are for the length and width of the envelope, measured with the flap folded down. A qualification to the use of size is that minor variations occur due to the folding process, a 1½mm range is suggested by Stieg (2001) and is accepted in this account.

The first step in the manufacture of envelopes is to cut the blanks from flat sheets of paper prior to the folding process. This was undertaken by using cutting knives. All have four flaps although the sizes and shapes vary and after the blank is folded the pattern of the overlap is often diagnostic of the envelope type. Some 14 different knives are thought to have been used for New South Wales envelopes issued by the Post Office. These are illustrated and used in the accompanying catalogue listing.

Paper

The initial description applicable to New South Wales envelopes is either 'laid' or 'wove' paper. Laid paper is distinguished by a series of parallel lines which occur across the whole paper sheet from which the initial envelope is cut. The lines result from the 'laid' and 'chain' wires which form part of the drying process in the manufacture of the paper in sheet form. The laid lines are some 5-6 per mm apart and the chain lines about 30mm. For New South Wales the laid lines are usually diagonally across the sheets from which the envelopes were cut. This is because having the knives placed diagonally permits the maximum number of envelope shapes to cut from a single sheet of paper. The pattern is diagrammatically illustrated in Figure 2, adapted from Stieg (2001, p. 77).

For 'wove' paper the mesh of wires is very much finer and the lines prominent on laid paper are not visible. For further details see *Fundamental of Philately* (Williams, Chpt. 3, 1990). Few of the New South Wales envelopes were produced on wove paper.

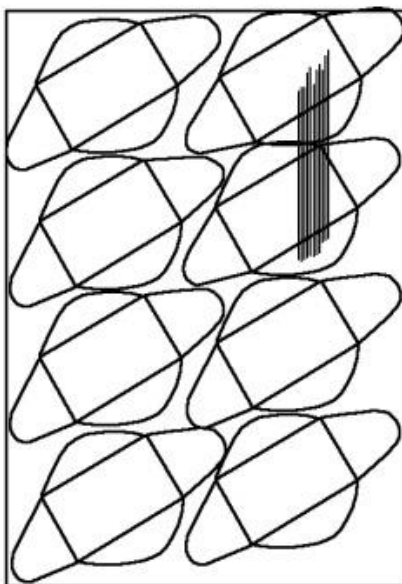


Figure 2. Sheet of laid paper illustrating the lay out for envelope manufacture, from Stieg (2001).

Manufacturers' watermarks on the paper used for New South Wales envelopes on both Post Office and sto issues are rare. A limited number of envelopes have been seen with the name of the stationer embossed on the flaps on the reverse of the envelope.

Some later issues of the 1d Jubilee Die 2 envelopes show a portion of a watermark for the NSW Government. Stieg (1973) describes a 1d Jubilee envelope with a portion of a watermark that reads 'NEW SOUTH WALES/GOVERNMENT/?10 in large capital letters. He considers that this indicates it was a post office issue rather than sto. Additional mint and used copies of the 1d Jubilee envelopes show that some were printed with two distinct forms of watermark; that seen by Stieg for which the third line read's '9-10' and a further example, NEW SOUTH WALES/GOVE'. Both have double lined capital letters but for the Stieg example the letters are approximately 24mm high but only 12mm for the new style. The Stieg example has now been seen with both Die 1 and 2 1d stamps and to date the new type only with Die 2. Other examples of Type 7 envelopes are known without any form of watermark. Neither of these forms of watermark has been seen reported for any other type of New South Wales stationery envelope.

The colour of the paper can also vary. Most commonly white or cream paper was used although the effects of ageing make colour alone an uncertain diagnostic feature. Varying shades of blue paper were used.

An additional feature of the earlier issues of NSW envelopes is the addition of uncoloured embossed ornamentation added to the top flap. In this account these are referred to as 'tresse' other accounts often refer to them as 'seals'. These were added by the manufacturer of the envelopes and are purely decorative and present on both Post Office issues and sto envelopes. They were also purchased as plain envelopes by the public and used with added adhesive postage stamps. Tresse identical to those used on the earliest postal stationery envelopes have been seen on envelopes used in New South Wales in the early 1860s, these are discussed and illustrated later in this account. Their use ceased in the 1880s.

Additional Printed Information

For envelopes issued by the post office or produced sto the Government Printer is thought to have only added the impression of the postage stamp. For sto printings additional information such as the return address or illustrations for advertising were solely the responsibility of the client. Many sto envelopes do not have addresses or advertisements and it is especially difficult to distinguish these from those issued by the Post Office.

Other Features - Gumming

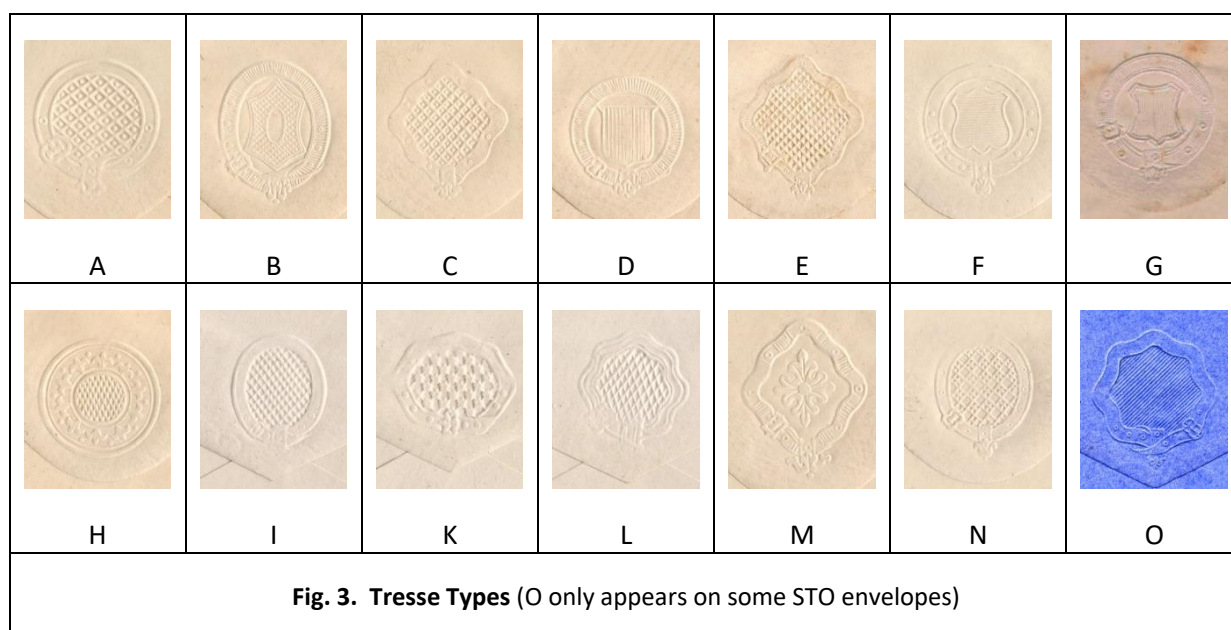
One of the other features that can vary between different styles of envelope is the nature and colour of the gum. The gum can either be applied by hand which leads to an inconsistent shape of the gummed surface or by machine which has a much more regular shape. For all the New South Wales examples seen the gum appears to have been applied by machine. There are minor variations in the area covered by the gum and sometimes in the colour but these are not considered to be sufficiently diagnostic to aid in the recognition of different types of envelope.

The Issued Envelopes

The 1d De La Rue Heads (E1 and E3)

In 1869 it was decided to produce 1d stamped envelopes and the first printing was undertaken in December and the items placed on sale to the public on 1 January 1870. The stamp design was the De La Rue Queen's Head also used for the current postage stamps and first issued in 1864. A proof of the 1d stamp used for the envelopes is known in black on buff paper. The 1d rate paid for the delivery of a ½oz. envelope within the local town; more precise definitions of 'local' are given below

in the section devoted on Postage Rates. The 2d envelopes were not issued until 2 September 1881 and the ½d envelope in July 1892.



Early catalogue listings of these items for New South Wales (eg. Ascher and Higgins & Gage) stress the problem of distinguished between official and sto printings for the early NSW envelopes. It is important to note that the Post Office did not offer a sto service for postal stationery envelopes until after an announcement in the Gazette of 2 September 1881.

Although the earlier printings of the 1d NSW envelopes until 1881 are free of the complications posed by sto they have their own complexities. In part this is because the Printing Office appears to have purchased the envelopes already folded and gummed from local stationery firms prior to adding the stamp impression. The term 'tresse', German in origin, and meaning 'to make more ornamental' is used in this account. In the 1860s and 1870s tresse were frequently used by makers of envelopes. Ascher (1925) illustrates the 11 tresse known to him as used on the 1d NSW envelopes and classifies these as Types A to L, oddly he does not illustrate a Type J. In recent years three further styles of tresse, listed as 'M', 'N' and 'O' were added although 'O' may be restricted to sto issues. These are illustrated in an enhanced form in Figure 3.

It is instructive to compare the style of the first NSW envelopes to those issued in Victoria and described in detail by Stieg (2001). The first Victorian envelopes, with embossed 2d stamps, were issued in February 1869. In contrast to NSW, the Victorian Postal Office offered a sto service to coincide with the date of issue of the first envelopes and this was eagerly taken up by many business organisations. In part this was because the purchase price of a stamped 2d envelope over the post office counter was 2½d but for a minimum order of 500 the only cost was that of the impressed 2d stamps! The first 1d Victorian envelopes were not issued until 1 June 1890.

In Victoria the 2d envelopes first issued in 1869 have a multitudinous array of sizes, styles of envelopes, gum patterns, watermarks and over 50 different types of tresse. These variations are all listed in Stieg (2001). The 2d Victorian envelopes produced officially for the Post Office appear to have been provided by a number of suppliers which included De La Rue and Sands & McDougall, Stationers of Melbourne but with variations especially to the tresse. Use of tresse appears to have declined and ceased prior to January 1881.

The classification for the corresponding period in NSW is happily much less complex than for Victoria and although the sto service was introduced more than 10 years later than in Victoria the rules and regulations were almost a direct copy.

Previously, the most thorough published listing for the NSW 1d envelopes was given in Ascher (1925). This presents details of the tresse designs, recognises envelopes with curved and pointed flaps, size and discusses other detail of the format of the envelopes.

The available material is predominantly composed of mint material and the specimen overprints of Type B2 known to have been printed in March 1871. The majority of the early NSW envelopes are printed on laid paper with the lines running across the envelopes at an angle, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Most of the 1871 specimen overprints (E1s in the catalogue) are on Size a envelopes. All examples overprinted specimen have a tresse on the reverse and most of the tresse shown in Figure 3 have been seen (all except I and K). If the assumption is made that the envelopes overprinted specimen on March 1871 were taken from the very large initial first printing of over 30,000 envelopes it is possible to describe the style of the majority of the original envelopes as Size a.

There are two examples (E1a and E1as) that differ from the E1 specimen envelopes described above, these have tresse B and D on envelopes of a similar size and paper but with a different envelope shape resulting in a 45mm flap. This shape is classified as Size g, and features a shape sometimes referred to as a 'cup'.

In the opinion of the authors all the early printings of the 1d envelopes, totalling 40,000, were of Types E1 and E2. From the example seen, E1 envelopes were printed in much larger numbers than those for E2. Further confirmation from the dates of used examples would be invaluable although the survival rate of these appears to have been surprisingly small. The stocks of the initial printings lasted until shortly before the sto service was introduced in late 1881.

The second printing of specimens in April 1882 was on slightly larger envelopes (141 x 78mm) with a pointed upper flap and is separately noted in the catalogue listing as E1b, Size j. It corresponds to the 1d envelope listed in Ascher with the date 1882. None of the specimen envelopes overprinted after 1871 have tresse.

1d Envelopes post-1882

The sto service commenced in late 1882 and soon became popular for commercial users. This causes difficulties in distinguishing the types of envelope provided for post office sales and this was recognised in all earlier catalogue listings and in published German accounts in the 1920s. Ascher lists a variety of envelope types defined by size and the nature of the flaps. He also lists 1d and 2d envelopes printed on blue envelopes, often of a very dark shade. Examples seen, overwhelmingly mint, further extend the variety of envelope types.

The colour of the 1d stamp on both the post office issues and sto printings is in various shades of 'rose', with those of the earlier issues often being particularly pale. However, the Ascher and Higgins and Gage catalogues both list a new issue in 1888 with the 1d stamp in a much darker shade of red. Ascher refers to this as 'zieglerot' which translates to 'brick-red'; the term used in the H and G listing. There is no mention of this colour change in Bassett Hull. The source of the information of the 1888 date given in Ascher and Higgins and Gage is unknown. The specimen overprint with a known date of November 1888 (E3as) has the 1d stamp printed in much darker shade than for the

earlier issues. The specimen is printed on an envelope which corresponds to one of the envelope types given for this issue by Ascher and H and G. The other types they list are all with pointed flaps and correspond to the other envelopes seen with brick-red stamps impressions, whether or not all were post office issues is unknown. The '1888' date has been retained in the envelope listing for the brick-red shade (E3) in the catalogue listing. If the date of 1888 is correct later printings with the 1d De La Rue 1d stamps would have been for a restricted time period as the 1d Centennial stamps were placed on sale in July 1888; an envelope with the 1d brick red stamp is known used in July 1888.

As with other issues of postal stationery there are variations in the shades of the stamp impression but except for the 'brick-red' issue it is considered that these do not merit separate catalogue listing.

2d De La Rue (E2)

Bassett Hull gives the issue date for the 2d envelopes as 2 September 1881. The design was based on the 1862 2d adhesive stamp. Bassett Hull also states that the 2d envelopes '...were issued in one size only [size not given], with and without tresse'. The Printing Office records show that the first printing of 10,000 envelopes was in August 1881. H and G list two sizes, 141 x 78mm (with or without tresse) and 137 x 79mm (without tresse). Ascher also lists these two sizes but with a variety of flap sizes. These earlier accounts are likely based on a limited number of examples, the number of 2d envelopes issued was much less than for the 1d envelopes.

In this account the examples overprinted specimen are considered to represent styles of envelope issued to the Post Office and most other types of envelopes are assumed to be sto. Examples of used envelopes from 1881 and 1882 are relatively uncommon but those seen from 1882 are of types thought to have been issued to the Post Office. This possibly indicates that for the years 1881 and 1882 sto envelopes were relatively uncommon.

None of the 2d De La Rue envelopes have been seen printed on blue paper, or with scalloped or cup envelopes, and to date the only recorded examples with tresse are E2, size j, envelopes, and are limited to tresse types K and L. The 2d on Size d envelopes listed as E2a are only known without tresse.

1d Centennial (E4)

The 1d Centennial envelope features an early view of Sydney with the earliest available for sale on 15 July 1888, a few days after the release of the 1d adhesive postage with the same design.

The information given in Ascher is further complicated as there are often only small differences of size between the types of envelopes listed. It is also necessary to note that Ascher, whose account is much more detailed than that of H & G, does not illustrate or give full dimensions of the shape of the envelope flaps. It is thought that the H & G listing (1984) was a simplified form of that given in Ascher (1925).

2d Emu (E5)

The 2d Centennial envelopes feature on emu in the stamp design and Bassett Hull gives the first day of issue as 21 January 1889. The postage stamp with the same design was released on 1 August 1888.

The ½d Envelopes (E6)

The ½d envelope which first appeared in July 1892, is not an inspiring issue but undeserving of the meagre descriptions it is given in the literature and catalogues. Ascher and H&G give the issue date for the ½d envelopes with the Queen's Head in grey as 1895, E6 in the attached catalogue listing,

and surprisingly there is only a single passing mention of this issue in Basset Hull (1911, p.355). Basset Hull's comment is that after 1892 sto ½d envelopes were also known, but he does not specifically mention or illustrate a post office printed ½d envelope.

The ½d envelopes were introduced when the bulk postage for printed circulars was reduced from 1d to a ½d for up to 2 ozs in weight; this was effective from 1 July 1892. This rate change was also responsible for the issue of an adhesive ½d postage stamp in early 1892, the same design in grey was used for envelopes. Although designed to meet the new bulk postage rate the ½d envelopes were used also for other postal rates with added postage stamps affixed.

At an unknown date in 1899 the colour of the ½d stamp on the envelope was changed to green. The colour change was to meet UPU requirements that the lowest value postage stamp should be in green. The ½d green envelopes are listed as a post office issue by Ascher but in H & G catalogue they are only listed with the sto envelopes. To date all of the ½d green envelopes seen are thought to be sto and in the attached catalogue they are listed as such.

The printing office records show that the first printing of 1,540 of the ½d envelopes was in early July 1892. They were passed to the GPO on 12 July and would have been placed on sale very soon after that date. Envelopes have been seen postmarked for 1893 and 1894. Additional printings took place throughout 1892 and the total printed and passed to the post office for issue during that year was 20,600. The numbers printed and issued in 1893 were 28,140; 45,680 in 1894 and 84,470 in 1895. The printing records indicate that the ½d envelopes were available in packets of 25 charged at 1/0½d, ie. the value of the impressed stamps. Examples of the packaging bands have not been seen.

The descriptions of the sizes and styles of ½d envelopes given in H & G are limited to a single specific size, 138 x 78mm. This is also listed in Ascher although he does specify the shape of the flap as 'scalloped' and adds two additional sizes; 140 x 90mm with scalloped flap and 152 x 85mm with a pointed flap. Compared to the other envelope issues of New South Wales these are especially sparse listings. The sto section given in this study (see the Envelopes Catalogue), lists a total of eleven Types; two are of interest as they are embossed with the stationer's name and another is a most unusual envelope shape with a truncated flap.

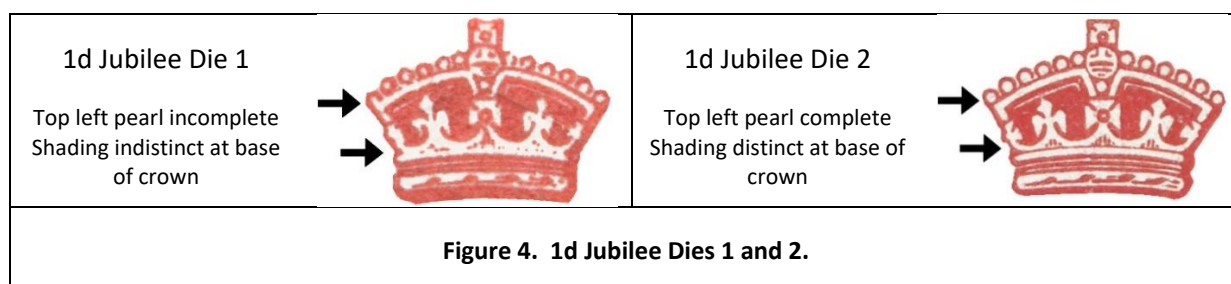
There are no archival records that indicate the production of a specimen overprint for the ½d envelope, and no records of its receipt by the UPU. Thus it is difficult to suggest which Types of envelope were produced for post office use and which were sto.

Further details regarding the ½d envelope may come to light in future years. As with the other styles of envelope the dates of use of the various printings rely on the availability of dated examples. There is interest for the postal historian in the handling of these bulk postings of circulars. Some of the used examples have handstamps of various kinds applied by the users to confirm that the sendings conformed to the bulk circular rate. Initially this was a Post Office requirement but many used covers do not have such markings. This is further discussed below in the Postage Rates section.

1d Jubilee (E7 –Die 1, E8 – Die 2)

The 1d Jubilee envelope was issued to the public on 22 June 1897 and the design remained in use until replaced by Commonwealth issues in 1913. During this period the die for the stamp impression was modified. Die 1 is most easily distinguished by the nature of the 'pearl' on the far left of the crown at the top of the design. For Die 1 this is incomplete and attached to the crown, for Die 2 the

pearl is fully formed and detached from the crown, see Figure 4. The change of die also occurs on other items of New South Wales postal stationery. E8 Die 2 was introduced in 1899 although the exact date is not known. Ascher lists the two dies but H & G does not, neither listing gives any detail of the type of envelope used other than of size.



A specimen overprint was likely produced soon after the envelopes were issued to the public. It is printed on an envelope of laid paper of size 138 x 78mm with a pointed 44 mm upper flap, E7s, Size d. This is thought to have represented the main Post Office issue for the early years of the 1d Jubilee printings.

The Annual Reports of the Post Office give information on the numbers of envelopes printed, see Numbers Printed Section below. These confirm the popularity of sto 1d Jubilee envelopes throughout their period of issue. The annual numbers of sto envelopes often exceeded those issued by the Post Office by a ratio of 20 to 1. Details of some of the more frequently seen envelopes thought to be of sto origin are given the Envelope Catalogue. Throughout the period of issue the envelopes together with those of the 2d value were printed on laid paper and only towards the end of the period of use have examples on wove paper been seen; these are thought to have been sto.

There are variations in the colour of the 1d stamp; earlier listings describe this as 'rose' which is adopted in this account. In addition to the use of two dies there are minor variations in the design many of which are associated with the pressure applied and wear reported during the period of issue. No attempt has been made to list minor variations in the stamp design.

All of the 1d Jubilee envelopes seen are on white or cream paper which confirms the restriction placed on the use of blue or other highly coloured envelopes by the Government Printer. This also applies to the corresponding Record Reign 2d envelopes.

2d Record Reign (E9)

The 2d Record Reign envelopes were first issued in 1897. The numbers printed were very much less than for 1d Jubilee although the proportion of sto envelopes is again much larger than those issued by the post office. The specimen overprints were produced on the same day as those for the 1d Jubilee and the type of envelope (138 x 78mm Size d) and specimen are identical.

The 2d 'blue' stamp on the 138 x 78mm envelopes (Size d) are known in a range of shades. These include the 'ultramarine' and blue-grey' shades listed separately by H &G and Ascher.

Illustrated Envelopes

The Sydney Morning Herald of 18 January 1898, under the heading "Pretty Envelopes", reported that "The Postmaster-General is considering the question of having stamped envelopes printed with pictorial and other illustrations, intended to advertise the colony". No essays or proofs are known

and it is likely, as in the case of illustrated Lettercards (for which several essays are known), that this idea was not adopted for cost reasons.

Numbers Printed

The 1d and 2d Envelopes

The first printing of 36,000 1d envelopes, issued on 1 January 1870, was in December 1869 followed by a further 4,000 in January 1870. Such numbers far exceeded demand and 20,000 were still held in stock by the Printing Office in December 1879.

Date		1d Envelopes	2d Envelopes
1880	December	10,000	
1881	January	0	
	February	0	
	March	0	
	April	20,000	
	May	0	
	June	0	
	July	0	First issued 2 September
	August	10,000	10,000
	September	22,750	11,750
	October	32,000	34,500
	November	400	100
	December	11,500	5,000
Table 1. Numbers of 1d and 2d Envelopes printed from July 1880 to Dec. 1881			

The monthly printing records for July 1880 to December 1881 for the 1d and 2d envelopes (issued to the public on 2 September 1881) are presented in Table 1. There is a significant increase in demand which accelerates dramatically after 2 September 1881 when the Post Office first issued the 2d envelopes and also announced the introduction of a sto service. Table 2, taken from Houison (1890), presents the numbers of 1d and 2d envelopes issued by the Post Office for the period 1872 to 1889 and confirms these increases. 2d envelopes first issued on 2 September 1881.

Year	1d Envelopes	2d Envelopes	Year	1d Envelopes	2d Envelopes
1872	1,575	-	1881	94,475	40,000
1873	1,700	-	1882	159,225	31,100
1874	1,700	-	1883	181,000	37,000
1875	1,000	-	1884	234,000	36,000
1876	1,300	-	1885	214,750	29,125
1877	2,200	-	1886	252,000	23,500
1878	-	-	1887	254,000	25,250
1879	1,000	-	1888	218,875	25,570
1880	12,000	-	1889	502,185	94,700
Table 2. Numbers of 1d & 2d Envelopes issued by the Post Office (from Houison, 1890)					

Basset Hull (1911, p.355) gives the prices charged in 1881 to the public for the 1d and newly issue 2d envelopes, available in packs of 25, as 2/3d and 4/6d respectively. They were supplied to Postmasters and Licensed Vendors at a discount '...at the rate of one shilling for every £1 2s 6d worth. Commencing in January 1891 the Printing Office records subdivide the numbers of envelopes printed into four categories. For the 1d envelopes these are listed as those to be sold at 2/1d and 2/3d and for the 2d envelopes at 4/2d and 4/6d; in all cases these were for packets of 25 envelopes. The 2/1d equates to 1d per envelope and 4/2d to 2d per envelope. Table 4 presents the annual numbers of individual envelopes printed in each of these four categories for the years 1891 to 1895, although many of the numbers are not multiples of 25. The 4/6d rate for the 2d envelopes was reduced to 4/4d in February 1894. Unfortunately the detailed monthly records cease after January 1896. The Printing Office records also mention, without additional detail, the printing of paper

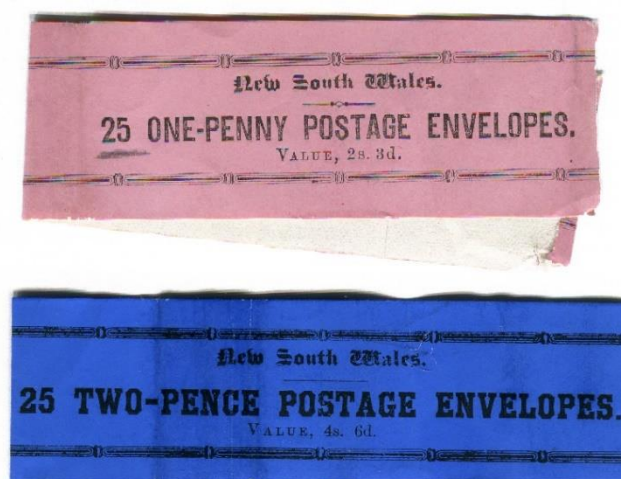


Figure 5. Packaging wrappers for envelopes.

packaging for the four categories although very few examples of these have survived. Examples of such packaging for '25 One-Penny Postage Envelopes/Value 2s 3d' and '25 Two Pence Envelope/Value 4s 6d' both dating from the early 1890s are illustrated in Figure 5.

Year	1d (25 @ 2sh1d)	1d (25 @ 2sh3d)	2d (25 @ 4sh2d)	2d (25 @ 4sh6d)
1890	Combined 474,180		Combined 116,930	
1891	619,560	388,940	158,660	135,890
1892	581,250	413,157	133,331	153,880
1893	483,496	423,160	102,412	171,295
1894	484,196	340,292	103,312	203,839* Price reduced to 4sh4d
1895	485,296	155,679	114,212	214,450
Table 3. Printing Office Records for the Numbers of 1d & 2d Envelopes at Differing Prices				

A second source of information is from the Postmaster General's Annual Reports which list the number of postal stationery and postage stamps issued each year. Those for the ½d, 1d and 2d envelopes for the years 1894-1900, 1906 and 1910 are given in Table 4. The reports for the missing years after Federation have not been seen. For the 1d and 2d envelopes the reports separately list those issued sto and those sold direct by the post office. The problem is that these do not match well with the numbers available from the Printing Office given in Table 4. Some differences would be expected as the Printing Office data refers to the numbers of items printed and the Postmaster

General's reports to items 'issued'. However the Printing Office only held back limited stocks of each item before issue to the Post Office and these are thought to be insufficient to explain the discrepancies. If the assumptions regarding numbers printed at the differing price levels are correct the differences are even larger.

	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900	1906	1910
½d STO	109,372	120,296	81,900	84,500	86,860	68,530	109,936		
1d	114,210	95,500	91,250	65,250	58,750	44,500	34,500	34,722	38,481
1d STO	152,632	160,170	200,017	247,555	251,090	268,050	318,757		
2d	11,600	10,125	13,875	12,125	13,000	9,000	8,750	10,375	6,375
2d STO	203,839	208,990	164,790	142,790	136,180	137,430	160,702		

Table 4. Numbers of ½d, 1d & 2d Envelopes issued, from Postmaster General Annual Reports

Information for the ½d envelopes is also problematic. The Postmaster General Annual Reports lists all the issued ½d envelopes as sto (see Table 5). This infers that copies were not available for sale from post offices, a situation that is thought to be unlikely. For accountancy purposes the Printing Office records for these envelopes charge them at ½d each in contrast to many of the 1d and 2d envelopes which were charged at above the face value.

Stamped to Order (sto)

It is important to note that the Post Office did not offer a sto service for postal stationery envelopes until after an announcement in the Gazette of 2 September 1881, offering to impress envelopes with either the 1d or 2d De La Rue stamps. The minimum order was for 500 envelopes and the only restriction to the type of envelope was that they must be '... of sufficiently thick paper to allow for the impression of a die'. There was no charge for this service other than the value of the impressed stamps.

The sto service for both the 1d and 2d envelopes rapidly became popular with business customers of the Post Office. In part this was because the cost of this service was limited to the value of the impressed stamp. The rationale was that for sto printings the Post Office did not have to provide the envelopes. This dual system creates problems in understanding the available information of the numbers of 1d and 2d envelopes sold to the public and those sto which were supplied in bulk to the business enterprises that ordered them.

The main difficulty is distinguishing STO envelopes from those issued by the post office, particularly those produced in the early years. Distinguishing features may include printing on the envelope, and odd sizes and papers.

Initially sto printings of postal stationery were not widely accepted by philatelists and were generally excluded from detailed listing in catalogues and from competitive exhibits of postal stationery. Bassett Hull (1911, p.356) comments, '...it would be hopeless to attempt to describe all varieties of these [NSW] impressed to order envelopes, and as the interest in such stationery is of the slightest, any further reference to them may well be omitted'. Nevertheless collector interest in sto envelopes has gained considerable momentum in recent years. In part this is because many of the examples include attractive advertising material sometimes excellently illustrated with multi-colour printing. Collector demand is confirmed by the prices obtained for such material in auctions held over the last decade or so. It is stressed that the printing undertaken by the Government Printer was restricted to adding the appropriate impressed stamp.

Given the current interest in New South Wales sto envelopes the production of a detailed listing of users and types sometime in the future is considered likely. A listing of examples known to the authors is included in the Envelope Catalogue, but this listing is far from exhaustive. Also included in the catalogue listing are those sto envelopes issued with double strikes of ½d or 1d stamps or with stamps officially obliterated together with 'collared' adverts around the impressed stamp and a letter sheet. These styles of sto envelopes have become much sought after items and it is considered appropriate to list them in a postal stationery catalogue.

Initial STO issues (XE1 – XE5)

The first STO envelopes were impressed with the 1d and 2d De La Rue designs (XE1 and XE2). After 1888, the colour of the 1d De La Rue changed from dull rose to brick-red (XE3), and indicia of this colour appear on several STO types.

After the issue of envelopes impressed with the 1d and 2d Centennial designs, these designs were used on sto envelopes which were becoming increasingly popular (XE4 and XE5).

Coloured Papers

In 1892, a number of orders were placed for sto envelopes to be printed on coarse, flimsy, coloured paper. A number of these are listed in the Envelopes Catalogue, as "flimsy". Such envelopes caused problems with ink bleeding and also resulting in problems with the printing machinery.

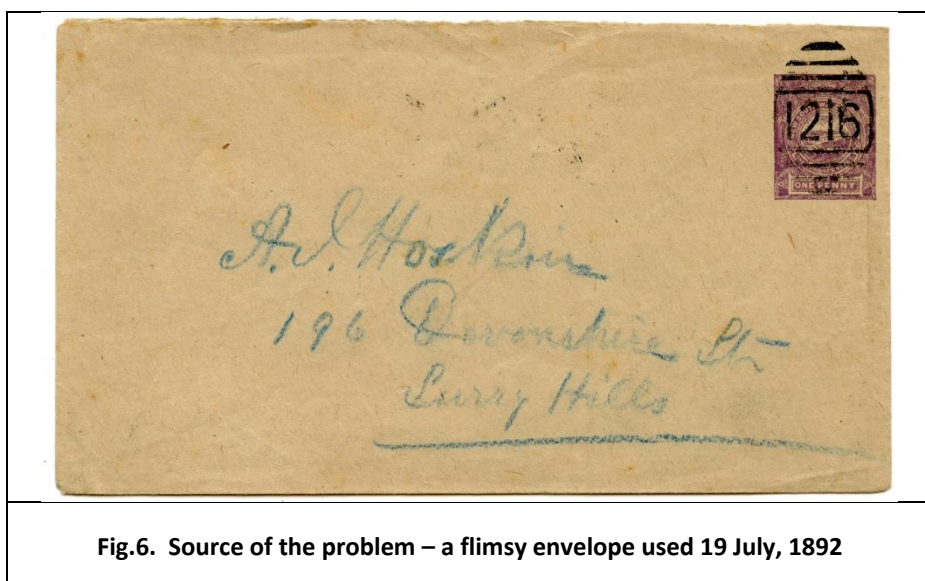


Fig.6. Source of the problem – a flimsy envelope used 19 July, 1892

To avoid further problems “...in July 1893, it was notified that coloured envelopes, and envelopes too thin for stamping, would not in future be received [ie. used for sto orders]” (Bassett-Hull 1911, p.355). Notably, the Government Printer continued to stamp blue envelopes for official use.

½d De La Rue (XE6 and XE10) and 5d Centennial

The Government Gazette of 21 September, 1892, announced that approval had been given for “the issue of a 5d impressed stamp for envelopes”. The venerable 5d Diadem design used for adhesives was unsuitable for impressing on envelopes, and so a die for the 4d Centennial had its value modified to “five pence”, and proposed design colour of green.



Fig.7 5d Die Proof

A die proof of this design was produced, but the post office envelopes were not produced. However the Government Gazette of 15 July 1893 made this design available to sto users – “half-penny, one penny, two penny and five penny stamps will be impressed on envelopes supplied by the public...”

Although ½d envelopes proved popular, no 5d sto envelopes are known, and the die proof is the only surviving example. Drilled out for the insertion of OS plugs, the design was used for official envelopes.

The archival monthly printing records cease after January 1896 and the only available sources of data on the numbers of postal stationery items issued are the Postmaster General’s Annual Reports. These do not give information for all years and in contrast to other categories of postal stationery there is no information for the ½d envelopes for the years 1906 and 1910. This could suggest that ½d envelopes for post office or sto use were not issued after 1900. This is thought to be incorrect, as envelopes imprinted with the ½d green from as late as 1911 are known, and as the ½d rate for circulars continued to apply until Australian Commonwealth postal stationery was issued in 1913.

1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	1900
54,980	92,876	109,732	120,926	81,900	84,500	86,860	68,530	109,939
Table 5. Annual Sales of ½d sto Envelopes, from Annual Reports of NSW Postmaster General								

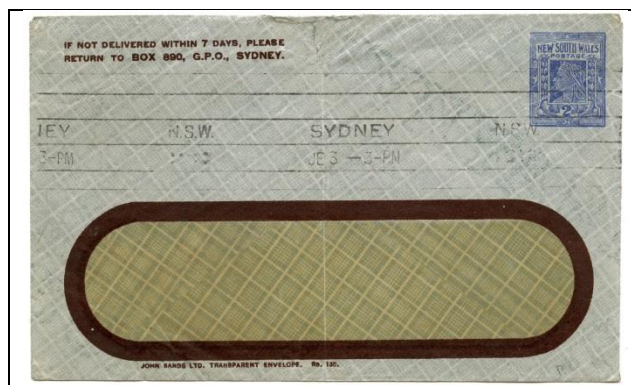
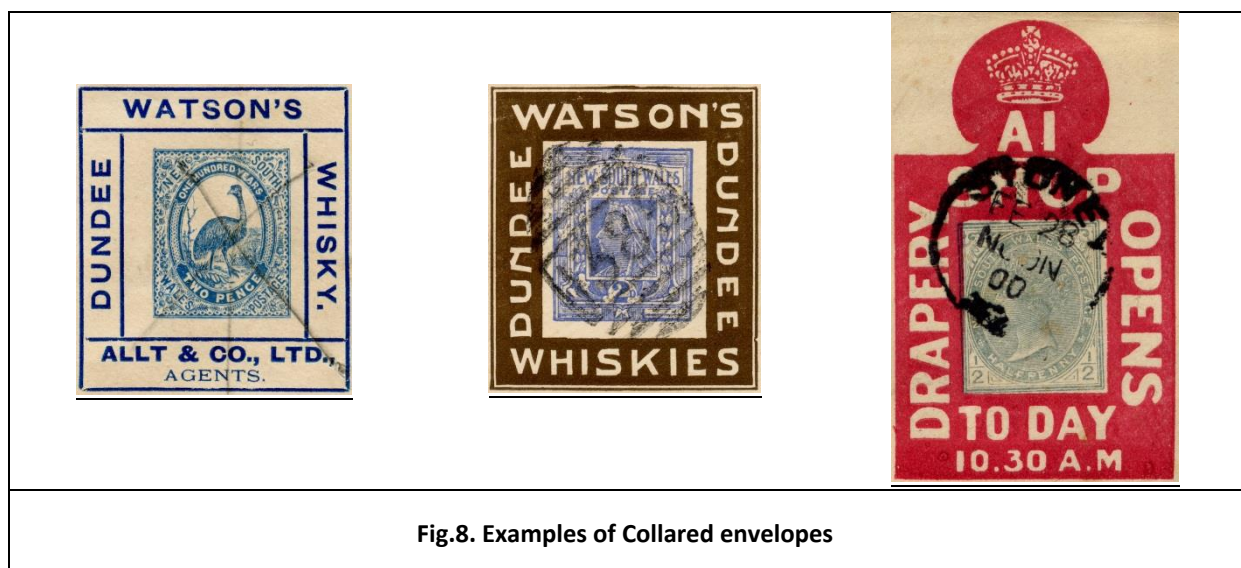
The data in the Annual Reports 1892-1900 for the ½d envelopes are given in Table 5. These are unusual in that they appear to relate solely to sto sales. This contrasts to the corresponding data for the 1d and 2d envelopes which separately list those sold by the post office and those provided to sto users. There are also major differences between the printing figures of the years 1892 to 1895 and the sto sales figures for ½d envelopes in Table 1. The numbers from the printing office being much smaller than those reported as sto in the Annual Reports. The reasons for these differences are unclear.

Jubilee envelopes (XE7 – XE9)

After 1897, the centennial designs were replaced by the 1d and 2d Jubilee issues. Some envelopes were produced with the short-lived 1d Jubilee Die 1 (XE7), which in turn was replaced by the 1d Jubilee Die 2. These designs remained in use until 1913.

Collared stamps and Windowed envelopes

From the 1890's, some sto envelopes were produced with the indicium surrounded by an advertising collar (these are identified as "collared" in the sto section of the Envelopes catalogue). Such collars are also known on ordinary envelopes with the space within the collar used for attachment of an adhesive stamp. The practice was banned after 1908, after the UK and various other postal administrations refused to handle such envelopes.

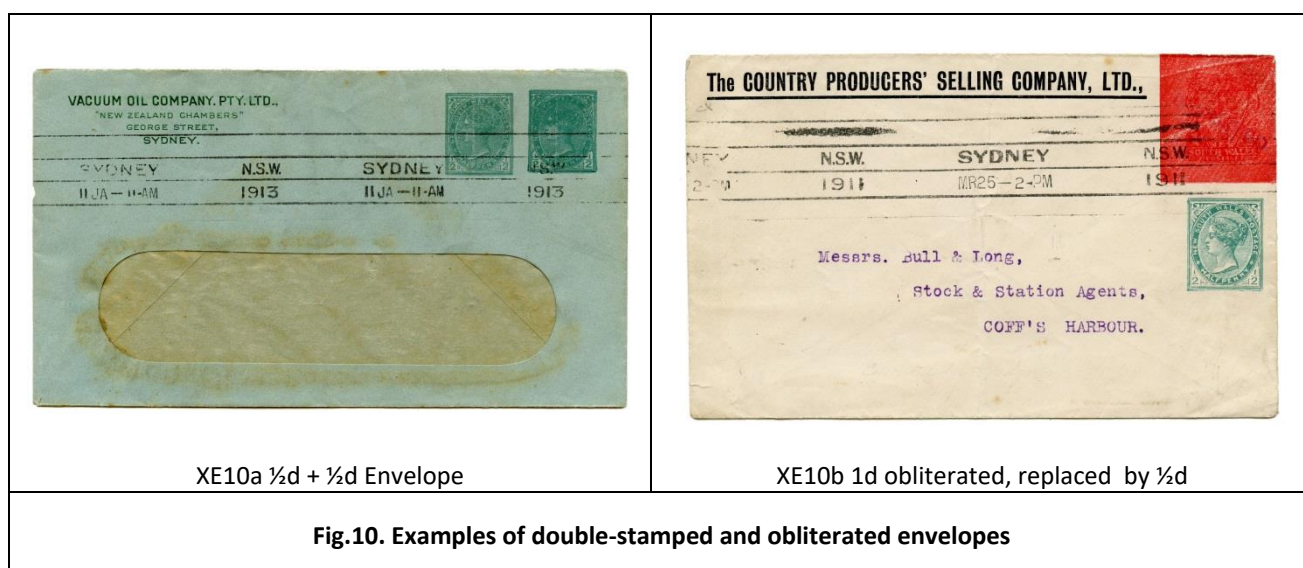


After 1900, windowed envelopes were produced which facilitated postage of business documents. No post office issued envelopes were produced with windows, but at least two official envelopes were windowed.

Sto Double Stamp Impressions, Obliterations and Collared Stamps

Some sto envelopes are known with either double strikes of impressed stamps or have an obliterated stamp accompanied by a second impression. These are especially collectable and represent occasions when the Printing Office made an error with the original sto request, ie. they initially printed the wrong value stamps. In such cases the original envelopes were returned to the printer who corrected the error either by adding an additional stamp or by obliterating the original stamp and replacing it with the correct value.

Hancock (2006) provides details for two occasions when this occurred, for 3,000 envelopes for Messrs. Harrison, Jones and Devlin in August 1889 and for the Sydney agents for Robertson's Whiskey in the mid-1890. For the latter the company requested 1,000 covers to be impressed with a 2d Emu stamp. In error the envelopes were impressed with a single 1d Centennial stamp and to remedy this, the Government Printing Office added an extra 1d Centennial stamp to the covers. Many of these mint covers were obtained by Vindin, a Sydney dealer, who advertised them at 2/6d for the first 100 ordered and 5/- for later requests. The unsold envelopes were used many years later in 1939 for normal postage by J.M.Smyth, another Sydney dealer who affixed an additional advertising label on the reverse.



Although the post office announced that steps would be taken to avoid a repetition of this type of error, this was not the case. A more detailed account by Blinman (2020) lists eight examples of this type of error, as well as two examples where the printed indicum was of a higher value than ordered. In these cases the incorrect indicum was obliterated, and the correct value was printed on the envelope.

There is no doubt that prior to the introduction of the sto service in 1881 interest in the use of the 1d envelopes was minimal. For the first ten years the average rate of use was less than 4,000 a year. Ten years later when the sto had become popular the annual printing of Post Office envelopes exceeded half a million with large numbers supplied to a variety of commercial clients.

Increase of sto costs

Hancock (1991) discusses sto envelopes and disputes an earlier statement in the Australian Journal of Philately for 16 August 1904 that '...a number of big firms send their envelopes to be stamped direct, and that they get done for the price of the stamps alone'. The statement in 1904 referred to earlier sto printings and was likely correct. However, Hancock also draws attention to the Post Office Guide for 1903 which states that the charges for the sto service '...shall be the value of the stamps,

and 2s [shillings] per thousand, or portions of a thousand for the work of stamping'. This applied '...to envelopes, envelopes combined with sheets of note-paper or newspaper wrappers'. It appears that the earlier favourable rate for sto ceased at that time although it appears to have had little adverse effect on the popularity of the service.

Envelopes: Postage Rates

Major usage of the 1d and 2d stamped envelopes was for the transmission of letters, private and commercial, containing written communication. These were charged at the letter rate and this permitted the envelopes to be sealed. Such mail is referred to as 'First Class Mail'. In October 1875 a new and cheaper postcard rate of 1d within New South Wales was introduced but if the postcard '...bear upon it a written communication in the nature of a letter' it was charged at the higher letter rate. There was also a caveat that if the postal service was overloaded then letters had priority. There were also other rates that could apply to material posted in envelopes and these are termed 'Second Class Mail'.

In outline, second class mail applied to the other categories of envelope sent through the mail. At the time of Federation these categories were officially listed as 'Printed Matter', Commercial Papers' and 'Merchandise, Patterns and Samples'. The distinguishing feature of Printed Paper and Commercial Papers is that the envelope could not be sealed. This is the usual way by which postal historians recognise the use of second-class mail items. Newspaper rates represent an entirely different class of mail and are separately discussed in the Wrapper section.

Date	Local ¹	Within NSW	Interstate	Empire	Overseas
1868 1 Jan	1d	2d	Various ²	6d Empire UK rate	Varied
1874 1 Jan	1d	2d	2d	6d	Varied ³
1891 8 Oct	1d	2d	2d	2½d except Australasia	2½d
1901 1 Mar	1d	2d	2d	2d NZ, Fiji and BNG added	2½d
1905 1 Apr	1d	2d	2d	2d UK added	2½d
1905 4 Jul	1d	2d	2d	2d India, Canada & others ⁴	2½d
1907 Feb	1d	2d	2d	2d BWI, African colonies ⁵	2½d
1911 1 May	1d	1d	2d	1d	2½d
Table 6. ½ ounce Letter Rates, 1868-1913 (additional ½ ounces charged at same rate)					

Notes on Table 6

- 1) The area defined as the local rate varied over time. For Sydney it was 10 miles from the GPO in 1873, in 1883 it encompassed Parramatta and in 1890 Liverpool. By 1899 the local rate, within a radius of 13 mile from the post office, applied to 17 major towns and their surroundings throughout the State. Additional detail is given in White (1988, 149-152).
- 2) In the early months of 1870 the rate to most Australian colonies was 6d per ½oz. By July 1870 the inter-colonial letter rate was generally 3d per ½oz by sea with 2d for overland transport to Victoria and Queensland. For further details prior to 1 January 1874 see White (1988, 154-156).
- 3) For rates to destinations not in the British Empire see White (1988, pp. 335-356)

- 4) 2d rate extended to Canada, India, Ceylon, Egypt, Hong Kong, Lord Howe and Norfolk Island, Natal, Orange Free States and Straits Settlements.
- 5) 2d rate extended to the British West Indies, many African colonies and other destinations (see Breckon, 1987).

First Class - Letter Rate

The basic letter rates for local, inter- and intra-State and overseas destinations are given in Table 6. The rates are all for weights up to ½oz, each additional ½oz. was charged at the same rate. The pattern is straight forward except for the complications of defining 'local', pre-1881 changes to the rates outside the British Empire and changes to differing parts of the British Empire especially after 1891. Further details of local rates are given in White (1988, pp. 149-152), for pre-1881 foreign destinations in White (1988, pp. 335-356) and for post-Federation rate changes, especially to destinations within the British Empire, Breckon (1987& 1988) is the best source of information.

Although the most common rate to British Empire destinations prior to 1881 was 6d it is stressed that this was by the longer sea routes and higher rates applied to other faster routes. The change to a standard 2½d rate to all UPU member nations after the Australian Colonies became full UPU members in 1891 became effective in New South Wales on 8 October 1891.

Stamped envelopes were only available for the 1d in 1870, 2d issued in 1881 and after 1892 at a ½d. For overseas use it was often necessary to add additional adhesive stamps. The use of such envelopes for overseas destinations is relatively uncommon and prior to the adoption of the 2½d UPU rate in 1891 such uprated envelopes to destinations outside the British Empire are rare.

Second Class Mail

The Printed Paper rate disallowed any form of written communication to be included in the unsealed envelopes. Commercial Papers were defined as '...all papers and documents not wholly printed which have not the character of actual or personal communication'. In practice this definition allowed written or typed material that was not of a personal nature. It was widely used by businesses for the transmission of invoices, receipts, insurance documents, cheques and the like. Merchandise, Patterns and Samples is a difficult category to define, broadly used for manufactured items but also included were seeds, preserved plant specimens, wedding cake and live bees! Clearly many of these would not be suitable for transmission in stamped envelopes and Breckon (1988) comments that '...in effect this category of mail was a 'small parcel' service with weight steps up to 16ozs, above that weight the item was subject to parcel rates. It is also clear that some of the possible contents could not be easily sent in an unsealed envelope.

It is pertinent to note that at no time, except for the exception mentioned below, did the Post Office regulations require second class mail items to be endorsed, eg. by adding 'printed matter' or 'commercial papers', to the envelopes. However it was common practice for the correspondents to add such words to envelopes in order to confirm that they conformed to the requirements of the lower postage rates. The Printed Matter postage rates are summarised in Table 7, additional detail on the rate steps are given in Breckon (1988).

New South Wales introduced the ½d envelopes on 1 July 1892 to meet the needs of the new Printed Paper rate of ½d for envelopes containing 'circulars' of up to 2ozs in weight for delivery within New South Wales. New regulations for this form of second-class mail came into force on 1 July 1892, ie. the same day as the issue of the ½d envelopes. For the ½d rate mail to apply there were restrictions on the form of the enclosures and the printed paper/circular rate required at least 20 identical copies to be posted at the one time with the envelopes marked '20 copies posted'. This was the responsibility of the sender and in some cases appropriately worded rubber handstamps were used

although it is clear that often such markings were not applied to all the envelopes in an individual posting. Most likely the top letter in a bundle of envelopes submitted to the post office would have been marked.

It is often difficult to distinguish between envelopes used for Commercial Papers and for Merchandise, Patterns and Samples. This is because the postal rates for weights of 2ozs or less, for which envelopes were most suited, were the same for a range of destinations. A summary of the rates for these two classes is also given in Table 7.

Date	Within NSW	Interstate	British Empire	Foreign
Printed Matter				
1892 1 Jul	½d up to 2 oz.	1d up to 4 oz.	1d up to 2 oz.	1d up to 2 oz.
1911 1 May	½d up to 2 oz.	½d up to 4 oz. Also NZ and Brit Pacific	1d up to 2 oz.	1d up to 2 oz.
Commercial Papers				
1901 1 Mar	1d up to 2 oz.	1d up to 2 oz.	3d up to 2 oz.	3d up to 2 oz.
Merchandise, Patterns and Samples				
1901 1 Mar	1d up to 2 oz.	1d up to 2 oz.	1d up to 2 oz.	1d up to 2 oz.
Table 7. Rates for Printed Matter, Commercial Papers and Merchandise, Patterns & Samples				

Specimen Envelopes

The dates and number of the specimen overprints for the period until the end of January 1896 are known from the Printing Office archival records. These are presented in Table 8. As with other items of the specimen postal stationery of New South Wales it is not always possible to allocate the type of overprint used for specific issues.

For the first issue, E1 the 1d De La Rue envelopes, all known specimens are on envelopes that have colourless embossed tresse on the upper flap. Although not all have been seen it is probable that all of the style of tresse (A-M, see **Figure 3**) are represented. If this assumption is correct it can assist with distinguishing between the early envelopes issued by the post office and those that, after 1881, were submitted to the Post office for sto.

Table 8 lists nine separate occasions on which material was printed for use as specimens. That for 29 August 1889 is unusual in that all the adhesive stamps and postal stationery on issue at that time were marked in the printing records as 'for specimen use' but they were not overprinted in any way. The printing of 345 copies of all the postal items indicates that they were destined for transmission to the UPU in Geneva for distribution to their members and the same is likely to apply to for any later printings of specimen envelopes where the total exceeded about 350.

All the others listed in Table 8 were overprinted 'specimen'. There are no records or known examples of specimen overprints for the ½d envelopes. The 1d and 2d Record Reign issues of 1897 are known overprinted with the B23 Type overprint, although the date of issue and numbers printed remain unknown.

An unusual feature of the De La Rue specimen printings of 13 November 1888 (no.3 in Table 8) is that the Types of envelope used for the 1d and 2d values differ; the 1d is Type 4 and the 2d Type 5. Normally when envelopes of the same issue were overprinted specimen they were all on the same Type of envelope.

Date	Stamp	Number Printed	Specimen Type	Envelope
1871 Mar	1d Rose De La Rue	1500	B2 Diagonal	E1s
1882 18 Mar	1d Rose De La Rue	100	B4a	
	2d De la Rue	100	B4a	E2s
1888 13 Nov	1d Brick-red De La Rue	200	B12	E3as
	2d De La Rue	200	B12	E2as
1889 29 Aug	1d Brick-red De La Rue	345	-	-
	2d De La Rue	345	-	-
1889 3 Sep	1d Centennial	200	B14	E4s
	2d Centennial	200	B14	E5s
1892 22 Mar	1d Centennial	1000	B14	E4s
	2d Centennial	500	B14	E5s
1892 Oct	1d Centennial	150	B19	E4cs
	2d Centennial	236	B19	E5bs
1897 (?)	1d Jubilee Die 1	?	B23	E7s
	2d Jubilee	?	B23	E9s
Table 8. Specimen Envelopes: Date, Numbers Printed and Type				

There are no records indicating that the ½d envelope, issued in 1892, was overprinted specimen and no examples of specimen ½d envelopes are known.

The 1d and 2d Centennial issues are known with two distinct Types of specimen overprint (B12, B14 & B19). It is difficult to allocate with any certainty which Types were used for the four different printings. Tentative Types are appended to these four printings in Table 8, on the basis of the first dates of use of the various specimen types.

The reasons for the production of the specimen overprints other than for possible transmission to the UPU are not fully understood. For the first issue, which was prior to the formation of the UPU, the number of 1500 seems unduly large although similarly large numbers were printed for the 1d embossed wrappers. For later issues distribution to the UPU is a possibility and was undoubtedly the case for the unmarked printings of 29 August 1889 (no. 4 in Table 8). The number of copies for this special printing exactly matches the 345 required by the UPU at that time. The printing of 22 March 1892 (no.6 in Table 8) also exceeds the number required for the UPU. If added together the rather unusual numbers of overprints in the October and 29 December 1892 printings also exceed the UPU distribution number. Details of the number of specimen required by the UPU at various times are given in Bendon (2015) and an account of specimen stationery sent to the UPU by the Australian Colonies in Smith (2016).

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