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THE ESSAYS AND PROOFS OF THE PICTORIAL ISSUES OF TASMANIA

by Geoff Kellow

No comprehensive treatment of the subject of the essays and proofs of Tasmania's Pictorial stamps seems to have been attempted. Keith Lancaster, in his work *The Pictorial Stamps of Tasmania* deals with the De La Rue correspondence and the production of the 1899 engraved issue, and in so doing alludes to a number of the essays and proofs which were created, but does not attempt to provide an accurate listing of these. The present article is an attempt to redress this situation. It is based on the records the author has kept of material that has appeared on the market, but should not necessarily be considered fully comprehensive. This is particularly the case since some very important, and previously unknown, pieces first surfaced in 1991, and the possibility remains of further discoveries in the future.

By far the majority of the essay and proof material is related to the 1899 engraved issue produced by Thomas De La Rue & Co Ltd. in London. Proofs from the Melbourne printings are much rarer. It should not be thought, however, that all the De La Rue proof material came onto the market when that Company's archives were sold at auction in 1976. There was already a significant amount of material available to collectors before this, and not all the proof material has come direct from De La Rue – certain items can be sourced to engravers and other employees of the Company.

All the listed material is sourced to auction catalogues in which it has appeared, or to other references. These references are not exhaustive in listing all the instances any article has appeared at auction, but are chosen as representing the more important and accessible sources.

For classification purposes each item has been given a number. Prefixes used are "E" (Essays), "DP" (Die

Proofs), and "PP" (Plate Proofs).

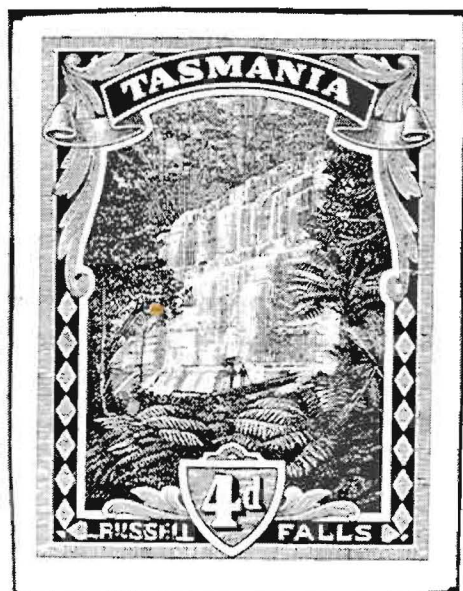
The 1899 Engraved Issue

The order for the proposed pictorial issue was forwarded to De La Rue by the Agent-General for Tasmania on 20 April 1899. This order enclosed the photographs on which the designs were to be based. These photographs may be considered important artefacts in the production of the issue, but as far as the author is aware, these originals cannot now be identified out of context, assuming the photographs still exist. Other copies of the photographs survive, some probably not contemporary with the stamp issue since many of the scenes were photographed by well-known photographers and used in other circumstances. Keith Lancaster deals with the subject of the photographs at some length in his book.

The Artist's Drawings

Although the Agent-General's letter asks only for a tender for dies, plates and printing, De La Rue did not reply until 24 May 1899, when they enclosed photographic essays for each denomination. The derivation of these photographic essays was unknown until the appearance, in 1991, of three large-size pen and ink drawings for the 4d, 5d and 6d values. These drawings are done on thick paper in black ink and touched up in places with Chinese white. The 5d is mounted on board.

The essays are line drawings which clearly served a double purpose: they could be photographically reduced to provide suitable stamp-sized essays for submission to the Agent-General for approval, and following approval could be used as a master by the engraver after photographic reduction onto a steel die. Further details of the procedure employed is in an article by the author in *Philately from Australia*, December 1991, pp 83-85. These three drawings came from the estate of Henry Barr, who was employed as an artist at De La Rue; he subsequently worked at the Indian Security Printing Works at Nasik, and for a short time was employed at the Note Printing Branch in Melbourne, where he designed the 5/-, 10/- and £1 Robes definitives of 1938. Although the provenance is known, it cannot be certain that Barr himself was responsible for the drawings.



E1 (reduced)



E2 (reduced)

Similar drawings must have existed for the other denominations (including the unissued 2¹/₂d St Columba's Arch), but are at present unrecorded.

- E1 4d BLACK AND CHINESE WHITE, 143 x 204 mm (Phillips, London, Sale 28741, 19 September 1991, Lot 779; Stanley Gibbons Australia, 13 April 1994, Lot 1223).
- E2 5d BLACK AND CHINESE WHITE, 217 x 170 mm (Rodney A. Perry, Melbourne, Sale 191, 3 April 1998, Lot 940).
- E3 6d BLACK AND CHINESE WHITE, ?size.

The Photographic Essays

The photographic essays, derived from the line drawings, were submitted with De La Rue's tender on 24 May 1899. A number of these essays are composites, comprising paste-ups of vignette and frame, from which it is inferred that some reconsideration must have been given by the De La Rue artist to this aspect of the designs subsequent to the completion of the line drawings. Swapping of the frames was easily done photographically, and would have involved only recasting of the denominations and captions.

The essays comprise stamp-size photographs in colour or in black mounted on thick card measuring approximately 114 x 90 mm (horizontal designs) or 90 x 114 mm (vertical designs). Some essays are touched up with Chinese white or black ink.

Three sets of these essays existed. Practically all of these were dated "May 24th 99." in the upper left corner. One set was that submitted to the Agent-General with De La Rue's tender. There is no mention that a second set was included with this tender, but there is no doubt of its existence, although not all values can now be traced. This second set would seem to have been transmitted to Hobart for approval of the designs. There is no mention of this in the official correspondence between the Agent-General and De La Rue, but the essays may have been asked for and received in person. It is noteworthy that the photographic essays were submitted on 24 May 1899, but only the 1d and 2d were approved soon after, on 2 June. This approval must have come from the Agent-General. The other values, with the exception of the 2¹/₂d, were approved by the Agent-General on 3 August. This gives sufficient time for the transmission of a set of the essays to Hobart, and a telegraphic reply. The author believes this Hobart set came onto the market at a relatively early but unknown date, and is that formerly in the J.R.W. Purves collection. Several of the essays bear manuscript notations on changes which it is reasonable to assume would have been made in Hobart. The alternative is that this set was a De La Rue artist's set, which would be consistent with the manuscript notations, but there is no correspondence from the Agent-General regarding the changes made, which might be expected, and the delay in approval of most of the designs is not explained. The third set comprised reference copies retained by De La Rue for their own archives. These are similarly dated "May 24th 99." in the top left corner, and additionally have "Dupl." at lower right. There is no question as to the identity of this set, which was first sold at the De La Rue archival sale in Melbourne on 5 August 1976. There are differences between the three sets which are detailed in the listing below.

The 2¹/₂d denomination was originally to have depicted St Columba Falls. Approval of this design was delayed, and eventually on 9 August 1899 the Agent-General wrote to De La Rue enclosing "a more appropriate view" for the 2¹/₂d stamp. Subsequently, on 1 September De La Rue sent the Agent-General two further

photographic essays featuring Tasman's Arch. These are dated "Sept. 1st 99." in top left corner.

E4 1/2d composite in GREEN, 114 x 90 mm.

A. Agent-General's copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Rodney A. Perry, Melbourne, Sale 191, 3 April 1998, Lot 933).

B. Hobart copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 512).

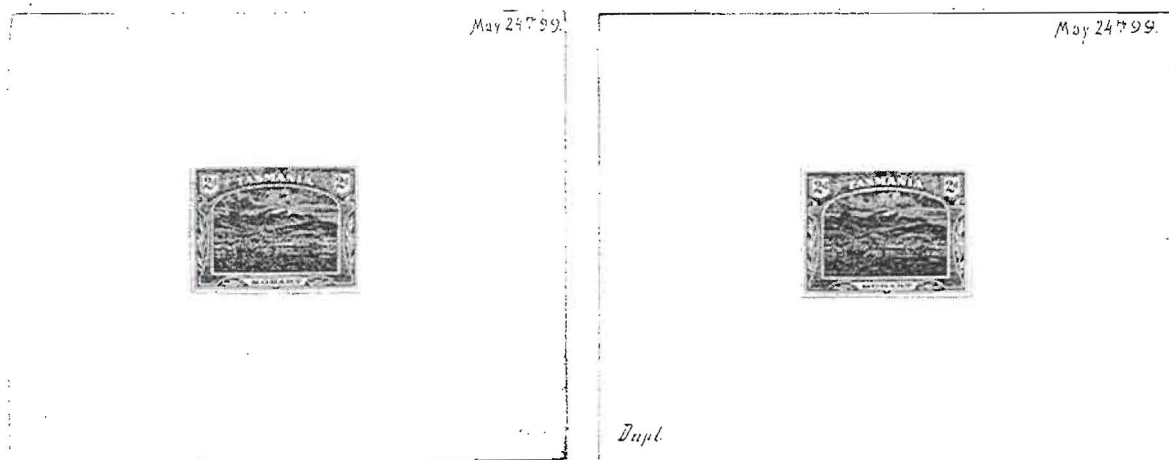
C. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 116; Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 498).

E5 1d composite, 90 x 114 mm.

A. In RED-BROWN (?oxidised). Agent-General's copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Rodney A. Perry, Melbourne, Sale 191, 3 April 1998, Lot 933).

B. In ORANGE-VERMILION. Hobart copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 513).

C. In BLACK. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 116; Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 499).



*E6A E6C
The Hobart and De La Rue file copies of the 2d photographic essay*

E6 2d composite, 114 x 90 mm.

A. In MAUVE. Agent-General's copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right, with handstamped "5 JUN 99" below (Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 501; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1214).

B. In BLACK. Hobart copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 512; Rodney A. Perry, Melbourne, Sale 191, 3 April 1998, Lot 936).

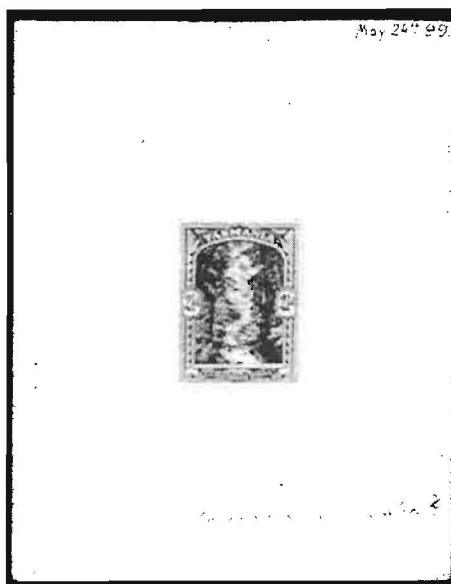
C. In BLACK. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 116; Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 500).

E7 2¹/₂d St Columba Falls composite, 90 x 114 mm.

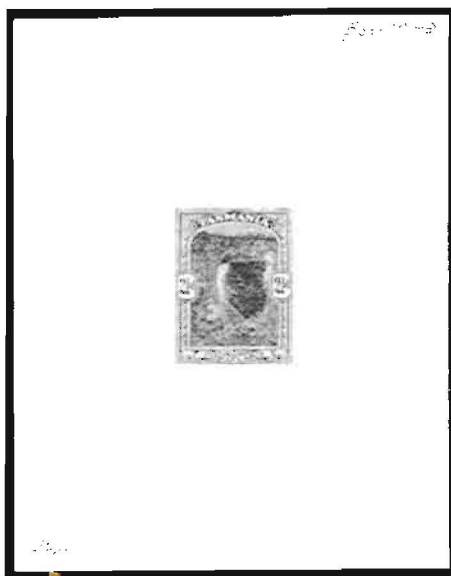
A. No evidence for the existence of the Agent-General's copy has been found.

B. In BLUE. Hobart copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right, and with pencil notation "Columbia or Columba?" below design (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90. 6-7 April 1982, Lot 515; Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 502).

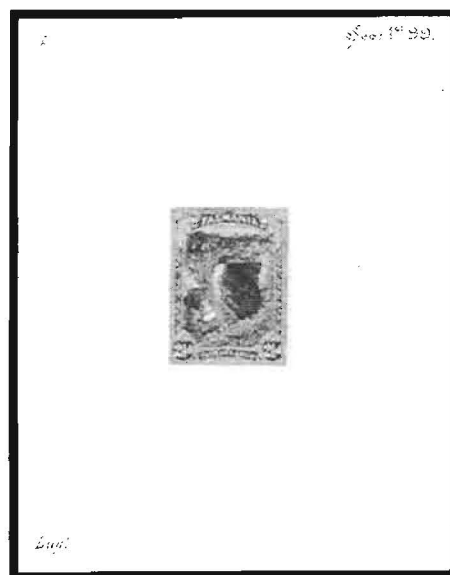
C. In BLUE. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 116).



E7B - the rejected St. Columba Falls design



E8Ca



E8Cb

The two 2¹/₂d Tasman's Arch photographic essays

E8 2¹/₂d Tasman's Arch, 90 x 114 mm

A. No certain evidence for the existence of the Agent-General copies has been found.

Ba. Composite in BLACK, using a similar frame to that for the St Columba Falls design. Hobart copy, endorsed "Sept. 1st 99." at upper right and "B" at upper left (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 516).

Bb. In BLACK, using a new frame. Hobart copy, handstamped "8 SEP 99" at upper right and marked "Approved" (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 517).

Ca. Composite in BLACK, using a similar frame to that for the St Columba Falls design. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "Sept. 1st 99." at upper right, "B" at upper left and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1979, Lot 116; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1217).

Cb. In BLACK, using a new frame. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "Sept. 1st 99." at upper right, "A" at upper left and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 116; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1216).

E9 3d in SEPIA, 114 x 90 mm.

A. No evidence for the existence of the Agent-General's copy has been found.

B. Hobart copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 518; Phillips, London, Sale 27602, 16 March 1989, Lot 696).

C. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 116; Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 505).

E10 4d, 114 x 90 mm.

The word "RUSSELL" lower left is touched up in Chinese white on all essays. It will be noticed that this area is damaged on the 4d line drawing.

A. In SEPIA on bluish. Agent-General's copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Rodney A. Perry, Melbourne, Sale 191, 3 April 1998, Lot 933).

B. In SEPIA on bluish. Hobart copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 519).

C. In BLACK. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 116; Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 506).

E11 5d in BLACK, 114 x 90 mm.

A. No certain evidence for the existence of the Agent-General copies has been found.

B. Hobart copy, undated but endorsed "*The stamp will be in a light blue*" and "*I have taken a few lights out of the clouds*". This is apparently done by hand (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 520).

C. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 116; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1226).

E12 6d in PINK, 114 x 90 mm.

A. Agent-General's copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Rodney A. Perry, Melbourne, Sale 191, 3 April 1998, Lot 933).

B. Hobart copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 521).

C. De La Rue file copy, endorsed "May 24th 99." at upper right and "Dupl." at lower left (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 116; Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 508).

Die Proofs

On the basis of the presence of die proofs of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 1d, 3d, 5d and 6d in his personal engraver's book, the engraver of the Tasmanian Pictorials has been identified as Leonard Phillips (see *The Philatelist*, September 1975, page 359). He may have been responsible for the other values as well. However, a die proof of the 6d in the De La Rue archival sale is stated to have been the work of F.W. Pearce. The endorsed date on this die proof is in a different hand to that in the Phillips engraver's book – all of which makes one wonder whether the allocation of an engraver to a particular stamp on the basis of his possession of a die proof is a reasonable extrapolation.

According to the De La Rue correspondence books, the Agent-General wrote on 2 June 1899 authorising production of the 1d and 2d plates, and on 3 August all the other values except the $\frac{2}{3}$ d were approved. The $\frac{2}{3}$ d Tasman's Arch design was finally approved on 7 September.

All recorded die proofs are struck on paper or thin card, and are usually dated, either in manuscript or by handstamp. Most are in black. The few that are in colour probably served no function as colour trials. There is no evidence that any die proofs were submitted for approval to the Agent-General, and all known examples are thought to be engraver's proofs or De La Rue file copies. A number of these die proofs may be progressive, but without detailed examination of the proofs themselves it is not possible to make any further comments.

DP1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d in BLACK on glazed paper 52 x 45 mm, endorsed "25-9-99" at top, from the Leonard Phillips engraver's book (Robson Lowe, London, Sale 4013, 19 November 1975, Lot 1353; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1211).

DP2 1d
A. INDIGO on wove paper 40 x 46 mm, endorsed "July 99" at top right, from the Leonard Phillips engraver's book (Robson Lowe, London, Sale 4013, 19 November 1975, Lot 1354; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1213).
B. BRIGHT BLUE on wove paper 42 x 46 mm, with blue crayon check mark at top right. The original source of this proof is not known (Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 510).

DP3 2d in INDIGO on wove paper 47 x 45 mm, with blue crayon check mark at top right. The original source of this proof is not known (Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 512; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1215).

DP4 Tasman's Arch
A. In BLACK on wove paper 45 x 47 mm, handstamped "2 NOV 99" at top, from the Purves collection (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 522; Rodney A. Perry, Melbourne, Sale 191, 3 April 1998, Lot 943).



DP1



DP2A



DP2B



DP3



DP4A



DP4B



DP4C



DP5



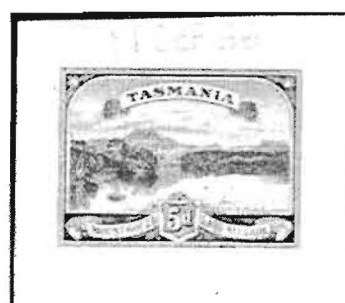
DP6A



DP6B



DP7A



DP7B



DP8A



DP8B

(DP4 B. In BLACK on wove paper 41 x 42 mm, handstamped "3 NOV 99" at left, also stated to be from the Purves collection (Christies Robson Lowe, Melbourne, 10 May 1991, Lot 356; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1218).

C. In SLATE GREEN on wove paper 42 x 34 mm, endorsed "4.11.99" at bottom, from the De La Rue archives (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 119; Rodney A. Perry, Sale 31, 22 September 1976, Lot 419).

DP5 3d in BLACK on glazed paper 50 x 44 mm, endorsed "26.9.99" at top, from the Leonard Phillips engraver's book (Robson Lowe, London, Sale 4013, 19 November 1975, Lot 1355; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1219).

DP6 4d

A. In BLACK on glazed paper 50 x 42 mm, handstamped "11 OCT 99" at top. The original source of this proof is not known (Christies Robson Lowe, Melbourne, 10 May 1991, Lot 357; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1224).

B. In BLACK on wove paper 42 x 34 mm, endorsed "13.10.99" at bottom, from the De La Rue archives (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 119; Rodney A. Perry, Sale 32, 28 October 1976, Lot 454).

DP7 5d

A. In BLACK on glazed paper 51 x 42 mm, endorsed "September 10th 99" at top, from the Leonard Phillips engraver's book (Robson Lowe, London, Sale 4013, 19 November 1975, Lot 1356; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1227).

B. In ULTRAMARINE on wove paper 44 x 38 mm, handstamped "11 SEP 99" at top. The original source of this proof is not known (Christies Robson Lowe, Melbourne, 10 May 1991, Lot 358; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1228).

DP8 6d

A. In BLACK on glazed paper 55 x 48 mm, endorsed "6.9.99" at top, from the De La Rue archives (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976, Lot 118; Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4418-9, 24 July 1979, Lot 508).

B. In BLACK on glazed paper 53 x 42 mm, endorsed "8-9-99" at top, from the Leonard Phillips

engraver's book (Robson Lowe, London, Sale 4013, 19 November 1975, Lot 1357; Stanley Gibbons, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1232).

Plate Proofs

Plate proofs fall into two categories – proofs pulled for the selection of colour on unwatermarked paper, and imperforate proofs in the issued colours on watermarked paper.

(i) Imperforate Colour Trials

Colour trials were submitted to the Agent-General in the form of Appendix sheets, showing a range of colours from which a selection was to be made for each denomination. None of these Appendix sheets now exist, and although the De La Rue file examples were photographed prior to their sale, the author has been unable to see these. At the De La Rue archive sale in 1976 these Appendix sheets were cut up and the colour trials offered in groups which bore no relationship to the original composition of the sheets. The following comments are therefore incomplete, and no comment can be made on the number of trials on each sheet and their colours.

On the basis of surviving examples, it is probable that only one set of Appendix sheets was prepared, submitted to the Agent-General, and then returned to De La Rue, where the sheets remained until their disposal in 1976. The author has found no evidence for the existence of colour trials on the market before that date, with the exception of nine which were in the J.R.W. Purves collection (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lots 523, 524 and 525). These trials are mostly in colours not represented in the De La Rue archival sale, suggesting these were “spares” which were not used on the Appendix sheets. Many of the colour trials exist now mounted on pieces of the Appendix sheets; some others are off piece, either because the backing has been removed, or there might also have existed some “spare” unmounted examples of these trials.

There were three sets of Appendix sheets:

- (a) Two sheets submitted on 25 July 1899 for the approval of the colours for the 1d and 2d. The Agent-General's selection was forwarded on 3 August.
- (b) Two sheets submitted on 5 October 1899 for the selection of colours for the $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 3d, 5d and 6d. The Agent-General replied on 9 October.
- (c) Two sheets submitted on 14 November 1899 for the selection of colours for the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d and 4d. The Agent-General replied on the following day.

Presumably the alternative colours for each denomination were made using the printing plate for that denomination. The chronology of approval of the designs and authorization for the plates to be made matches the order in which the three sets of Appendix sheets were prepared. Many of the trials are marginal examples. The following list is as complete as possible, but these colour trials are not always illustrated in auction catalogues, so it is not possible to be certain in most cases of exactly how many in each colour exist. Further, the colour descriptions vary, and the exact number of colours for each denomination cannot be considered final. In the De La Rue archival sale (Robson Lowe International Ltd., Melbourne, Sale 37, 5 August 1976), the colour trials were Lots 120 to 134. There is no duplication of any stamp, and it is assumed that these lots represent the exact contents of the six Appendix sheets. All the stamps are given colour descriptions, and it

seems sensible to follow those colours here. The numbers in brackets in the following list indicate the quantity known in those cases where there is sufficient evidence.



Examples of imperforate colour trials

PP1 1/2d imperforate colour trials on unwatermarked paper

- A. LAKE
- B. LIGHT BLUE (2)
- C. INDIGO
- D. MAUVE
- E. DEEP CHESTNUT
- F. OLIVE BISTRE
- G. BOTTLE GREEN
- H. DEEP YELLOW GREEN
- I. YELLOW GREEN
- J. GREEN (issued colour)

PP2 1d imperforate colour trials on unwatermarked paper

- A. LAKE (ex Purves and not represented in the De La Rue archive sale)
- B. DEEP BLUE (ex Purves and not represented in the De La Rue archives sale)
- C. DEEP BLUE GREEN (ex Purves and not represented in the De La Rue archive sale)
- D. DEEP VIOLET
- E. DEEP CHESTNUT
- F. SEPIA
- G. BOTTLE GREEN
- H. ORANGE
- I. YELLOW GREEN (ex Purves and not represented in the De La Rue archive sale)
- J. VERMILION
- K. RED (issued colour)

PP3 2d imperforate colour trials on unwatermarked paper

- A. SEPIA
- B. LIGHT BLUE
- C. INDIGO
- D. VERMILION
- E. YELLOW GREEN

F. MAUVE (issued colour)

PP4 2¹/₂d imperforate colour trials on unwatermarked paper

- A. ORANGE (2)
- B. LIGHT BLUE (2)
- C. ORANGE BUFF
- D. GREY GREEN
- E. DEEP CHESTNUT
- F. OLIVE BISTRE
- G. VERMILION
- H. YELLOW GREEN
- I. INDIGO (issued colour)

PP5 3d imperforate colour trials on unwatermarked paper

- A. LAKE (2, both crossed by red manuscript ink lines; one is ex Purves)
- B. LIGHT BLUE (2)
- C. INDIGO
- D. MAUVE
- E. DEEP CHESTNUT
- F. OLIVE BISTRE
- G. BOTTLE GREEN
- H. DEEP YELLOW GREEN (2)
- I. GREY GREEN
- J. SEPIA (issued colour, endorsed "Approved 9th Oct 99")

PP6 4d imperforate colour trials on unwatermarked paper

- A. ORANGE (3, one ex Purves)
- B. LIGHT BLUE (2)
- C. INDIGO
- D. VERMILION
- E. CHESTNUT (2, one ex Purves)
- F. OLIVE BISTRE
- G. YELLOW GREEN (2, one ex Purves)
- H. ORANGE BUFF (issued colour)

PP7 5d imperforate colour trials on unwatermarked paper

- A. LAKE
- B. SEPIA
- C. INDIGO
- D. MAUVE
- E. DEEP CHESTNUT
- F. OLIVE BISTRE
- G. BOTTLE GREEN (2)

- H. GREY GREEN
- I. YELLOW GREEN
- J. LIGHT BLUE (2, issued colour)

- PP8** 6d imperforate colour trials on unwatermarked paper
- A. SEPIA
 - B. LIGHT BLUE (2)
 - C. BLACK (ex Purves)
 - D. MAUVE (2, both crossed by red manuscript lines)
 - E. DEEP CHESTNUT
 - F. OLIVE BISTRE
 - G. BOTTLE GREEN (2)
 - H. GREY GREEN
 - I. LAKE (issued colour, on piece endorsed "Approved 9th Oct 99")

(ii) Imperforate Plate Proofs in Issued Colours

For the issued stamps, special watermarked paper manufactured from a new "TAS" dandy roll was used. The De La Rue archives contained a sheet of 60 of each denomination from the initial printing on this paper, ungummed and imperforate. In the lower right corner of each sheet is a handstamped date, which may correspond to the printing date, together with a signature. This set of sheets was Lot 134 in Robson Lowe International Ltd., Sale 37, 5 August 1976. Subsequently, the sheets were cut up, the inscription pieces being retained as corner blocks of 8 (Rodney Perry, Sale 41, 1 July 1977, Lot 489). These have since been reduced to corner blocks of 4 (Phillips, London, Sale 28505, 31 January 1991, Lot 517).



PP16 - 6d lake imperforate plate proof showing marginal endorsements

Imperforate plate proofs, watermarked TAS

- PP9** 1/2d GREEN (handstamped date 22 DEC 1899)
- PP10** 1d CARMINE RED (handstamped date 7 SEP 1899)
- PP11** 2d MAUVE (handstamped date 22 SEP 1899)
- PP12** 2¹/₂d INDIGO (handstamped date 22 JAN 1900)
- PP13** 3d SEPIA (handstamped date 1 JAN 1900)
- PP14** 4d ORANGE BUFF (handstamped date 2 FEB 1900)
- PP15** 5d LIGHT BLUE (handstamped date 4 DEC 1899)
- PP16** 6d LAKE (handstamped date 14 NOV 1899)

A further imperforate proof sheet of the 1d exists. This was described by J.R.W. Purves in *Philately from Australia*, June 1968, page 30. The sheet was printed on watermarked paper, ungummed, from Plate 4 and was endorsed in pencil "January 24, 1901" and was in a pink-red shade (compared to the typical carmine red of the earlier 1d printings). The date corresponds to an order for 2,000,000 1d stamps forwarded by the Agent-General on 10 January 1901. On 31 January De La Rue wrote advising that the 1d plate had suffered an accident and that a replacement plate would have to be made. The sheet was broken up, and Purves retained a block of 30 for his own collection (see *Philately from Australia*, June 1969, p. 54), although that block does not appear in the auction sale of his Tasmanian Pictorial collection (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982). Items cut from this sheet would generally be indistinguishable from PP10 except by shade.

- PP17** 1d PINK RED (from Plate 4 and showing plate number in the lower left selvedge, and endorsed in pencil "January 24, 1901").

The Purves collection also included a number of perforated sheets and blocks of the issued stamps, representing various printings and with handstamped dates in the selvedge probably representing the date of printing. These had been retained by De La Rue as reference sheets, but came on to the market prior to the 1976 De La Rue archival sale. Stamps from these sheets are indistinguishable from the issued stamps.

THE 1902-1912 MELBOURNE PRINTINGS

On 17 September 1901 the Agent-General for Tasmania wrote to De La Rue advising that it had been decided that all future printings of Tasmanian stamps would be made in Melbourne. All the De La Rue dies and plates were packed up and shipped to Melbourne in July 1902.

Subsequent printings of the Tasmanian Pictorials were made at the Victorian Government Printing Office (and after July 1909 at the Commonwealth Stamp Printing Office) in Melbourne. These printings were made from either lithographed or letterpress plates, and for the manufacture of these plates it was necessary to provide new dies in the De La Rue Pictorial designs. The techniques used in the manufacture of the dies and plates were discussed in detail by J.R.W. Purves in an article "The technique of the Tasmanian Pictorials printed in Melbourne 1901-1912" published in *The London Philatelist* in 1931 and subsequently reprinted in monograph form.

Die Proofs

The new Pictorial dies were zinc line blocks derived by a combination of photographic and etching processes. A proof struck from a De La Rue die was photographed onto sensitized zinc, which was then etched in an acid bath to create a relief die. The finer lines of the die are protected in the acid bath by a coating of asphaltum, since these lines cannot be satisfactorily created through etching, but are added by hand-engraving at a later stage.

Purves actually discussed the process with Mr J. Oliver, the head of the Engraving Department, who was the workman responsible for the production of these dies. From Mr Oliver, Purves acquired a number of proofs from these zinc dies which would appear to be the only ones recorded. Proofs of the 1/2d, 2d, 3d and 6d exist, some showing progressive stages of the etching process.



DP9A



DP9B

DP9 1/2d in BLACK

A. Cut down to stamp size on glazed paper and mounted on piece. Progressive undamaged state (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 539).

B. On glazed paper, 100 x 73 mm. Showing a deeper etch and with a weakness to the top frame at right which is characteristic of the issued stamps (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 540).



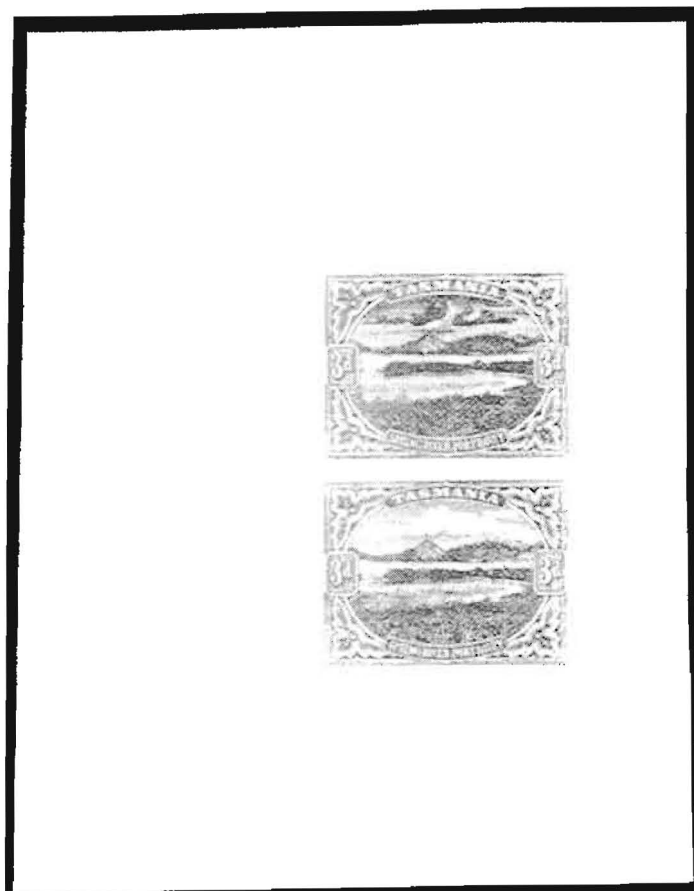
DP10

DP 10 2d in BLACK on PALE GREEN glazed paper, cut down to stamp size and mounted on piece. From the final state (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 541).

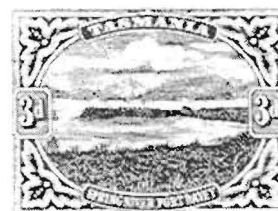
DP 11 3d in BLACK

A. Two impressions on glazed paper, 88 x 114 mm. The upper impression shows the state of the die as removed from the acid bath, with black patches, especially over clouds, caused by the presence of asphaltum. The lower impression shows the removal of the asphaltum (Robson Lowe, London, Sales 4688-90, 6-7 April 1982, Lot 542; Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994, Lot 1222).

B. On glazed paper, ? size, showing additional engraving work over most of the design, and especially in the sky. This proof does not appear in the original Purves auction; it may have been included in the stamp study; it is illustrated with *The London Philatelist* article.



DP11A



DP11B

DP12 6d in BLACK

A. On glazed paper, 90 x 114 mm. Two virtually identical proofs are recorded, showing the state after etching and prior to the removal of the asphaltum. Not offered in the original Purves auction, but illustrated with *The London Philatelist* article. One proof was subsequently offered as Lot 1234 at Stanley Gibbons Australia, Melbourne, 13 April 1994.

B. On glazed paper, ? size. After cleaning up of the die, but apparently not the final state since the issued stamps show some differences. Not offered in the original Purves auction, but illustrated with *The London Philatelist* article.



DP12A



DP12B

Plate Proofs

No plate proofs from the Melbourne printings have been definitely identified as such. An imperforate sheet of the 1d electrotpe, on paper watermarked Crown over A inverted, first reported in 1908 (see *Australian Philatelist*, May 1908, pp. 110-111) has generally been reckoned as an error put into circulation.

