

Centenary of Telegraph in New Zealand

New Zealand Post, n.d.

This stamp issue celebrated the centenary of the introduction of the first telegraph service in New Zealand.

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Issue information

Edward Dobson (born 1816) was a civil engineer who was one of the original purchasers of Canterbury Association land. He emigrated to New Zealand in 1850. Described as a man of 'strenuous action', he was Provincial Engineer between 1854 and 1868, during which time he attempted to confine the Waimakariri river within its banks to stop flooding in Christchurch; supervised the draining of 10,000 acres of swamp land around Rangiora; designed and supervised the construction of the breakwater in Lyttelton Harbour and supervised the establishment of the railway system throughout Canterbury.

Dobson planned and introduced New Zealand's first telegraph circuit which was operated for the first time on the 1st of July 1862. The telegraph line ran over the Port Hills which separate the port of Lyttelton from Christchurch and was operated from the Police station in Lyttelton to Christchurch Police Station as is shown on the 3d stamp. This stamp was designed by A G Mitchell and was issued by the Post Office one month early on the 1st of June 1962.

The 8d stamp was designed by A.G. Mitchell's father L.C. Mitchell. It features a 'modern' 1960s teleprinter - most likely a Siemens Halske Teleprinter Model 100 which were manufactured in Germany and sold internationally in the early 1960s. These machines were well built and incorporated many advances in post-war technology. The model 100 included the new PMG Telex Service for businesses which were able to connect directly to each other via teleprinter both nationally and internationally.

Interestingly, during the Second World War Siemens and Halske produced the T52 German teleprinter cipher machine codenamed Sturgeon by British cryptanalysts. The T52 was a permanently connected machine used by the Luftwaffe and German Naval units. It was by far the most complex cipher of the three used by German forces and was least often broken by the British at Bletchley Park - usually because the same messages were often sent using easier to attack or already broken ciphers.

Stamp Bulletin


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1 / 4

Issue

This stamp issue first appeared in New Zealand Post Stamp Bulletin No. 25 on 9 May 1962.

Acknowledgments: Bulletin scanned and provided by John Biddlecombe of the New Zealand Society of Great Britain. Their web site offers further information useful to those interested in the stamps and postal history of New Zealand. Link: <http://www.nzsgb.org.uk/>

Product Listing for Centenary of Telegraph in New Zealand

Click on image to enlarge.

Image	Title	Description	Price
	Single Stamp	Single 3d 'Telegraph Centenary' gummed stamp. This stamp depicts a hand operating an early morse key, against a background of the Port Hills, Lyttelton. A line of poles carries a telegraph wire from the left foreground of the stamp over the hills in the centre.	3d
	Single Stamp	Single 8d 'Telegraph Centenary' gummed stamp. This stamp depicts a 1960s teleprinter and white teleprinter tape.	8d

Technical information

Date of issue:	1 June 1962
Designers:	A G Mitchell, Wellington and L C Mitchell, Wellington
Printers:	Harrison and Sons, England
Stamp size:	41mm x 25mm
Sheet size:	120 stamps per sheet
Process:	Photogravure
Perforation gauge:	14.75 x 14
Paper type:	Guard Bridge, chalk surfaced, multiple NZ and star watermark