

AUSTRALIAN H.M. CUSTOMS CLEARANCE SEALS

The 1899-1930 Customs Seals of the Australian States and it's Commonwealth.

Dave Elsmore RSRM



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PREFACE

This is the first philatelic study of the Australian States and Australian Commonwealth Customs Clearance Seals for some 120 years, neglected by just about every philatelic student till now!

History

The Department of Trade and Customs was formed 1 January 1901 as one of the first seven Commonwealth Departments of State. On 4 July 1901, The Honourable Charles Kingston announced that Dr. Harry Wollaston would be appointed the first Comptroller-General of Commonwealth Customs. The Customs Act 1901 received Royal Assent on 4 October 1901 as the sixth Act of Federation, giving Customs legal powers to enforce tariffs, duties and excise. Prior to this, each Australian State was responsible for its own Custom Duties, via each of the States Customs Houses.

Referred to as Customs House and Brandy Exide Seals. New South Wales was the first Australian State to order 'H. M. Customs Clearance Seals' on 14 March 1899 by the Collector of Customs. [job 99/D1208]. Used to officially seal Customs related instruments as a security device to prevent fraud.

The Power House Museum in Sydney has imperf proof colour trials in purple, mauve, light and dark brown and two shades of red. Also a Sydney and a Newcastle perforated and gummed, manuscript "Cancelled" examples.

After 120 years, it is time to finally start this work.

Dave Elsmore

January 2021

Ports of Entry

It is unclear as to whether all ports issued seals or not as records have not survived. Seals recorded here are from the author's database.

New South Wales:

Coffs Harbour, Eden, Lord Howe, Newcastle, Norfolk Island, Port Kembla/Wollongong Sydney.

Northern Territory:

Darwin, Gove.

Queensland:

Brisbane , Bundaberg, Cairns, Gladstone, Mackay, Southport (Gold Coast), Thursday Island, Townsville. Weipa.

South Australia:

Port Adelaide, Port Lincoln.

Tasmania:

Burnie, Devonport, Hobart, Launceston

Victoria:

Geelong, Melbourne, Portland, Westernport.

Western Australia:

Albany, Broome, Bunbury, Carnarvon, Christmas Island, Dampier, Esperance, Fremantle, Geraldton, Port Hedland.

New South Wales Imperf Colour Trial Proofs



Printed by the New South Wales Government Printer from a background woodcut block and an embossing brass die [97] which was produced locally.



Green backing frame 33mm x 61mm

Design Embossed on thin card - Imperf

New South Wales Imperf Colour Trial Proofs



Green backing frame 33mm x 61mm
Design Embossed on thin card - Imperf

New South Wales Imperf Colour Trial Proof of Accepted Colour for the Port of Sydney



Green backing frame 33mm x 61mm
Design Embossed on thin card - Imperf

Reverse / Horizontal Flip

1899 First Series First Issued 4 April 1899

35mm x 4mm Violet SPECIMEN

Issued Seals for the Port of Sydney



Green backing frame 33mm x 61mm

Specimen overprint prepared for inclusion into parliamentary presentation packs

Specimen copies recorded with or without clipped corner done as a further security measure on thin open wove paper

Perforation 12



Issued Design Embossed - Perforation 12

1899 First Series Second Issue

Imperf Proof of Accepted Colour for the Port of Newcastle and Issued Seal



Design Embossed on thin card - Imperf



Green backing frame 33mm x 61mm

Issued Design Embossed - Perforation 12

1901 Second Series First Issue

1901 Second Series Second Issue
Generic Key Plate

New South Wales - Newcastle



Diameter 37mm

NEWCASTLE

PORT OF NEWCASTLE

Lithographed - Perforation 12

1901 Second Series Third Issue

New South Wales - Sydney

Generic Key Plate



PORT OF SYDNEY

Lithographed - Perforation 12

Diameter 37mm

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1901 Second Series Fourth and Fifth Issue
Generic Key Plate

Queensland - Brisbane and Thursday Island



Diameter 37mm

PORT OF BRISBANE

PORT OF THURSDAY ISLAND

Lithographed - Perforation 12

1901 Third Series First Issue

Victoria



Used Port of Melbourne

Two paper colours recorded for Victoria

Lithographed - Imperforate

1901 Third Series Second Issue

1901 Fourth Series First Issue

Western and South Australia



Used Port of Bunbury
'State of' Western Australia



Used Port Darwin

Lithographed - Imperforate

c1906 Fifth Series First Issue
Commonwealth

New South Wales - Norfolk Island



CLEARANCE SEAL.

Used Seals have not
been sighted

Diameter 40mm - Box 38mm x 9mm
Lithographed - Gummed - Imperforate

1911 Sixth Series First Issue
Commonwealth



One Brandy Bottle Seal recorded

Diameter of red writing 56mm

Two Colour Lithographed - Imperforate

1923 Seventh Series First and Second Issue
Commonwealth - Generic Frame



Two different
Coats of
Arms
Recorded

Roulette 6½

Full Gum

<-

->

Perforation 12

Design 28mm x 52mm

Lithographed - Roulette and Perforated



Newcastle handstamp

1930 Eighth Series First Issue

New South Wales



Design 50mm x 32mm

Lithographed - Perforated

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Brass Handstamp
30mm x 23mm