

Cinderella Corner

Batman And The Melbourne Centenary

Welcome to the August edition of *Cinderella Corner*. August has arrived, and as cooler days continue to descend upon Melbourne, the city celebrates 85 years since its centenary of white settlement festivities, having commenced in 1934 and extending into 1935. This period of time was of particular philatelic importance as many different cinderellas were issued to commemorate this occurrence, not only in Melbourne, but Australia-wide. This article considers one branch of these labels, namely those that capture the John Batman and Melbourne city motif (as described further on); other groups of Melbourne centenary cinderellas will be explored in a future *Cinderella Corner* piece. I welcome, as usual, feedback about this article and other examples of the 'Batman centenary' labels that may exist.

Original Design

The designs of the Batman centenary cinderellas explored in this article drew upon the 1934 Australian stamp issued to commemorate the centenary of Victoria. This stamp, illustrated in Figure 1, was issued in three values: 2d, 3d (as pictured), and 1/-. Each stamp illustrates an engraving of an Indigenous man, with spear in hand, overlooking the Yarra River towards the city of Melbourne, and features the text: *1834 1934 / CENTENARY OF VICTORIA AUSTRALIA*

Centenary Of Melbourne: Batman Cinderellas



The design of the cinderella illustrated in Figure 4 is identical to the one in Figure 2 except for the following text included in the bottom margin: *H. J. LANGDON & CO. PTY. LTD. / ESTABLISHED 82 YEARS*

This label measures 43mm x 37mm and is perforated 11

Figure 1 (top right) and Figure 2

Figures 2 to 11 highlight some of the known Australian cinderellas with designs based on the 1934 centenary of Victoria stamp. The first, illustrated in Figure 2, is shown in a block of five. Two immediate visual differences in Figure 2 (when compared to Figure 1) include:

- A more elaborate city design
- Different text: *MELBOURNE CENTENARY 1934 – 1935 / 1834 BATMAN VISUALISES A CITY*
- The indigenous man is replaced by the towering and ghostly presence of John Batman

Each of the labels measures 43mm x 34mm, is perforated 11 and is coloured light blue and white.

John Batman (1801 – 1839), as illustrated in Figure 2, was an early Australian entrepreneur and explorer. Born in New South Wales and dying in Melbourne, he is credited as having founded the current site of central Melbourne, having negotiated with local Aboriginal peoples of the area, in 1835, to acquire the greater Port Phillip Bay area. These negotiations are reported to have been controversial, with some records suggesting that his dealing with the Indigenous peoples were unsavoury. This label is rarely seen in multiples, so blocks of any size are scarce.

Figure 3 illustrates an identical label to the one shown in Figure 2 except for its light brown and white colour. It appears to be scarcer than the blue variety. It is possible that other colours for these generic Batman centenary cinderellas exist.

Vito Milana



Top row Figures 3 & 4
Middle row Figures 5 & 6
Bottom row Figures 7 & 8

on all sides. It is the first of several of the Batman centenary labels with added advertising text. Henry Joseph Langdon, from Devon, England, was born in 1822 and died in Melbourne in 1898. Henry founded the merchant and importer company H. J. Langdon & Co. in 1852, no long after migrating to Australia. At the time of the label's production in 1934, Henry's son, Charles Tetley Langdon, was managing

director of the firm, and they specialised as spirit merchants at this time. Figure 5 illustrates a second example of this label, with slightly darker blue print, and with a clear 12 June 1934 Melbourne cancel strike on it.

A second variety of the H. J. Langdon & Co. advertising Batman label is illustrated in Figure 6. This cinderella is coloured brown and white and includes the text: *H. J. LANGDON PTY. LTD. / ESTABLISHED 82 YEARS*

This label measures 43mm x 34mm and is perforated 11 on all sides. The omission of the 'Co.' is fascinating, as the firm was still registered as H. J. Langdon & Co. at the time of Charles Tetley's death in 1938, approximately four years after the cinderella's release. The size of the text is also significantly larger than the advertising text presented in Figures 4 and 5.

A second advertising slogan on a Batman centenary label is illustrated in Figure 7. This cinderella features the text: *TROEDEL & COOPER PTY. LTD. / ESTABLISHED 70 YEARS*

This label measures 42mm x 33mm and is perforated 11 on all sides. German-born Johannes Theodor Charles Troedel was born in 1836 and died in Melbourne in 1906. A few years after arriving

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Top to bottom Figures 9, 10 & 11

in Australia, Johannes opened a small lithographic shop in Collins Street, Melbourne, in 1863. Nearly three decades later, in 1891, he partnered in Sydney with Edward Cooper and this developed into the firm's name *Troedel & Cooper Pty. Ltd.* in 1910, a few years after Troedel's death. In 1968, the company donated its archive, which included 1,000s of lithographs, to the Library Council of Victoria.

A second example of this label is illustrated in Figure 8. It is identical to the one shown in Figure 7, except it is distinctly a lighter blue colour. A third example of this label is then illustrated in Figure 9 and is coloured light brown and white.

A third advertising slogan on a Batman centenary label is illustrated in Figure 10. This cinderella features the text: *LYELL-OWEN PTY. LTD. / PROCESS ENGRAVERS*

This label measures 42mm x 32mm and is perforated 11 on all sides. The firm Lyell-Owen Pty. Ltd. were West Melbourne-based process engravers. Part of firm's activities included the production of photograph negatives.

The final advertising slogan on a Batman centenary label is illustrated in Figure 11. This cinderella features the text: *COMMERCIAL PUBLICATIONS PTY. LTD. MELBOURNE*

This label measures 43mm x 33mm and is perforated 11 on all sides. Commercial Publications Pty. Ltd. was a Melbourne-based company affiliated with the publication of several books and magazines, including some associated with Victoria's centenary. The firm was deregistered in 1942. The Commercial Publications Pty. Ltd. Batman centenary label, along with the Lyell-Owen Pty. Ltd. one, are coloured deep purple and white, unlike the blue/white and brown/white examples illustrated in Figures 2 to 9. It is therefore likely that other examples of Batman centenary labels in purple/white, or other colours, exist.

Conclusion

There are likely to exist other 1934 Batman centenary cinderella labels in addition to those explored in this *Cinderella Corner* edition. They collectively form part of a wider group of more than 70 different labels celebrating the 1934/1935 Melbourne and Victoria centenary with advertising from various organisations, companies and products. Further information about the Batman centenary labels is required to broaden the breadth of understanding about them. It is also anticipated that a future *Cinderella Corner* will offer a more in-depth exploration of these advertising labels and list the different examples that have been discovered. I welcome any readers who have scans to share or can offer some further information about the scope of them.