

# WATERMARKS

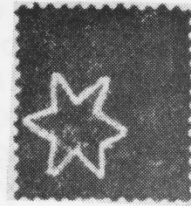
The illustration below shows some of the main types of watermarks used in New Zealand stamp papers.



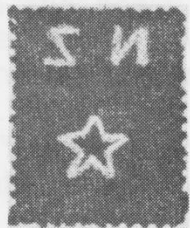
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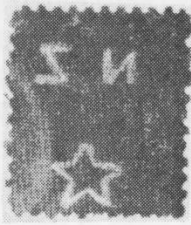
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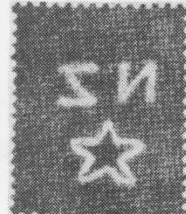
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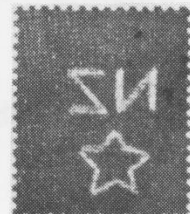
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**WHAT IS A WATERMARK?** This term is one of those which when examined closely is found to mean something quite different. The "watermark" in paper really has nothing to do with water at all.

Originally, the watermark was called a "wire mark" or "paper mark". It is a colourless mark or pattern imposed on paper while it is still in a damp form during manufacture. All sorts of patterns appear as watermarks and as you have already seen in New Zealand stamps watermarks take the form of letters, stars of various types and lines.

The watermark cannot be removed without destroying the paper itself because it represents an area of thinning in the paper which when held up to the light allows more light through in a certain pattern. In the John Dickinson process of paper manufacture "bits" are fastened to the wire cloth covering of the cylinder which collects the fibres, which in turn will eventually form the paper manufactured. In both hand-made and cylinder machine-made paper the fibres gather in a thinner film where the watermark "bits" are present and the paper from that point on carries a watermark. In the other method of paper-making known as the Fourdrinier method, a "dandy roll" carrying the same raised "bits" on its surface rotates against the paper as it passes on the web before it is fully dried and the "dandy roll" squeezes the paper embossing a watermark impression at right angles to the direction of the mesh.

All papers, both hand-made and machine-made, have a "good" side and a "wire" side. The wire side is that adjacent to the wire mesh during paper making and the good side is the upper face.

In hand-made papers the side away from the watermark is the good side on which printing takes place. In machine-made papers the watermark is **impressed on the good side** by the dandy roll.

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