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# Irish Philately

THE JOURNAL OF THE IRISH PHILATELIC CIRCLE



## DANNY BLANCHFLOWER - FOOTBALL LEGEND

pages 102/108 this issue -

also in this issue, more on Ballymaclinton postcards, Mileage Marks, Donegall Place RH and the First Olympic Champion.

### **NEWS AND VIEWS - Editor**

Once again it is Christmas and another volume of *IRISH PHILATELY* is completed. My thanks to all those who send articles, both lengthy and brief - the so-called 'space-fillers', and letters. Unfortunately, as all those who read *IRISH PHILATELY* will readily realise, the authors are few in number and appear on a regular basis in the quarterly issue. This means an over-reliance on a few; there remains a continual flow of material from these enthusiastic philatelists but the message remains that there are still many members with knowledge which could and should be put to print.

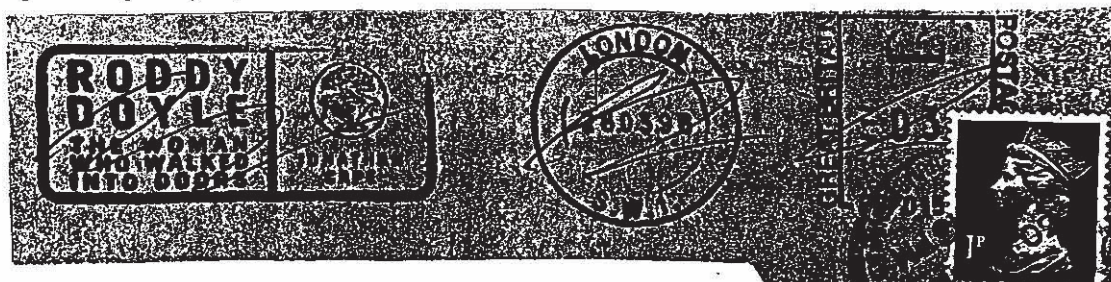
This would ensure an even greater flow of material for the *JOURNAL* and would relieve the pressure on those presently forwarding material. I appreciate the fact that many members are of course in the situation where time and other factors preclude the possibility of regular contributions, but with a holiday season approaching perhaps some members will make the effort and I eagerly look forward to a bumper post in January!

The message basically is one of more members putting pen to paper!

The final issue of the year made its appearance in early November - this being the annual Christmas offering. On the subject of *An Post* one wonders at how some decisions are reached. There are those irritating situations - arriving in Cork earlier in the year (taking in the 'Road Show') and no-one in the [Cork] head-office knowing of same, never mind any details. Then being told that the Philatelic Bureau would be open in any case even if the 'Road Show' was being held! The Philatelic Bureau in Dublin being closed on Saturdays is another odd situation - surely Saturdays would prove the most financially rewarding day to be open?

The information in the new issue bulletins has resulted in my writing to the Philatelic Bureau earlier this year. This was in connection to the Olympic Games issue; the text neglected to mention such athletic 'giants' as Martin Sheridan, or that there were Ireland teams competing prior to the 1924 Games or that there was a celebration in 1906. More unusually was the portraying of 'living' people - I had thought that this was not *An Post* policy; the discus thrower and woman athlete of the Olympic issue portrayed none other than Nicky Sweeney and Sonia O'Sullivan - even if a little stylised.

The October CINEMA issue does show 'living' personnel in the form of the actors depicted. John B. Keane's epic *THE FIELD* gets a second airing on an Irish stamp - the THEATRE issue some years back also included same. For the Irish sporting collector this particular stamp is of interest as the central character, the 'Bull' McCabe was played by Richard Harris who is featured in the middle of the trio depicted. Harris was a noted rugby player back in the 1950's in his native Limerick; apparently having the potential to play at International level before other commitments appeared. On the subject of the COMMITMENTS shown on another of the CINEMA issue a meter mark of interest was on a letter recently received. The meter mark advertises a book by Roddy Doyle, author of the COMMITMENTS.



## RANDOM JOTTINGS

### Senex

During the **Civil War in Spain - 1936/1939** - there was great difficulty getting mail to the Nationalist side. The mail is a problem in all wars and civil wars and the postal authorities have to make the best of what can be done, either find an alternative way for delivering or return to sender. In the Civil War in Spain both ways were used although I have not seen, or the truth be told, noticed any Irish covers. That these items exist in England, I understand from the *British Philatelic Bulletin* and they show the following examples -

1. Returned mail not delivered with boxed cachet  
RETURNED FROM ABROAD FOR NON DELIVERY / NOT STATED.  
The sender supposedly understanding why.
2. Sent the mail via Italy, cover marked VIA GENOA. Mussolini had arranged a regular seaplane service to the Balearics and Cadiz.
3. Sent to the Embassy in Marseilles, forwarded by boat to the South of Spain.

There was also a military censorship by the Nationalists and censor labels are known. The above information was new to me and I pass it on.

[Editor - Some years ago I was given three covers - with contents - sent from Spain in 1936. These had been in the possession of a gentleman who had just died. He himself had written all three and sent them back to his family in Cork. Being a volunteer with the *INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE* these, of course, would not have received any of the above handstamps. Two did bear censor and other markings and emanated directly from Spain. The third appeared to have been forwarded to France; there it was handstamped before passage through England. Unfortunately, I passed these on to another collector who had a greater interest in this material. One wonders at the scarcity of such material, originating from the Civil War in Spain.

Incidentally, the deceased gentleman, after serving with the 'Republican' forces in Spain duly made his way to Finland to fight for that country against the USSR in the early years of World War Two! He also sent mail back to Cork from that theatre of war but could not locate any such material in more recent years.]

An **interesting envelope** in my collection is one dated July 7th, 1868. It was posted from Gosport to a Captain Swale, RMLI, with the address being

HMS LIFFEY,  
off FASTNET LIGHTHOUSE,  
COAST OF IRELAND

The envelope has a Gosport back stamp and a faint obliterator on a 1d red, plate 95. The envelope is marked 'VIA QUEENSTOWN' and has a CDS

Queenstown back-stamp of 'JA 9 68 D'. Why was an HMS LIFFEY permanently positioned, or long enough to get mail in that position? Fastnet is of course 4 miles off Cape Clear in County Cork.

Apropos lighthouses, there is an excellent set of photographs on 38 postcards of Irish lighthouses by John Eagle Photography, Beara - very good views and scenically interesting.

At **STAMPEX** in London this year, there was a stand with a number of PCs. The public were invited to try using the floppy discs provided by the Company on the machines, teach disc giving a programme of the countries stamp issues. I watched other visitors trying their arm with the programmes and it looked very pretty and efficient but it only appeared to provide another way of ticking off items in a catalogue or to print 'want lists' when required.

I would have had a go but there were no discs of Ireland and compatible with IBM. Apart from the drawback it would not appear to be difficult to design your own programme based on a catalogue, this you would have to do anyway to add the numerous new issues. As a GB used in Ireland collector I would have to produce my own lists anyway - and not being a researcher I would not want to get too involved in long and involved studies.

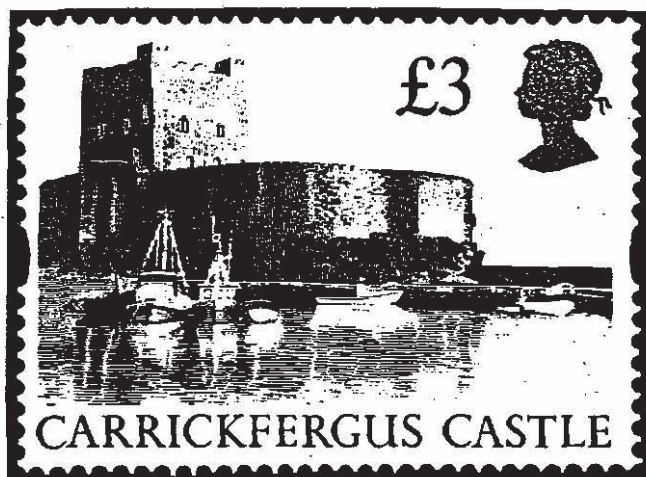
My own use of the machine is to produce prettier and more readable pages for displaying my collection. I could not be convinced to expand further my use of programmes if other collectors could show me how or why.

### **£3 CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE STAMP**

#### **A Kane**

A new £3 stamp showing the Carrickfergus Castle 1994 design was issued on August 22nd, 1995. It was printed in purple ink.

A close examination of the PHQ card shows it to be from the 1992 design.



Technical details are as follows -

printer; Harrison & Sons Ltd  
size; 41X30mm  
perforation; 15X14  
paper; OBA free

process; Intaglio (Recess)  
sheets; 100 - 4 panes of 25  
phosphor; none  
gum; PVA DEXTRIN

**DONEGAL (sic) PLACE R.H. -  
THE FIRST SUB POST OFFICE IN BELFAST  
AW Graham**

Trying to find out anything about early receiving houses is a difficult enough task - in the case of DONEGALL (as it is now spelt) PLACE it has proved almost impossible since any references are so obscure and the marks are so scarce.

It was so short-lived that it did not feature in the local business directories. *MARTIN'S DIRECTORY*, of March 1840, was published before it opened and that of August 1842 lists CHICHESTER St. R.H. which replaced it.

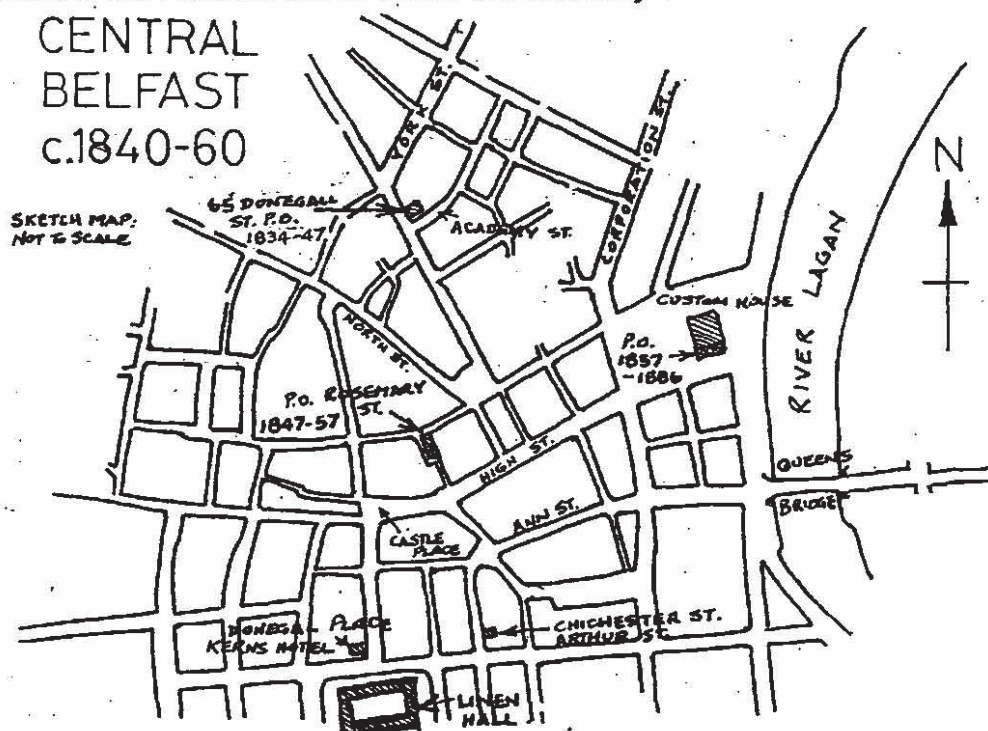
*HENDERSON'S BUSINESS DIRECTORY* of August 1843 gives more detail on CHICHESTER St. R.H. and one might well suppose that this was the first post office in central Belfast.

It should be noted that these locations made a lot of sense at the time as the main post office in Belfast was sited at 65 Donegall Street from 1823 until 1847. This was a brisk 5/10 minute walk across the city centre. The Linen Hall was also a hive of activity - it was replaced by the present grandiose City Hall, completed in 1906.

I had suspected that there had been a receiving house nearby before the move to Chichester Street R.H. and the Post Office Archive minutes make some tantalising references but do not give away too many details.

Vol 11 page 496 dated May 20th, 1841 notes -

*'It appears to me that at present one receiving house will be sufficient at Belfast, and I submit that this should be as near as possible to the Linen Hall, marked A in the accompanying map. [the map, is of course, missing!]. The salary to be £5 per annum, and one allowance to the postmaster for the service of bringing the bag to the office ..... If your Lordships approve, the nomination of the receiver will be left to the Treasury'.*



Vol 12 page 354 dated November 30th, 1841 notes that the salary for the receiver at Donegall Place to be increased from £5 to £18 per annum.

Curiously the only official Post Office listing with Donegall Place is in the 1844 Almanac and this is a mistake as it is well out-of-date at that stage, having been replaced by Chichester Street R.H. from which the first reported cover that is noted is dated December 1842.

In fact if one were to rely on the oblique hints one might well begin to doubt if Donegall Place R.H. ever existed. As the sketch map shows the locations were within yards.

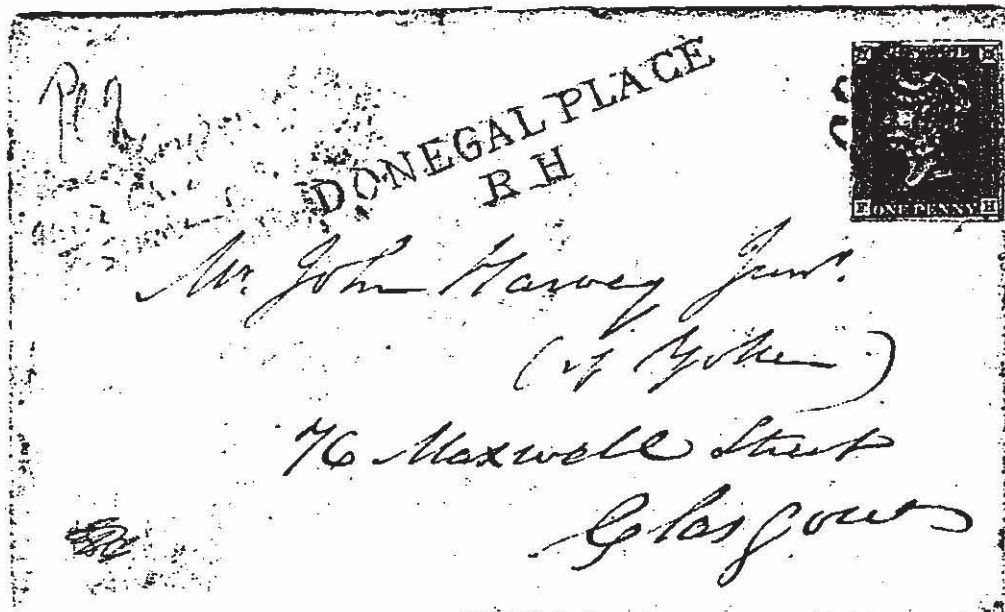
However, in 1993 two covers were reported with the following marks -

DONEGALL PLACE

R.H.

DONEGALL PLACE

R H



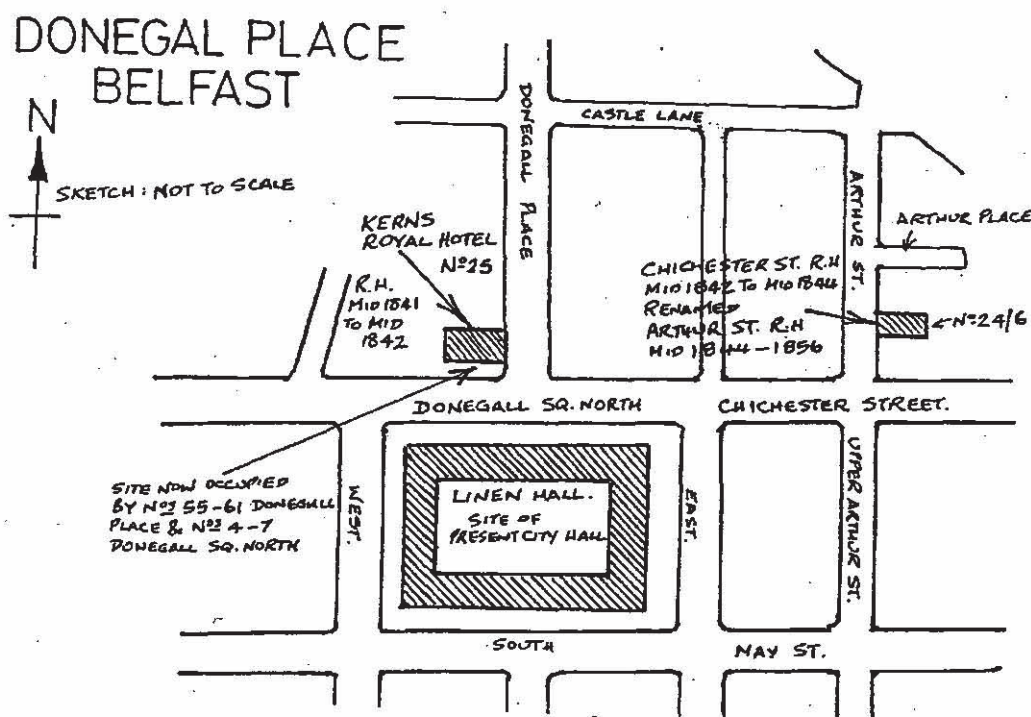
DONEGALL PLACE / RH - September 22nd, 1841

The style is capital letters with serifs in black ink and the covers are dated September and November 1841. So DONEGALL PLACE R.H. did exist - but where?

Some very obscure reports in local newspapers fill in the final piece of the jigsaw puzzle. There are brief reports in the *NORTHERN WHIG* and *BELFAST NEWSLETTER* and from the *BELFAST COMMERCIAL CHRONICLE* of August 14th, 1841 there is the following -

*'We understand a receiving house at the Royal Hotel, Donegall Place has been established. Letters are sent from it to the general office in Donegall Street four times daily to meet the various despatches of the branch mails. The site is very convenient ....'*

The hotel referred to was a large house built around 1785 and also the town residence of the Second Marquess of Donegall until about 1820. Then a former butler of the Donegall family took the premises over to become the most fashionable hostelry in Belfast. Photographs exist as the hotel existed until the turn of this century when it was demolished alongside the Old Linen Hall.



So Donegall Place R.H. was open from June-July 1841 until mid 1842 when it was replaced by Chichester St R.H. - later itself renamed Arthur St R.H. in mid 1844. So the first sub Post Office in Belfast City centre also qualifies for inclusion in the *GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS* as the shortest lived!

So if anyone has covers with the DONEGALL PLACE R.H. despatch mark - you now know how rare these are. It might well be worth having another look at any entires to check the correspondence as the very select clientele of the Royal Hotel reads like a Who's Who of Victorian VIPs. The Hotel was also referred to as Kerns or Kearns Hotel after the proprietor.

None of the very knowledgeable local historians I contacted were aware that there had been a Post Office in the hotel and I would be grateful to hear from anyone with dated marks or other information about precisely when it opened and why/when it was replaced. This is part of a study of Belfast postmarks that I and Tim Stephens have been working on for some time.



Photograph of Kern's Hotel / Royal Hotel about 1880 - Donegall Place / R.H.  
(reproduced by permission of the Trustess of the Ulster Museum)



Daniel O'Connell outside 'Kern's' Hotel in January, 1841. He was leaving under police protection to catch the mail packet from Donaghadee.  
(reproduced by permission of the Trustess of the Ulster Museum)

My thanks to JL Frazer for providing the illustration of the entire with DONEGALL PLACE / RH handstamp.

## BALLYMACLINTON POSTCARDS

### Des Quaide

It was with interest and regret that I read the article on BALLYMACLINTON (*IRISH PHILATELY*, Volume 96 Issue 2) by George Ithell. I regret that, although a member of the *IRISH PHILATELIC CIRCLE* for many years, I never had any correspondence with George regarding the postcards and similar of Ballymaclinton.

With interest because a number of years ago, I was able to acquire 36 cards - 35 colleens and one man (all portraits) all autographed by each of the 'colleens'. 17 of these are dated are Ballymaclinton with the months being August, September and October, all 1908. The man, NW Partridge, has signed his postcard, *BALLYMACLINTON, 1908*.

The following are four of the postcards;



Photo (postcard) left and 'ordinary';  
the photo postcard is signed by  
Maire McCullough, in Irish, with  
added (by her)  
'Ballymaclinton / September 1908'.



'Real' photographic postcard; depicting, and autographed by Grace Hardy.

*Grace Hardy*

'Printed' postcard depicting, what appears to be, Grace Hardy.



## FOOTBALL LEGENDS 2

CT Murphy

In the June issue of *IRISH PHILATELY* mention was made of the FOOTBALL LEGENDS issue, released last May by Royal Mail. This in particular dealt with the Danny Blanchflower 60p value and the George Best label within the pane of 25p definitives from the accompanying prestige booklet.

There was of course much additional material for this particular issue - in the form of special postcards, covers and first day of issue handstamps. I intend to write in a forthcoming issue of *IRISH PHILATELY* on this particular subject - that is football and Ireland, the philatelic connection. However that is in the future! To ensure that collectors of this theme, indeed of the Ireland theme, are aware of the many offerings accompanying the FOOTBALL LEGENDS issue, I thought I would write on the subject before many of these related philatelic items come 'off sale' with consequent rise in purchase price.

The FOOTBALL LEGENDS issue did in fact encompass no less than four 'legends' that had links with Ireland in one form or another - three so honoured were born in Ireland, a fourth celebrated played part of his professional career in Ireland.

The latter was the legendary Dixie Dean, known better for his career with Everton Football Club. Dean is depicted on the 19p value with accompanying Royal Mail PHQ card, number 179 (a) 5.96.

Towards the end of a glittering career, and just prior to World War II, Dixie crossed the Irish Sea and played for Sligo Rovers. With his new club he won an FAI Cup medal!

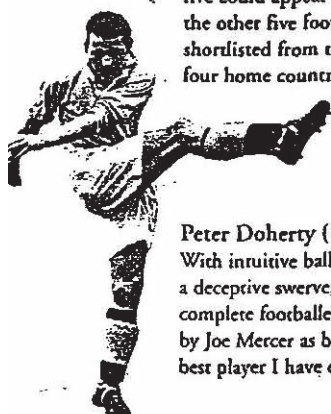


The 1958 World Cup Finals was of course a mile stone in the history of football in Ireland. It was in Sweden that an Ireland team made its debut at this stage of the competition. Captained by Danny Blanchflower and with

Peter Doherty as manager, the Northern Ireland combination made it through to the quarter-finals, being eliminated by France.



five could appear on the stamps. Here are the other five footballing legends that were shortlisted from the nominations of the four home country Football Associations.

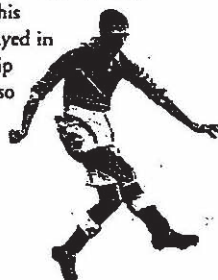


**Peter Doherty (1913-1990)**  
With intuitive ball control, great stamina and a deceptive swerve, Doherty was the complete footballer. He was once described by Joe Mercer as being, 'The best player I have ever seen'.

exceptionally baggy shorts as for his skills. Alex was the playmaker in Herbert Chapman's dominant Arsenal side of the 1930s.



**Joe Mercer (1914-1990)** The image of Joe Mercer's huge grin and bandy legs only serves to put a picture to his remarkable record. He played in three League championship winning teams and was also an FA Cup winner. Joe was one of football's most popular characters.



Accompanying the set of stamps for this issue was a special postcard pack. This depicted footballers who were nominated but not short listed for the final issue. Peter Doherty was among those so included. The above postcard bears the Blanchflower 60p value, with special 'Blanchflower' handstamp; the illustrated pages with text also comes from the postcard book.

Peter Doherty enjoyed a lengthy career in football. He played with Blackpool, Manchester City, Derby County, Huddersfield Town and Doncaster Rovers as well as claiming 16 caps for Northern Ireland. He subsequently managed the latter, with some considerable success. He died in 1990, some three years prior to the bereavement of his captain at the 1958 Finals, Danny Blanchflower.

Danny Blanchflower played for Barnsley, Aston Villa and Tottenham Hotspur. It was with 'Spurs' that he attained football immortality. In the 1960/1961 season Blanchflower captained 'Spurs' to the Football League and Cup double - the first occasion this century that this feat was accomplished.



Bernera £1 'stamp' showing Danny Blanchflower holding the FA Cup aloft after the 1962 Cup Final. The surrounding border shows the rival captains Danny Blanchflower ('Spurs') and Jimmy Adamson (West Ham united) shaking hands prior to the 1962 Final.

Örjans vall  
Världsmästerskapet i Fotboll 1958 Halmstad 11/6 1958  
World Championship in Football 1958  
Championnat du Monde de Football 1958  
Weltmeisterschaft im Fussball 1958

#### Argentina — Nordirland

Målvakt ....

|                 |                                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Högerback ....  | Vänsterback .....                    |
| Högerhb ....    | Centerhb .... Vänsterhb .....        |
| Högerinner .... | Vänsterinner .....                   |
| Högerytter .... | Centerforward ... Vänsterytter ..... |

Domare: ....

|                  |                   |                |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Vänsterytter ... | Centerforward ... | Högerytter ..  |
| Vänsterinner ..  |                   | Högerinner ... |
| Vänsterhb ....   | Centerhb ....     | Högerhb ....   |
| Vänsterback .... |                   | Högerback ...  |

Målvakt ....

Resultat: — (halvtid: — )



Match cover for the 1958 World Cup group game between Northern Ireland and Argentina, handstamped HALMSTAD 11.5.58 with the 60p Blanchflower stamp tied by the special Tottenham Hotspur cancellation.

Captain Tottenham Hotspur  
Winners F.A. Cup and League Double 1961  
Winners F.A. Cup 1962  
European Cup Winners Cup 1963

Captain Northern Ireland  
56 Caps  
Quarter Finals 1958 World Cup  
Manager 1976-1979

Footballer of the year 1958 & 1961

*Danny Blanchflower*



The Blanchflower family produced a commemorative cover which included career statistics; the 60p stamp was tied by a special DANNY BLANCHFLOWER / TOTTENHAM handstamp. The covers were available signed by daughter, Gayle, and proceeds went to charity.



BRITISH  
**Football  
Heroes**

Benham  
Folkestone, Kent

Yet another 'special' cover came from the Benham company in Folkestone, Kent; this depicted Danny Blanchflower early in his footballing career; the 60p stamp in this case is cancelled with the BRITISH / FOOTBALL / HEROES / TOTTENHAM handstamp.

In addition to the set of stamps and the accompanying postcard book, Royal Mail also issued a 'prestige booklet'. The set of five stamps appeared in



original long list (all of whom are represented in our Football Legends sticker book). Also to the sportswriters of many of the leading national papers who helped us with the almost impossible task of trimming the list down to just ten players. Finally the stamps represent the people's game and it is fitting that the final selection of the players to appear on the stamps was made by football fans - the first time a poll has ever been used to select the subject of a Royal Mail special stamp issue.



*The Spurs double winning team of 1960-61 parade the FA Cup, led by captain Danny Blanchflower.*



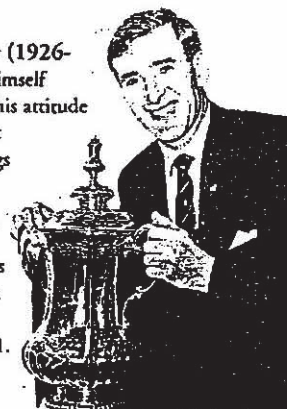
can play, but was never booked for club or country.



**Duncan Edwards (1936-1958)**  
Edwards' is a story of unfulfilled promise. In a professional career lasting only five years, he made a phenomenal impression on the game - playing for Manchester United and becoming the youngest player ever to don an England shirt. Edwards was one of 'Busby's Babes' and a victim of the tragic 1958 Munich air crash.

no less remarkable scoring 17 goals in 10 appearances. He died at Goodison Park, watching his beloved team lose 2-1 to Liverpool.

**Danny Blanchflower (1926-1993)** Blanchflower himself succinctly summed up his attitude to the game, 'It is about glory, about doing things in style, about beating the other lot, not waiting for them to die of boredom'. Danny was the inspirational captain of the Spurs double winning side of 1960-61.



Danny Blanchflower; pages from the postcard book and the 'Blanchflower' postcard from same with relevant 60p stamp and fdi cancel.

various formats within and in addition there was a block of definitive stamps; a label portraying George Best was 'surrounded' by eight of the then first class value, 25p, these being 'regionals'.



George Best; the pane from the booklet, above, with the front cover of magazines from his era - SCORE, SCORCHER and TIGER illustrated on the left selvage. 'Official' Manchester United post-card of Best with the label from the pane, handstamped with the special MANCHESTER fdi cancel.

An interesting aspect of the 'Prestige Booklet' was the accompanying text. A brief overview of the European Football Championship final rounds was

included - each on a separate page. For enthusiasts from Ireland there was particular interest on two pages - listed as page 2 and page 9. This numbering is only seen on exploded booklets - being on the 'spine'.

Both pages are illustrated below;

- the 1960 Championship Finals include the note that 'the very first match in the competition was played in Dublin, the Republic of Ireland beating Czechoslovakia 2-0 before losing 2-4 on aggregate'. As a footnote it should be added that this was in the preliminary round of the competition; the very first match of the competition was a first round encounter played prior to this between USSR and Hungary!

- the 1988 Finals in Germany were notable from an Ireland perspective as these were the first at which an Irish team qualified. That Ireland were unlucky to be knocked out of the tournament by Holland is noted in the text - and Holland went on to an emphatic overall tournament win!

The USSR's famous goalkeeper Lev Yashin was the competition's first key player, keeping a clean sheet in the semi, beaten only by his captain Igor Netto's deflection in the final. The talented Yugoslavs, who won the Olympic title later in the year, were worn down by the more physical Soviets, epitomised by the hefty centre-forward and match-winner Viktor Ponedelnik

## France 1960

champions: Soviet Union



European Nations' Cup Final  
10 July 1960 Parc des Princes, Paris

- In 1960, Milan Galic scored in ten consecutive internationals, including this final, equalling a world record that still stands.
- Yugoslavia, 4-2 down in their semi-final against the hosts France, scored three goals in three minutes to win 5-4.
- The very first match in the competition was played in Dublin, the Republic of Ireland beating Czechoslovakia 2-0 before losing 2-4 on aggregate.



Holland had been lucky to beat England and the Republic of Ireland in their group, and needed Hans van Breukelen to save Igor Belanov's penalty in the final - but were worthy, hugely talented champions, the skills of Ruud Gullit, Frank Rijkaard, Ronald Koeman and Gerald Vanenburg culminating in Marco van Basten's famous astonishing volley from Arnold Mühren's cross.



## West Germany 1988

champions: Holland

European Championship Final  
25 June 1988 Olympiastadion, Munich  
Attendance: 72,308  
Referee: Michel Vautrot (France)  
Holland 2 USSR 0  
Gullit 32 Van Basten 53



- Van Basten's hat trick in the group match was the only one scored in any game against England since 1959.
- Mühren, once of Ipswich and Manchester United, now winning his last cap, was the oldest player (37) to play in a European Championship final.
- A month earlier, Van Breukelen's save in the penalty shoot-out had won the European Cup for PSV Eindhoven.

Best of the British: ENGLAND, who conceded only one goal in the qualifiers but lost all three matches in the finals.

## BELFAST / 80 TYPE 1 MILEAGE MARK

Tim Stephens

It was interesting to read Part 1 of Cyril Dulin's article MILEAGE MARKS; A CRITICAL REVIEW (IP, June 1995), which made reference to Hans Moxter's listing of Irish Mileage Marks.

By coincidence, fellow IPC member, Jim Rankin had just proved to me how there was not just one IRELAND / 80 Type 1 mileage mark (i.e. straight line above the figures), but - it seems - three, which are different sizes. Moxter lists '27X9' measurements for the Type 1, which is known in both black and red ink, from 1813 to 1826.

I have now been able to record several examples (listed below) including some four other IPC members' collections as well as ones in my own collection and the information supplied by Jim Rankin. Instead of measuring the full height of the mileage, I have always measured the height of the letters - I hope readers will bear with me.

Type 1 (a) 33 (max)X4mm 14/5/1814 23/1/1815 23/10/1815  
?/12/1815 ?/?/1814 or 1816  
all in red ink.

BELFAST  
80

Type 1 (b) 27X3MM ?/?/1816 13/12/1816 15/3/1817  
in red ink.  
and 6/5/1820 ?/?/1821  
in black ink.  
[Exact dates for 1816 and 1821 examples  
unknown. I have also seen a ?/?/1821  
example which is probably the above type]

BELFAST  
80

Type 1 (c) 26X4MM 5/9/1823 in black ink.

BELFAST  
80

It is clear that the 1813/1826 range covers all of these marks, not just the 27mm ones. The Type 1 mileages overlap to a very great extent with the use

of other Belfast postmarks. The 28X3mm straight line BELFAST I have recorded for June 1812, 1813 and February 1817, all in red ink (I may have seen others. The 1812 and 1817 examples, I admit, were described to me rather than shown to me). Later marks are the BELFAST / 80 Type IV (circular) with 'shamrock sprays' - the earliest I have seen is 13/6/1817 (red ink; only a few months after the 1817 straight line). A slightly later example of 23/8/1817 is in black ink, so the changes from red to black ink for all Belfast marks can be put at some time between these dates. All later examples (until 1830) I know of are in black, and the Belfast 'POST PAID' mark also changed from red to black ink. The 'shamrock sprays' Type IV appears to have been superseded by the Type LV with arcs (which is larger). The earliest example I have recorded so far is 7/9/1821.

I would be interested to know if the 1813 example, recorded by Moxter, is in fact c33mm long, and the 1826 one in fact 26mm long, also of other examples. It is tempting to look for some special use for the Type 1 'BELFAST / 80' marks - e.g. redirected or late mail - but from the covers I have seen I am more of the opinion that they were simply used alongside other Belfast postmarks. But it is not impossible that at some period at least they were used for a distinct purpose or as a 'spare' mark, especially after the circular Type IV mileages were well established. The 1823 example is on a missent cover.

I would like to thank all IPC members who helped me by supplying details of postmarks mentioned above, and Jim Rankin in particular.

## THE FIRST OLYMPIC CHAMPION, 1896

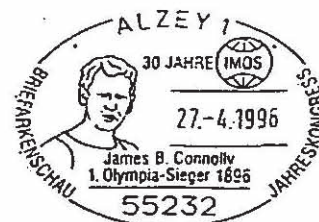
### CT Murphy

The distinction of being the first Champion of the modern Olympic era falls to one James Brendan Connolly. It was in the triple jump that Connolly won gold and he enjoyed further success in the high and long jumps, ensuring a complete set of medals - gold, silver and bronze.

It was an altogether appropriate outcome for someone with an Irish background to stake such a claim as initial Olympic Champion. Irish athletes at this time, the late nineteenth century, were not alone world champions but in many cases innovators of many of the contemporary athletic events. The triple jump is regarded as having its origins in Ireland and so for someone like Connolly to win the inaugural title was very appropriate.

Even if Connolly himself was born in the United States, his family hailed from the Arran Islands. They were native Irish speakers and secured their living in their adopted homeland from fishing.

Connolly's achievement has yet to be commemorated on a postage stamp but he did feature on a handstamp back in April. His distinction of being the initial Olympic Champion is noted.



## **MILEAGE MARKS; A CRITICAL REVIEW PART V**

### **CI Dulin**

In the previous four parts of this review, attempts were made to reconcile the differences found between directory and mileage mark data. Since the discovery for the reason for the discrepancy of the mileage marks of ATHY (**ATHY - A MILEAGE MARK EXPLODED**) which was due solely to the mail route taken and not to any difference attributable to Irish and English miles (or to the directory and hand stamp mileages), and there does not seem to be much point in trying to pursue the directory v. mileage mark routes.

It is not so much a question of looking for differences, but as to whether much of the data found in the directories is reliable for the particular year involved - even though the data was purported to come from Post Office sources. In comparing the mileage data found in the 1928 Nineteenth Report of Commissioners of Revenue Inquiry (a complete copy of which has now been found) and those in the directories, there is an astonishing number of Offices for which there are directories. Of course, not all of these differences were pertinent in terms of the rate changed. Thus, although the Report v. directories for the relevant years of 1827 and 1828 show differences in no less than 62% of the offices, for the majority these (about 86%) this amounts to no more than a mile. Since the Report gives distances in miles and furlongs while the directories show miles only, in many cases the difference is simply due to rounding up (or down) the furlong fraction. However, there still remains an appreciable number where the discrepancy is due to the rounding factor.

There had been a change in Irish rates in 1826. This was not based on mileages as such, but due to an attempt to reconcile Irish measure and currency with those of Great Britain. The 1826 rates (which nominally came into effect on January 6th, 1826) were based on British miles and expressed in British currency. Irish miles and currency were officially abolished. As far as postal rates were concerned, the Irish Post Office essentially used the 1814 rate list and deducted 1d from each entry. For Dublin, this meant that every Post Town should have shown a reduction of 1d in rate. Actually there were 10 exceptions and these deviants were essentially due to road and route changes during the intervening 12 year period.

One objective of the Commissioners Inquiry (which resulted in the Nineteenth Report) was to examine the effects that the new rates of 1826 had on the revenue accruing from the Irish Post Office. Basically it found that little had really changed and this resulted in another revision of rates during 1827. The revision was simply to re-instate the 1814 rates, for although the distances for computational purposes reverted to Irish miles, the actual rate was in British currency. The ratio between British and Irish currency was 12 to 13 and for many rates this roughly 8% basic difference could make greater (or lesser) changes in actuality, for the rates were always expressed as an integer and never as a fraction of a penny.

The rates were to last until 1839 when the introduction of the uniform 4d post on December 5th of that year, made rates based on mileage reckoning almost irrelevant. The 'almost' is important for it has to be remembered that

there were a number of post towns near to Dublin where the rate was 2d or 3d and for these the rates remained as they were. It was not until January 10th, 1840 when the uniform 1d post came into being that all rates from Dublin, including those to Great Britain, were reduced to 1d irrespective of distance.

This then finishes a capsulated analysis of mileage marks. The main findings have been that both the directories and the mileage marks cannot be regarded as an absolute basis from which to correlate postal rates, although they are indicative. While the mileage marks were renewed in a number of instances to reflect mileage changes, these, in general, were too transitory on which to base great reliance. The directories, which in turn were based on Post Office data, are also not too reliable a guide since they were updated only periodically and thus were frequently out of date and, occasionally, erroneous. It may be noted that even the prestigious Nineteenth Revenue Inquiry Report contained a few errors. For example, in the case of BALLYBAY and BALLYBOY where only one entry is given for both towns.

Obviously the main findings has been that mileages were indeed based on actual measured road mileage and that the mail route involved was critical. Thus in order to examine mileage marks against postal rates it is necessary to have recourse to what these mileages were and the mail routes involved. The Nineteenth Report is unequivocal as to the source for that period (roughly the mid-1820's) - TAYLOR AND SKINNER's map. However, for the critical period of 1808 to 1820 there is no such reliable indication as to which maps were used (with the caveat that they are, as yet, unknown to the author). Compensatingly, the mail routes can be ascertained with some precision, even if route changes can often be pin-pointed only to within a few months. The directories do carry information on mileages along routes, but in light of the infrequent revision they cannot be relied upon as being particularly accurate.

One of the many interesting analyses to be found in the Nineteenth Report is that of a table showing the distances of Post Towns from Dublin in terms of what is termed 'direct lines' (that is the shortest distance to the town by available roads) and those by 'Mail route'. Computed postal charges for each of the alternatives are also given. Very rarely can this be of practical value in determining as to which route a letter actually took by examining the postal charge. Primarily this is because there was only one postal charge for the Post Town even if the 'legal' distance could, if properly applied, lead to a lower theoretical rate. In 1828 there was no less than 63 Postal Towns which, if the legal distance could have been used then a reduction of postal charges would have ensued.

With the exception of HACKETSTOWN, the difference in every case would have been a 1d saving. For suffering HACKETSTOWN, the postal charges would have lowered by 2d. It was also in the minority of towns which had only three posts per week. After 1828 there were few, if any, new mileage marks and, of course, with the re-amalgamation of the Irish Post Office with that of the British in 1831, there was even less of an incentive to issue such handstamps. The mileage marks continued to be used by a number of offices

until the 1860's, but only for identification purposes. Straight line markings (that is town name stamps omitting the mileage) supplanted the mileage marks and an interesting study can be made as to when they came into use at particular offices.

Whether a full scale investigation into this is worthwhile is up to the individual collector to ascertain.

## **MILEAGE MARKS**

**Frans Hermse**

In the four articles on *MILEAGE MARKS, A CRITICAL REVIEW*, Cyril Dulin has published a lot of useful statistical information on Irish mileage marks and the charges to Dublin. New readers of *IRISH PHILATELY* might get the false impression that the mileage number in these marks was used for the calculation of the postal rates to Dublin. In fact this was not the case!

Postmasters had lists - or even wall charts - with the charges from their office to all destinations. The reason that few such lists survive is that the postmasters were instructed to destroy the old lists on the introduction of new rates. The postmaster did not bother about the mileage in his own handstamp and this is one reason that 'wrong' mileages were shown in some offices for many years. For the hypothesis as to why mileage marks were introduced I would like to refer to an article on the subject by John Harrison, published in the *POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL*.

It may be clear that the mileage to Dublin was only of importance for letters which went to/from Dublin. For so-called cross-road letters and letters that went further than Dublin this mileage was irrelevant. For FREE letters the mileage was irrelevant too. On PAID letters the postmaster wrote the amount which had been paid to destination, regardless the mileage to Dublin. In the 1830s it became clear that the mileages in townname stamps were merely confusing and postmasters were instructed to remove them - which was not always done - while some offices were provided with handstamps without mileages.

The charge to Dublin could be reduced after the improvement of the mail road. In some cases the mail road became longer because of the reorganisation of the mail transport. An example comes with the introduction of the Belfast-Derry mailcoach in 1809 - the distance from Ballymoney to Dublin became 118 instead of 108 miles. In this case it did not influence the rate to Dublin. There must also be an explanation for the famous mileage for the Athy - 32 and 41 - namely a different route and not the use of Irish and English miles respectively.

In the June 1996 issue, Dr Dulin raised the question of how the crow flies; in fact the crow did not take off at all. Up until 1836 mileage differences were calculated according to the way used by the mail - either footpost, horseback, mailcart and/or mailcoach, the so-called postroads. From 1838 the distances were calculated according to the shortest public road between two towns. Only a small number of postroad maps survived. A few of these are in the National Library in Dublin but unfortunately not accessible to the public.