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**INSIDE THIS ISSUE – THOM 5 LINE PLATE VARIETIES;
MY IRISH TRAVELS; OSCAR WILDE; AND ½d - SHADING**



Rare 1934 2d Coil – Forgery

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As to the size of this particular issue; at the time of starting to edit (approaching mid-August) I envisaged maybe six pages or less. Without being disrespectful I had only three articles, a snippet and another obituary hence I could not justify the publication of the Journal for September.

Yet again the staunch members rallied round and my thanks must go to them but as I will be in California for the coming Christmas – leaving in early December – I thankfully will have enough articles to publish at that time.

In the next issue there will be an “anonymous” article and I urge some of the more security minded members to consider sharing some of the philatelic information they have, with other members via this method so all may benefit and the knowledge shared.

On a lighter note: There will be a meeting of the I.P.C. at the Irish Centre, Hammersmith on Saturday 25th September, which has at least a “bring something” theme as well as the swap, sell or trade as a general theme. In this instance I shall be bringing something to sell “as a member sent me an article for publishing in the Journal but failed to check the postal weight hence I had to pay £1.19 for the privilege of obtaining this article”.

So in general terms beware as the Post Office has now reverted back to the early 1900's, whereby it is more important for staff to be employed in checking the items sent in the post for weight, correct value aligned with 1st or 2nd class postage.

This information and any other relevant pieces, I usually try to put up on the web page which is www.philatelic.cwc.net. Also you may email me at eddydalton@ntlworld.com

Telephone 01494 583111 in the UK.
Editor

Eddy **DALTON**

King George V ½d - Solid Shading to Left of HALFPENNY.

John Mullen draws attention [Irish Philately, March 2004] to this variety which occurs on the overprinted ½d value Row 20 stamp 1 [not row 10 as mentioned by Mullen].

This variety cannot be the variety catalogued in the Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Specialised Catalogue [Volume 2 – The Four Kings] and listed by Gibbons as:

½d Green. Cat no. N14n ‘Solid Shading to left of HALFPENNY’

Gibbons states this variety occurs on Plate 36b which was used with controls I16 and J17. It is currently priced at £40. There are no records of sheets of GB stamps with such early control numbers being used for overprinting for use in Ireland 1922-23 so the variety he shows cannot be the same as the SG catalogued variety.



Fig 1

A similar variety [fig 1] to that listed in the SG catalogue occurs on the stamps overprinted and I have examples in control blocks of 6 of the following:

Thom 5 line.	Control T22	Overprint settings 8 and 9.
Thom 3 line	Control T22	Overprint setting 5
	Control U22	Overprint setting not know [Mullen]
	Control U23	Overprint setting 3 and 5.

On the unoverprinted GB stamps it also occurs on V23. I have not seen this variety on the Dollard or Thom wide issues. I have unsuccessfully tried to state on which plate this variety occurs on the overprinted stamps. This variety warrants catalogue status.

Plating the base GB stamps is not easy and the SG Specialised catalogue is the best guide. The printer inserted cuts and marks in the marginal rules [Jubilee lines] mostly in the control block area of the plates and these are listed in this catalogue which gives the plates used with the control numbers used. However my control blocks with the error show no cuts or marks in the control block [fig 2] so, by a process of elimination, the plate might be plate 70 as this plate has no cuts in the margins of the control piece.

However our listing is not complete. Fig 3 shows a strip of ½d control T22 [identical to fig 2] unoverprinted with this variety on R20/1 and with a ‘cut’ in the marginal rule on Row 20/5 but this area is not covered by the SG catalogue. This may help us to plate this variety; can any collector help with similar blocks with the variety?



Fig 2



Fig 3

The SG listing is not 100% correct and the numbering of the plates are those given by philatelists and not the printer!

Another similar variety also occurs in the same position [R20/1] on the 1½d value. I have this on the Thom 3 line on control U22 but the error is not so pronounced. My example cannot be plated. Why this variety should occur in the same position is not known. Examples of over inking on R20/1 are often seen.

Stanley Gibbons recommends the KGV plate markings are best collected in bottom row strips of 12 or larger! An impossible task but no doubt they are right!

Bill FLETCHER

An Post Press Release - 29 July 2004

Loss-making SDS to close

The Board of An Post has decided to close SDS, its loss-making parcels and couriers division, and to re-integrate its business into An Post mail collection and delivery operations. Management proposals to address chronic losses will lead to 270 voluntary job reductions, the sale of the existing SDS premises at Naas Road and the transfer of its central parcels hub to Portlaoise.

The radical overhaul of its parcels business is in addition to the objectives of the An Post Strategic Recovery Plan to restore financial stability to the company which reported operating losses of €43m for 2003. An Post Chief Executive Donal Curtin said “Moving the central parcels hub to Portlaoise will help eliminate costly duplication and overlap and enable the Company to be more efficient and effective as it continues to provide its range of high quality courier and parcels processing.”

An Post employs a total of 450 workers, at six separate SDS sites, as well as 46 owner/driver operators. 180 staff will transfer to other positions within An Post. Voluntary severance or voluntary early retirement schemes will be available to surplus staff. The decision to revamp SDS, which last year shed 114 jobs and saw the introduction of owner/driver operators, is part of ongoing management attempts to return An Post to financial stability.

EMS customers of SDS services will not be affected by the radical new approach to parcel handling but the Company will disengage from a range of loss making contract parcel services. The Company has developed redeployment and relocation options to deal with staff issues and will be having discussions, in a Partnership context, with its unions - including the Communications Workers Union which represents the majority of those affected. Proposals approved by the Board of An Post envisage the completion, by the end of this year, of staff transfers and re-integration measures and the commencement of the revamped operations by February 2005.

SDS was set-up in 1989 to compete in the domestic and international parcel handling market. In recent years the SDS business model – due to high fixed costs and inflexibility - has suffered in the face of increasingly intensive price competition resulting in a loss of market share, and falling volumes.

Mr Curtin said “Despite enormous efforts to turn around the situation at SDS, volume losses and market trends have made this decision absolutely inevitable. “Losses at SDS have been a serious drain on the financial resources of An Post. This action will ultimately be of major benefit as we struggle to restore the business to profitability. Right now the decision is regrettable but unavoidable”.

Snippet

I understand that Dugort Post Office, Achill closed on 16 July 2004.

Courtesy of Brian **WARREN**

My Irish Travels

I have been a collector of Irish postal history for quite a few years. Over this time I have had many trips around Ireland, in search of Post Offices – some have been very interesting experiences!

Firstly to Co. Cork where I planned a visit to Hare Island Post Office, in the end it took two days, yes two days to make a ten minute trip. There was no ferry service so I had to find someone to take me there, this was arranged for the next day but a force 8 gale sorted that out. Another day on and I finally made it across in the afternoon. Although I was made most welcome I am sure the Postmaster thought I needed my head examined when I told him the reason for my visit. Sadly, this Post Office has since closed.

Also in Co. Cork, I visited Coolea Post Office near Macroom. It was early one very wet January morning. After knocking on the door for a while, an elderly lady appeared at an upstairs window and signalled she was on her way down. Nearly half an hour later she appeared and I made my entrance with a bang; literally falling down a large step inside the front door, taking some of the shops stock with me. To top it off, the Postmistress was unable to find the cancellation stamp as her grand daughter had been playing with it the night before. However she promised to send a cancel by post, which she did.

I have many happy memories of my visits to Clare, Limerick and Galway, especially the Connemara region. The Post Offices there are a long way apart so getting around takes a long time. Also visits to Co. Donegal and Derry there are some wonderful Post Offices, some very remote and in beautiful countryside. I thoroughly recommend a visit to the Ulster American Folk Park in Co. Tyrone. Here they have reconstructed Mountjoy Post Office, with some very interesting postal history exhibits.

Very different was a visit to Belfast City, quite an eye opener at that time, almost all the Post Offices had wire grill and thick glass to protect the counter. Uninviting looking but I was made to feel welcome and got about twelve new cancels in just one day.

I have an old postcard picturing the Curragh Camp, as I had an opportunity to visit the site of the original Post Office there. The outside of the building had not changed, sadly this Post Office is also now closed but I could not help thinking how many soldiers must have used this office to send mail to loved ones.

Some Post Offices I have visited have had most unusual names: Curry, Co. Sligo, Blueball, Co. Offaly, Borris, Co. Carlow and Ballyferriter, Co. Kerry and I am sure there are many more. It is so sad to see that many of the Post Offices I have visited over the years have now closed.

However, I will continue to visit Ireland and its Post Offices in my spare time but spare a thought for my spouse and daughters who have spent many hours of their holidays waiting outside Post Offices for me!!! I hope that I am not the only crazy person doing this. Anyone else?

Florence **McCARTY**

OSCAR WILDE (1854 – 1900)

The Ireland into which Oscar, O'Flahertie, Fingal, Wills, Wilde was born in 1854 was a deeply scarred and troubled nation. He was the second son of the eminent Dublin Surgeon, Sir William and Lady Jane Wilde, Lady Jane stood over six feet tall and claimed to be “above respectability”.

She obviously passed her eccentricity on to the young Oscar!

A million people had died in the famine years of 1845 to 1849 and over one and a half million had emigrated to escape the horrors of starvation, but the privileged life of the Wildes appears not to have been affected by the suffering around them. One wonders if things have changed a great deal since those days because millions are still dying of starvation and hunger. Perhaps the locations have changed, but the tragedies linger on?

However back to Oscar, there is no doubt that from his earliest years Oscar was a larger than life individual who, having been taught by his mother to view life as a performance, certainly tried to live up to his reputation. His favourite costume was a purple velvet coat edged with braid, knee breeches and black silk stockings together with a large flowing pale green tie! In his younger days he was very handsome and was able to gather around him many people of dubious character who were only too willing to flatter and encourage him to become even more outrageous.

In 1884, in an effort to embrace the Victorian idea of respectability, he married Constance Lloyd and fathered two sons Cyril and Vyvyan, but the marriage soon floundered when his wife discovered that he was sneaking off to Oxford to visit young men.



CONSTANCE LLOYD (Wife of Oscar Wilde)

Oil painting of Constance Lloyd in 1882 by Louis Desange

Oscar's peculiar lifestyle was now being openly talked about, but due to the popularity of his plays and poems he was still accepted by the establishment. However things came to a head

when the Marquis of Queensbury ordered Oscar to stay away from his son Lord Alfred Douglas and publicly accused Wilde of “posing as a Sodomite”.

Oscar foolishly decided to charge Queensbury with libel, but at the trial it was Oscar who was charged with indecency and after two trials was found guilty and sentenced to two years hard labour in Reading Jail. Some of the letters he wrote from Reading still survive and are highly sought after. On his release from prison, Oscar went to live in France and for the next two and a half years began what has been described as “a long slide to the grave!”

One of my favourite sayings from Oscar was the one on his deathbed when he remarked to his friend Maurice Gilbert “The wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death!”

Oscar’s final resting place is under Jacob Epstein’s monument in Pere-Lachaise Cemetery where his remains were transferred in 1909.

In 1980 Ireland issued a 13p stamp (SG 460) based on the portrait by Toulouse Lautrec, which depicts Oscar as quite a bloated person. Incidentally there are two types of perforation used on this stamp, due to two different machines being used in the production (Grover and Bickell). In the year 2000 four attractive stamps were issued to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of his death (SG 1309 – 1312). All stamps have dual denominations (Irish pence and euros) and show his portrait and various scenes from his plays.

George **ETOE**

Dr Victor W. D. Hale FRPSL

Victor Hale, a former President and an Honorary Life Member of the Hull Philatelic Society, and for many years their YPA delegate died on the 5th March 2004. He was born in Birmingham in 1922. A Cambridge graduate, who during the war served as a codebreaker at Bletchley Park, he was a mathematics lecturer at Hull University and later at York University where he remained until his retirement.

A keen philatelist who formed many collections, his most notable was a thematic collection tracing the history of the Olympic Games. His other collections included The Netherlands and the Republic of Ireland. He was a founder member of the Hull Philatelic Study Group, which met in members’ houses. He was a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society of London and for many years was their local representative. He gave many displays in different parts of the country as well as Yorkshire and was a keen competitor. Victor was also a member of the Society of Olympic Collectors and the Netherlands Study Circle, playing an active part in both societies. He was highly respected for his depth of philatelic knowledge.

Victor had many other interests. He was a Fellow of the British Computer Society, probably being the only member who never owned a computer! He also played an active part in local societies including Probus, Round Table and U3A, as well as local Scandinavian Societies. He also taught Scottish Dancing and spoke Swedish and Dutch.

In recent years, due to deteriorating health and failing eyesight Victor was forced to scale down a lot of his activities. He is survived by his wife and children, to whom the YPA extend their deepest sympathy.

Robert F. McMillan

(Taken from the Yorkshire Philatelic Association Newsletter of May 2004)

(A former member of the I.P.C. Ed.)

Courtesy of George **ETOE**

The Rare 1934 2d Coil stamp – Forgery



Since 2003 a range of modern forgeries of scarce stamps is being offered at auction by Roger West of Phoenix International. Roger is a noted collector and has had an interest in forgeries. He is the editor of 'Madame Joseph Forged Postmarks' by Derek Warboys.

Among the 'Maryland' forgeries, named presumably after Maryland in the USA, are forgeries of the rare coil stamp; the 1934 2d grey green Map stamp wmk 'SE', perforation 15 x imperf. [S.G. 74b].

The forgeries are on white un-gummed paper and the perforation is 10.75 x imperf.. The forgery is paler than the genuine and the print course. The stamp size is 18.0mm x 22.5mm for the forgery whereas the genuine is 18.5mm x 22.0mm. The forgery seen has a large FORGERY in an enclosed oval hand stamped in green on the reverse (illustrated above).

Bill FLETCHER

Ireland

Thom 5 Line Plate Varieties

by Michael Priestley

The following pages reproduce copy pages from Michel Priestley's collection of overprints of the Thom 5 Line Plate Varieties. Further pages will be reproduced in subsequent editions of the Journal.

Among the varieties found in the Thom narrow setting issue those due to the method of plate manufacture are the most interesting. They are known generally as *R/Se* varieties and can be seen as variations in the relative position of the overprint lines.

The two types of line movement are shown below.

R/Se and *R/S*

Normal *R/Se* *R/Se* *R/Se* *R/S* *R/S*



e₁/1

Normal *e₁/1* *e₁/1* *e₁/1*

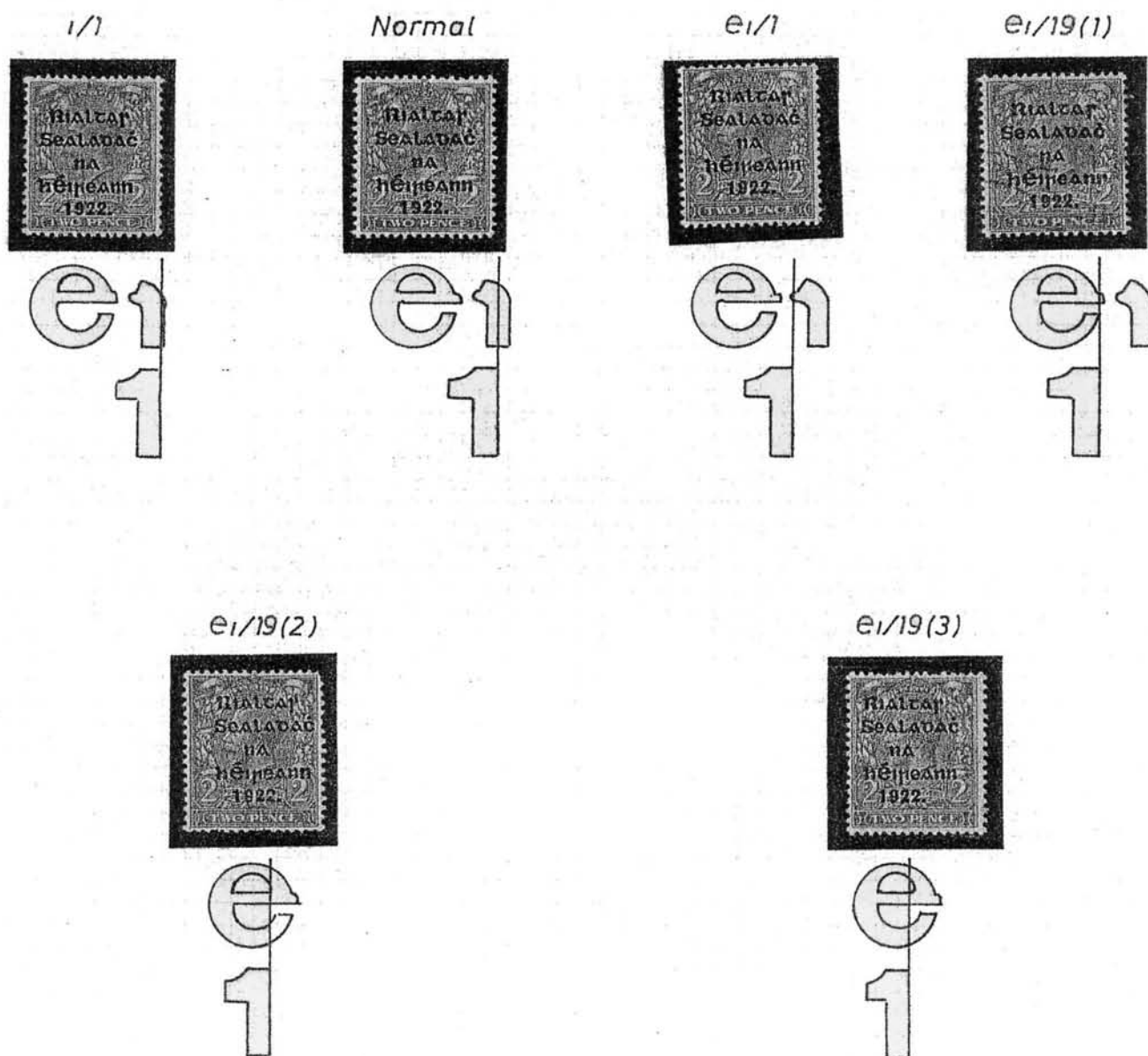


This study was undertaken to measure the amount of movement which had taken place in different examples and thereby to identify from which of the many known plate positions of the variety the examples came.

i/1 e1/1 and e1/19 Varieties.

Movement of the fourth line of the overprint causes these varieties. The e1/19(2) and e1/19(3) varieties are only found in conjunction with R/Se(3).

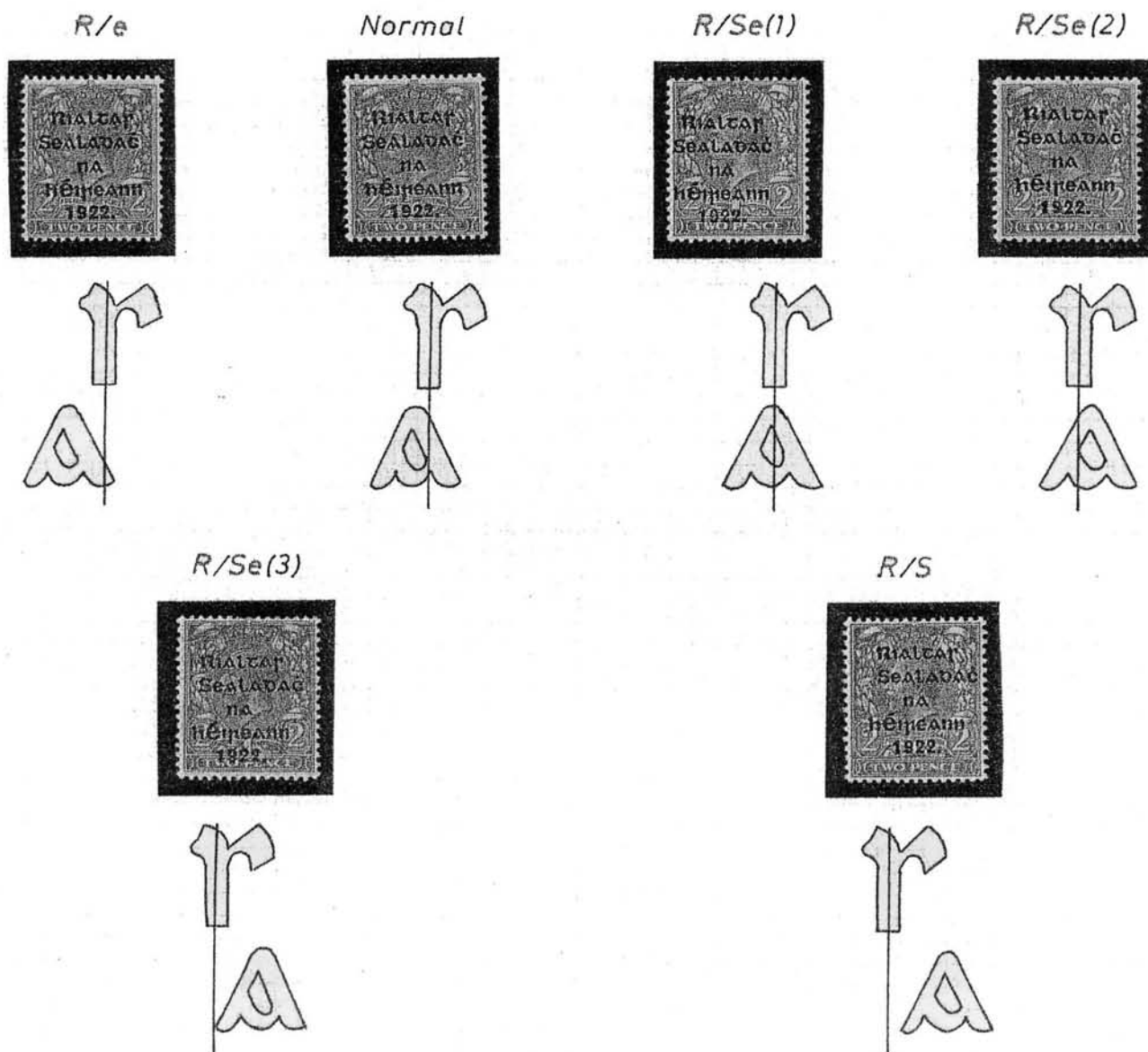
In the i/1 variety hEireann has moved slightly to the left. In the e1/1 and e1/19 varieties hEireann has moved to the right.



R/e R/Se and R/S Varieties.

These varieties are caused by the movement of the second line of the overprint. In the *R/e* variety *Sealadac* has moved to the left relative to the other lines. In the *R/Se* and *R/S* varieties *Sealadac* has moved to the right.

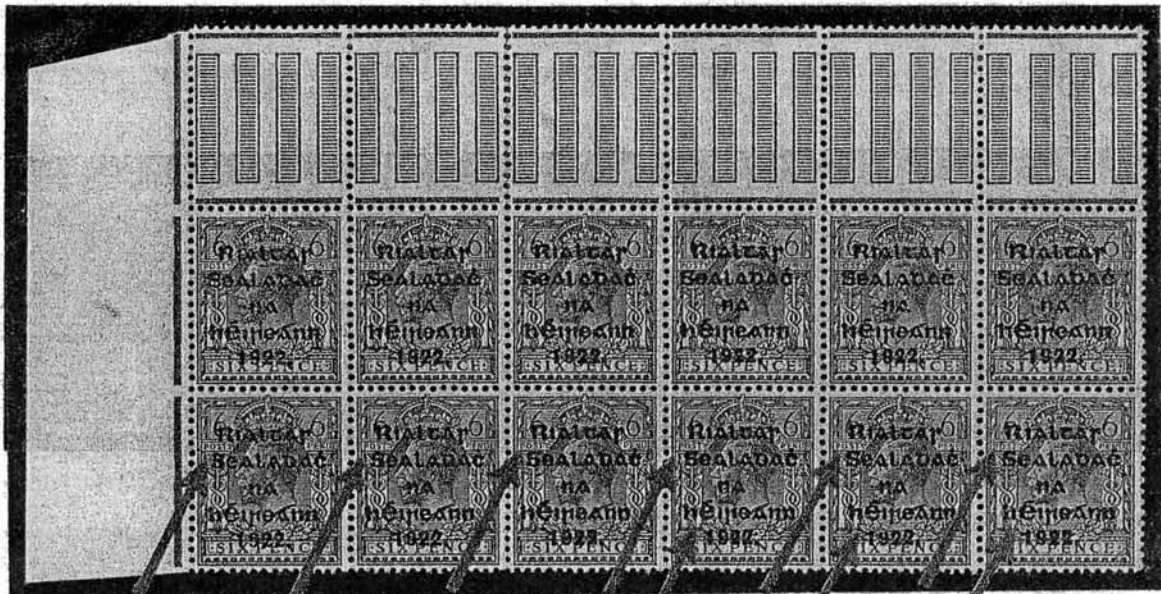
The examples below are compared by noting the relative position of the *r* of *Rialta* and the third *a* of *Sealadac*.



R/Se and e₁/19 Sheet Positions

Plate 2 Row 12

	Stamp Number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Row 12	R/Se(2)	R/Se(2)	R/Se(2)	R/Se(3) e ₁ /19(1)	R/Se(3) e ₁ /19(2)	R/Se(3) e ₁ /19(2)



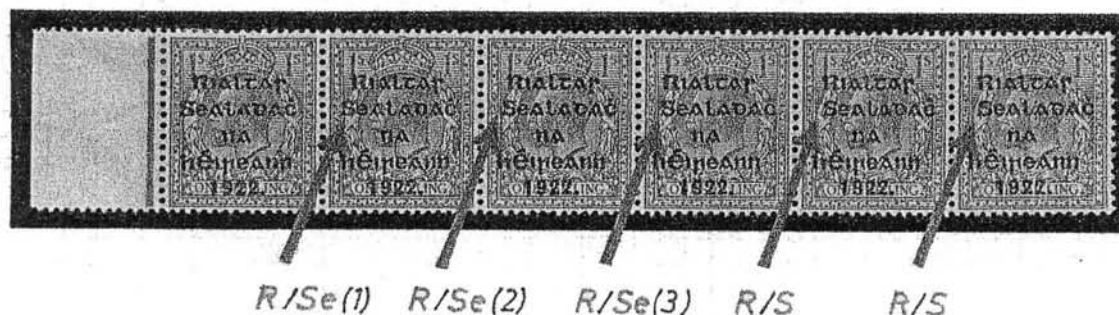
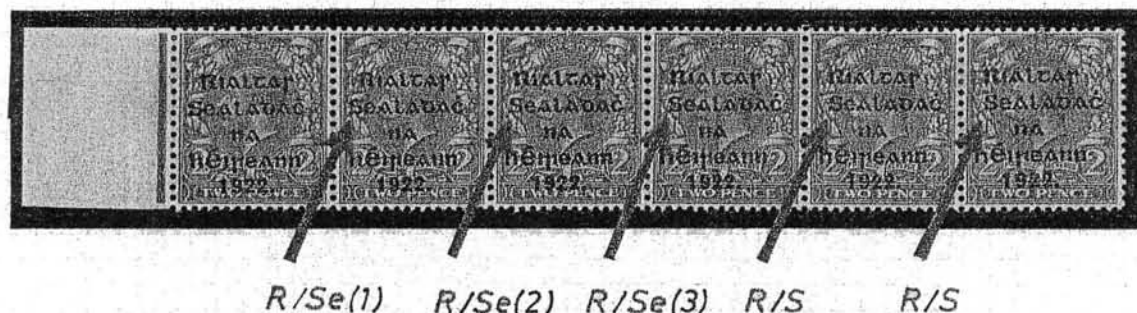
R/Se(2) R/Se(2) R/Se(2) R/Se(3) R/Se(3) R/Se(3)
e₁/19(1) e₁/19(2) e₁/19(2)



R/Se(2) R/Se(2) R/Se(2) R/Se(3) R/Se(3) R/Se(3)
e₁/19(1) e₁/19(2) e₁/19(2)

Plate 2 Row 17

Stamp Number					
1	2	3	4	5	6
Row 17	R/Se(1)	R/Se(2)	R/Se(3)	R/S	R/S



Programme of Special and Commemorative Stamps for 2005

An Post recently distributed to individuals and organisations who had submitted suggestions for the 2005 programme a preliminary list of the special and commemorative issues which are set out below.

It is unclear if "National Day Stamp" is a further St. Patrick's Day issue – presumably so and not a "National Stamp day" issue. The Ryder Cup (Golf) will be held at "The K Club" in Co. Kildare in 2006, the first time it has been held in Ireland. This is also the first time that we can recall a promotional "in advance" issue. Will it be followed up with a further set in 2006? The Joint Issue with Canada (a first) is on the subject of Biosphere Reserves – a most intriguing subject for a joint issue. Biosphere Reserves were set up by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The purpose of these reserves is to combine conservation, education, scientific research, monitoring and to involve the local community. There is one Irish coastal site under this designation - North Bull Island, Co. Dublin.

Some issues were already the subjects of similar or associated releases in earlier years. The Fauna and Flora issues of 2000 and 1985 already featured "Butterflies" and a 1994 issue featured "Moths". The establishment of the United Nations was the subject of a two stamp set in 1995 and also featured in the Millennium Series (as did Albert Einstein). A stained glass window by Evie Hone featured on the first Art issue of 1969. A "Talls Ships" issue was released in 1998 to coincide with the visit of the ships to Dublin and Arthur Griffith featured in the "Statesmen of Ireland" series (1986). The 1983 Europa issue was on the subject of "Great Works of the Human Genius" and the 29p value referred to the Quaternions Discovery by William Rowan Hamilton (in 1843). He was also shown on a two stamp set issued in 1943 to mark the centenary of this discovery.

1.	Love/Greetings
2.	National Day Stamp
3.	Fauna & Flora – Butterflies
4.	Europa – Gastronomy
5.	Ireland Series – Round Towers
6.	150th Anniversary of the Completion of the Dublin – Belfast Railway Line
7.	50th Anniversary of Ireland's Membership of the United Nations
8.	Irish Female Artists – including Nano Reid and Evie Hone
9.	Cork – European Capital of Culture 2005
10.	Ryder Cup
11.	Talls Ships Race Visit to Waterford
12.	Centenary of the birth of Erskine Childers
13.	Centenary of Arthur Griffith's policy which established Sinn Féin
14.	Bicentenary of the birth of William Rowan Hamilton UNESCO World Year of Physics Centenary of the "Miraculous Year" of Albert Einstein
15.	Joint Issue Ireland and Canada – Biosphere Reserves
16.	Christmas

Tony **FINN** and Brian **WARREN**

An Post to stamp out errors in stamps

CARL O'BRIEN

An Post is to hold a strategic review of the way it designs stamps following a series of blunders and mistakes.

Two high-profile members of the design committee who resigned in protest at recent errors will take part in the review to be chaired by An Post's chief executive, Mr Donal Curtin.

The blunders include the misplacement of the island of Cyprus in a stamp commemorating EU enlargement, mixing up the Latin names of a species of duck in a series of wildlife stamps and reproduction errors in an illustrated coffee-table book of Irish stamps.

Another stamp commemorating the Luas, which showed a wheelchair user being pushed on to a tram, was vetoed by Govern-

ment Ministers who felt it could imply that disabled people would not be able to board the tram without assistance.

Two An Post members of the stamp design committee have resigned and been relocated to other areas of the company since the mistakes occurred.

Separately, Dr Patricia Donlon, former director of the National Library, and Mr Ciarán MacGonigal, an arts consultant, resigned from An Post's stamp design committee in protest over mistakes.

In a statement, Mr Curtin regretted the decision of Dr Donlon and Mr MacGonigal to resign, but respected their reasons for doing so. He said he was "disturbed" and "disappointed" at errors in the stamps issued earlier this year.

A spokesman for An Post, while conceding a number of er-



Mr Ciarán MacGonigal, an arts consultant, resigned in protest

rors had been made in recent months, insisted there was no mistake over the placement of Cyprus in the EU enlargement stamp. He said the map was merely distorted to fit into a small space.

All 3,000 copies of a book of Irish wild flower stamps, due to be published earlier this year, were pulped at an overall cost of anything between €40,000 and €50,000. It is due to be reprinted and published later this year.

Irish Independent – 14 September 2004

Clare PostBus Ceases Operation

Beauty spot mail bus hits last post

A UNIQUE "post bus", which brought tourists and the mail to Co Clare's beauty spots, is being axed by An Post.

For a mere €6, visitors and locals could travel with the postman-cum-driver on a 70-mile trip as he dropped off letters at the Burren and the Cliffs of Moher. A spokesman for An Post said yesterday the post bus was beyond economic repair, and that the service was being cut for economic reasons.

We have since determined from Ennis Post Office that the An Post vehicle had been taken out of service some time ago as it was unserviceable and that they had sub-contracted the service to a local operator. The sub-contracted PostBus service had already ceased at least 4 weeks prior to the appearance of this newspaper report. This was the only PostBus service operating in the Republic of Ireland.

Tony FINN and Brian WARREN