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Dun Laoghaire to California - Internal Airmail in the USA – 1928

see the Editor's Challenge on page 5

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EDITORIAL

Let me begin with two apologies. Firstly in our last edition I referred to Dr Stafford Johnson as being the Father-in-Law of the well known collector Fred Dixon. In fact, I am reliably informed that the worthy Doctor was, in fact, Fred's Uncle-in-Law. A biography of the Doctor, by Héloïse Mitchell appears on pages 12 and 13 of this issue.

Secondly, I must begin by both thanking and congratulating Philip Kane for his persistence in making sure that we proceeded with the scanning project of all back issues of Irish Philately. The disks are now available from Philip but his efforts have told me that the article on Northern Ireland's Postbus which appeared in the June 2009 issue was effectively a duplicate of an article by the late Tony Graham which appeared in our June 1993 issue. My apologies!

Perhaps a third apology should also be to the effect that this issue is very much a 'people' issue. You will see what I mean as you read through. I actually have no problem with that for without people there would be no philately and we would then have no hobby. I find it interesting to learn what interests others and learn from the collecting habits of others.

Now for the bad news. As a result of a change of job, Graeme Murray, who has worked hard putting together the 'Beyond the Catalogues' series, has had to 'retire' and in consequence we need a new 'Officer in Charge'. I hope a member will feel able to come forward. David MacDonnell and John Lennon have provided much material for past issues, others have also contributed and I know will do so for the future. Unless there is a volunteer, the series will come to an end which we must regard as a great pity having made such a good start. To paraphrase Lord Kitchener – 'Your editor needs you!'

As editor one is always searching for new material. I can assure you that it gets no easier. For, what a glance through those back issues teaches me, is to

admire those early members who back in the 1960s, unaided by computer screens, spreadsheets, .xyz documents and the like (it is really a whole new language that we computer users have had to learn to speak), gathered together an abundance of knowledge which we would struggle to assemble today. By way of example: your editor, in his naïvety, had for some years been gathering together information on the 'Paid At' marks to be found on paid (unstamped) mail of the 1830s and 1840s. David MacDonnell had been kind enough to point out that there was a simplified listing in 'Feldman and Kane' (Handbook of Irish Postal History to 1840 – you need a copy if you don't already have one) and I saw myself wading through material to see what I had accumulated, writing to fellow members and ultimately, laboriously, putting some kind of article/ plea for help together. Stop! Go through the December 1960 and subsequent issues of Irish Philately and you will find it has all been done for us. Yes! Some of us will surely have a few dates to add, perhaps the use of different coloured inks, but use at unlisted towns? – I doubt it. For our enlightenment on the subject we have to be grateful to one J S Preston, who was hard at work in the late 1950s. There is a lot out there for those that search.

I am also much conscious of the fact that some of our members do not yet have internet access and whilst I would urge those of you who are not 'hooked up' to look to do so, let me reassure you that I for one remain of the opinion that the written word will remain king for many a year yet. Both email messages, useful as they are and even websites, in postal history terms are but fleeting and it will surely always remain our duty to preserve and expand our written knowledge. Let's all enjoy doing it. Good reading and good hunting! I also look forward to seeing many of you at our AGM in May.

Stan
28 February 2010

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THE CONNECTION BETWEEN BALLYMONEY AND BALLYCASTLE

Frans Hermse

The two post towns and their mileage to Dublin

Both these Co Antrim towns have been post towns since the 19th century. According to Ken Smith¹, Ballymoney had become a posttown by 1745 and Ballycastle as early as 1729. I have doubts about the last date as Ballymoney was situated on the main route to Coleraine whilst Ballycastle was isolated on the north coast. On a postal map of 1803 we see a thick line connecting Ballymoney and Coleraine and likewise from Ballymoney to Belfast but only a thin line (implying a less frequent service) from Ballymoney to Ballycastle.(fig 1), the official distances from Dublin being 107.4 and 113.3 miles respectively.



fig 1

After the introduction of mileage marks in 1808, that of Ballymoney showed 108 miles (from Dublin) and Ballycastle was 113 miles. Oddly enough the mileage for Ballymoney was increased to 118 in 1809. In that year the Belfast and Coleraine day coach commenced operation and the official distance from Dublin to Belfast became longer than hitherto. Before 1809 the mail from Dublin to Ballymoney went by horsepost via Banbridge via Moira, Glenavy, Antrim and Ballymena. The Ballycastle mileage also changed. Moxter² mentions 114 for 1814 and no less than 140 for the years 1824 and 1834. Although the new mileage was used for purposes of calculation, the old mileage marks remained in use for many years (fig 2). This may confirm a supposition I had many years ago that mileage marks were not always used for the calculation of the rates. On a postal map of Ireland for 1832 we see a dotted line between Ballycastle and Belfast implying a foot post, whilst the thin line shown between Ballycastle and Ballymoney indicated service by mail cart. At that time the mileage for Ballymoney was 119 (the one mile difference made no difference to rates) but the mileage for Ballycastle is reduced to 132 in place of

the earlier 140. Clearly the new mileage was via Belfast, a shorter distance. I have an 1833 letter showing the Ballymoney 119 mileage mark but I am still searching for the 132 mark of Ballycastle. Ballycastle was certainly using a 140 mileage as late as 1834², so perhaps a 132 mark does not exist!



fig 2

Places between Ballymoney and Ballycastle

In a return of 1837³ no penny post office is recorded under either Ballymoney or Ballycastle. Yet we know of a Penny Post at Ballymoney with sub offices but all are recorded after 1840. Dervock is a special case as it is recorded as a posttown with a mileage of 120 (seen on items dated 1812 and 1817) and 122 in 1832-33². The information provided by Smith¹ is somewhat confusing in that he quotes Dervock in 1810 as under the control of Ballycastle, whilst in 1852 he shows it as under Ballymoney (fig 3). Mosside is recorded as a receiving house under Ballymoney in 1846 (fig 4) and Armoys similarly in 1847 (fig 5).



fig 3 – reverse of 1844 item from Dervock to Ballymoney

The Ballycastle Railway and its RSOs (Railway Sub Offices)

The Ballycastle Railway was built to a gauge of 3ft (0.91m) and ran 16¼ miles from Ballymoney to Ballycastle (fig 6). It connected with the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway, subsequently the



fig 4 – Mosside to Ballymoney in 1846

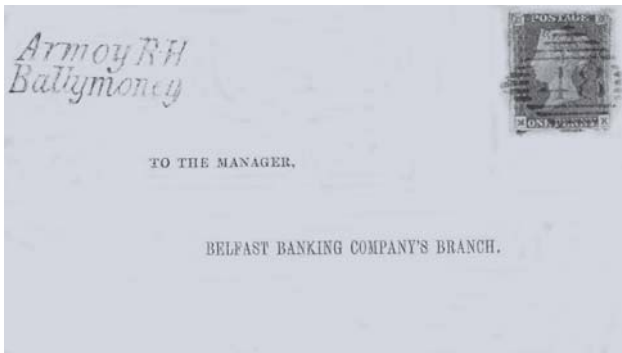


fig 5 – Armoy to Ballymoney in 1847

Northern Counties Committee (NCC) line at Ballymoney. It opened on 18 October 1880 and from the start it was in financial difficulty. It closed briefly on 24 March 1924, reopening on 11 August of that year after the main line had been taken over by the NCC. Final closure took place on 3 July 1950 by which time operation was under the control of the Ulster Transport Authority (UTA)⁴ Mail is believed to have carried from the outset and for most of the line's life services comprised three return journeys each day, taking between 50 minutes and an hour.

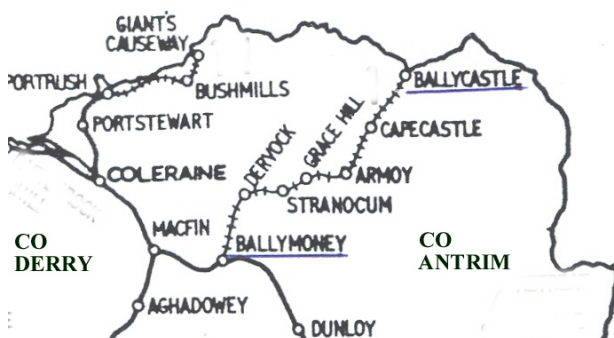


Fig 6 – Railways in North Antrim

Railway Sub Offices

The first Railway Sub Office (RSO) to be so named by the British Post Office was at Braco, Perthshire (Scotland) in 1856. The aim of these so-designated sub offices was to simplify accounting and improve service⁵. The railway sub offices could exchange mail directly with a travelling post office without the interference of a head office. Yet, several offices were designated RSO whilst they were not situated anywhere near a railway, the most extreme

examples being Sark RSO (Channel Islands) and Stromness RSO (Orkney Islands). Hence, some postal historians have incorrectly suggested that RSO also meant Rural Sub Office. According to Smith¹, Armoy, Dervock and Stranocum (which had a 'postally dependant sub office' at Mosside)⁶ were created RSOs on 1 September 1891. No further intermediate places on the Ballycastle Railway are noted as being a RSO. So far as is known datestamps did not include the lettering 'RSO' until the early 1900s; that for Armoy is recorded between 1903 and 1923, that of Dervock between 1905 and 1909, whilst none is recorded for Stranocum. Examples are shown in fig 7. (A detailed listing of Irish RSO postmarks was given in the Irish Philately in issues between September 1998 and December 1999 – Ed). The designation RSO was abolished in 1905⁷ but many handstamps showing RSO remained in use as late as the 1930s.



Fig 7 – Examples of Armoy and Dervock RSO postmarks

Railway letters

Until relatively recently, it was possible to hand a letter to the guard of a train at railway stations. For this extra service, one had to pay an extra fee by means of a Railway Letter stamp. On arrival at the terminus, there were two options, either for the letter to be called for or to be posted on arrival. An example is shown in fig 8, the sender choosing the second option. In this example the ½d stamps the letter was put on the train at Armoy and the stamps cancelled on arrival at Ballycastle (29 JU 06). The letter is assumed to have subsequently travelled by the Larne to Stranraer Packet to Nottingham which

it transited on 30 June, arriving at Newark on the same day. At that time, this was probably the fastest way of sending a letter from Northern Ireland to England (provided the letter had been sent in the correct direction via Ballymoney and Ballymena to Larne – Ed). Today, the internet user scornfully refers to this as ‘snail mail’!

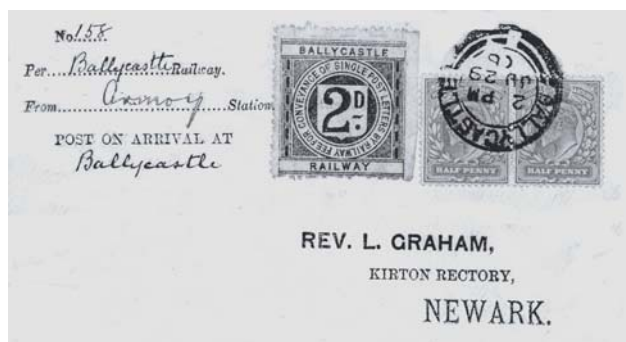


Fig 8 – Ballycastle Railway letter

References

1. Co Antrim post offices, a listing compiled by Ken Smith, updated 25.10.2006.
2. Hans G Moxter – ‘The Mileage Marks of Ireland 1808-1839’ published by FAI 1985.
3. Return to an order of the Honourable House of Commons, dated 10 February 1837, with the names of all places in Great Britain and Ireland in which a Penny Post is established.
4. Information provided by Cees Janssen, Zoetermeer, Netherlands.
5. A M Goodbody - ‘The Railway Sub Offices of Great Britain and Ireland’ published by the Railway Philatelic Group 1983.
6. Post Office Guide 1895.
7. Post Office Circular 28 June 1905.

THE EDITOR’S CHALLENGE

In the last edition of Irish Philately I issued a challenge to our members to locate ‘Philatelic Guinnessiana’ (even if our printer managed to omit the ‘G’ of Guinness in the title !!). Bill O’Connor has produced a First Day Cover to alcohol free Pakistan (perhaps they were more liberal in those days!) but my winner has to be Peter Wood who has produced a modern (c2003) address label with a pint shaped ‘stamp’. Peter will be receiving a small reward from me but with a collection such as his I am pushed to know what I can usefully find for him!



A NEW CHALLENGE: This edition’s challenge is a little more serious. I show on our front cover an item which came my way towards the end of last year and I need **YOUR HELP**.

The cover bearing the 2d map stamp, the correct US rate at the time, was posted at Dun Laoghaire on 4 October 1928 with alongside a 5c US airmail stamp endorsed ‘Airmail from New York’. The US stamp

has been cancelled at Hudson Terminal on arrival at New York on 12 October and there is an Oakland, California arrival mark of 16 October on the reverse. 5c US represented 2½d at the time.

It has been suggested to me that ‘Several overseas postal authorities sold US airmail stamps for US internal airmail’. A correspondent in the USA has advised that US stamps were sold in Australia for US internal airmail at this time but there is no reference to Ireland.

I have contacted David MacDonnell and airmail specialist Karl Winkelmann and drawn a relative blank. David’s response is ‘British postage stamps were on sale in the GPO up to the 1990s. I do not remember seeing US stamps there, but there was at least one other country represented’, whilst Karl advises ‘I do remember that when I was in school in the 1960s we were able to buy some small value British stamps from the Bursar but when he was out of them we were told that they could be bought at one of the counters in the GPO. I seem to recall doing so myself but cannot confirm that US stamps were also available. The facility for buying foreign stamps for whatever purpose would be essentially the same because the stamps being supplied were for internal use in that country. I had a look in my Eolai an Phoist 1931-32 but cannot find anything there. Maybe some of the earlier ones have something but that is my earliest one’.

I can trace no earlier reference, but do you, our membership, have anything to add?

FIFTY YEARS AN I.P.C. MEMBER - Rev'd Michael Noonan

I recently discovered Michael Noonan's name on the membership list for 1960 and therefore, I believe he may be our longest serving member. He has kindly written these reminiscences for us - Ed

Beginnings: The present of a stamp album, a packet of hinges and a selection of stamps for my tenth birthday in 1939 was the start of an adventure that has lasted all my life. I was fascinated by the strange looking stamps and the names of all the countries. My quest for more stamps began. I tore off the stamps from all incoming letters, soaked the paper from the backs of them and put them in my album. In the "Beano" and the "Dandy" I found offers from dealers in England and soon I was writing to them for the bargains they had to offer. Slowly my collection began to grow. Every visit to Woolworths or Easons meant the purchase of another packet of stamps.

Dublin: In my early twenties I moved to the Dublin area and it was then I found a lovely little stamp shop on the Quays in Dublin, near the Ha'penny Bridge. The little old man who ran the shop was most helpful and he had thousands of stamps for sale. I remember the thrill when one day he offered me a small album containing a collection of stamps from Monaco for the princely sum of two pounds. At the time I had recently acquired a Stanley Gibbons Simplified Catalogue, so I was able to spend hours checking out how much each stamp was worth. I felt like a mini-millionaire!

A Great Friend: It was around 1955 that I first met Michael Giffney, a man who was to have a big influence on my philatelic life and a great friend. Michael invited me to join the Dublin Stamp Society and here he introduced me to so many enthusiastic collectors. I got to know Bill Kane, Dr. Quigley, Fred Dixon, Norah Wright, Alf Langenbach, Jack O'Neill, Seamus Kearns and Ian Whyte. I was struck by the wealth of their knowledge and the standard of expertise shown in their monthly exhibitions. In a way, it all made me feel very inadequate, knowing that my petty collection could never measure up to their high standards. But it gave me something to aim for. Around this time Michael encouraged me to join the Eire Philatelic Association and also the Irish Philatelic Circle and thanks to their regular publications, my enthusiasm was maintained.

Shanahans; It was in 1955 that I heard about Shanahans Auctions in Dun Laoghaire and there I came across the famous Dr. Singer. Something made me a little suspicious about the whole

operation and though I attended many of the auctions, I wasn't tempted to make any bids. I was tempted by the stories of the fantastic interest that people were getting on the money they invested in Dr. Singer's schemes, but being an undergraduate at the time, I had no spare money. Just as well!

Specialising: By now I was coming to the realisation that collecting the whole world was an impossible task, so I began to specialise in Irish stamps. At this time it was possible to walk into the GPO in Dublin and buy whole sheets of stamps from O'Connell onwards. I'm sorry now that I didn't invest. I remember buying a sheet of the 1941 Soldier stamps and then breaking it up to use as postage, keeping only the 'Broken statue' and 'Broken windows' varieties.

Societies: In the 1960's I was teaching in Knockbeg College, Carlow and there I started a stamp club for the students. Around this time, together with Gerry Hosey, Billy Ellis and Martin Brophy I set up the Carlow Stamp Society. We were a bunch of real amateurs but for a while the society flourished. We even organised a Stamp Exhibition and had a special postmark for the occasion. But we ran out of ideas and the members began to lose interest, and soon the club died a natural death.

A Real Expert: It was at this time that the late Fr. John Brennan was appointed a Curate in my native parish. Our mutual love of stamps ensured that we became close friends and he was a wonderful help in encouraging my dedication for the hobby. But again there was a downside. He had such an outstanding collection of the High Value Overprints and a comprehensive knowledge of all aspects of the printing varieties of these stamps, that I could only look on and marvel at his expertise. But we remained great friends right up to his death.

Disappointments: Like every collector I dreamt of the day I would discover the famous variety or acquire that special rarity. But it never happened. Twice in my Carlow days I thought we had stumbled on something worthwhile. We discovered a copy of the 9d First Dail (1969) with a very definite colour shift of the value tablet, but when we reported it to some stamp magazines, they weren't interested (*fig 1 – on next page*). Then there was the 'button-hole' on row 8, stamp 1 of the 4d Combat Racism stamp of 1971. All the Post Offices in the Carlow area had sheets of stamps with this variety, whereas Post Offices in the Portlaoise area has no sign of this variety, but had smaller 'button holes'

on stamps 8 and 9 of row 8. We had a number of copies of these varieties, but they never got listed in the catalogues (fig 2 – below).



fig 1 – the colour shift



fig 2 – the 'button hole'

Personal Satisfaction: A few things in my collection give me great satisfaction. When I was in America I discovered that in Dakota there were towns called 'Michael' and 'Noonan' and so, I wrote to the postmasters there and got both postmarks. Another treasured item arose following the death of John F. Kennedy. When he was assassinated, an American friend wrote to me and asked me to say a Mass for the dead President, but he added a further obligation. He asked me to write to Jacqueline Kennedy and tell her that he had had the Mass offered. I did that and in return I got one of those envelopes that instead of a postage stamp had Jackie's signature.

Retirement: For the last thirty years pressure of work has meant that I haven't had time for my stamps. I became an accumulator rather than a collector. But now that I have retired I am blessed that I have such a wonderful hobby. I now spend hours putting everything in order. Mounting my commemoratives, sorting my slogans, examining my postmarks and trying to puzzle out those definitives that Brian Warren writes so expertly about.....these are the problems and the pleasures

that occupy me these days. My thanks to all the editors of Irish Philately for those interesting and learned articles that they continue to provide us with, and might I say, that I am delighted that Irish Philately has begun the latest series on the Irish Commemoratives and their varieties.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

UPU Colours

I hope Graeme Murray will forgive** me but I must correct an error in the second paragraph on page 90 of Irish Philately for December 2009. The official UPU colours from about 1890 were:-

Printed Matter – Green
Postcard – Red
Letter – Blue.

The UPU only laid down these colours for international (i.e. "foreign" mail). There were never official UPU colours for internal mail (or for Empire/Commonwealth mail).

Some countries were much better than others in observing the colours, with the French and Swiss especially trying to observe the requirement. Dublin paid only vague attention to UPU colour rules. Britain was mostly right as witness the colour changes in 1950-51 to tie in with the colour requirements. As an extra point of information I would add that multi-colour printing of stamps and inflation finally killed off the UPU rules on colours. Can you imagine countries today changing the colours of stamps almost every year (as GB did in 1949/50) just to keep the UPU happy?

Sincerely
Joe Robertson
Basingstoke, Hampshire

** It is not Graeme Murray who has any forgiving to do, for it is I, your ill-informed editor, who added this piece to Graeme's article in the last issue, in order to make his contribution fill the space available (an editorial hazard waiting to happen I fear). My apologies to all concerned and thanks to Joe for putting me on the right lines

As an aside, an interesting exercise would be to go through the stamps of various countries in the period 1900-1950 and see just how many did and did not conform! I think Britain always hoped after 1919 that 1d penny postage would ultimately be restored!

INTERVIEW – ANDY BALLARD

London based dealer Andy Ballard will be known to many members either in person from his regular appearances at Stampex each year or from his 'green' auction lists which come through many of our letterboxes at regular intervals. It was at Stampex last year that I managed to persuade him to leave his stand for a few moments to tell a little bit about his life in stamps.

SC Andy, I have always thought of you as a London boy?

AB Close. I was born in Kent and went on to London University. I did a masters degree in 20th Century British foreign policy and then trained to be a teacher, taking a postgrad certificate.

So how come you got into stamps?

I'd been interested since boyhood. I had a great aunt in New Zealand who was often sending packages home. I liked the stamps and as a youngster started collecting New Zealand. Stamps still served as school 'crazes' in those days and I was soon selling off duplicates. Monetary transactions between boys were strictly prohibited but I finished up with pennies to spend at Maidstone stamp shop for all that. That got me going originally.

Did you ever teach?

No! I applied for a couple of teaching jobs but didn't get them. With hindsight, that was a blessing. It was summer 1978, stamps were booming and Royale Stamp Company in London was advertising for staff. Stuart Babbington of Murray Payne was there at the time, as was Gerry Brown. I stayed until 1990. Sadly, the company was not doing well by then. It had been bought some years earlier at the peak and the market had largely collapsed

But where does the Irish interest come from?

Like so much in life it came about by accident. I was a 'Commonwealth' man; I'd starting learning GB. We were buying a lot of collections; one day a stock book of Ireland arrived. It fell to me to price up that stock book and I finished up selling most of it to an American dealer. It was at Stampex 1979 that I first met Ian Whyte and David MacDonnell and they took a lot of Irish material from me. It was all stamps in those days, postal history was just beginning to take off. We were wholesaling Irish stamps; we built up a specialised Irish stock and that led to one meeting the specialised collectors – the name of Cyril Dulin immediately springs to mind but there were many others in those days.



You say the market has changed?

A lot. Stamps were seen as an investment in the 1970s. They were, you might say, 'the thing'. It was different then; there were less investment opportunities available to people in an age of exchange controls. In the 1980s 'popular shares' came along with privatisations and that along with holiday homes and the like mopped has up a lot of surplus cash.

Your first visit to Ireland?

I first came to Stampex in 1982 and have now done 28 consecutive shows on the trot. There were problems with customs in those days – I recall dealing with carnets and interminable forms. I recall one incident when a customs officer started checking the covers – he found a cover with a 'PAID AT GALWAY' mark and was amazed to find that Galway had a post office in 1840! As time went by, I found myself concentrating more and more on Irish material. It was a nice sideline for Royale. Collections were still coming onto the market in the 80s, unlike today.

So you went on your own in 1990?

Yes; I resigned my directorship. I have no regrets about going out on my own. Royale, in fact, subsequently found itself in liquidation. They had been a great company to work for; we were a group of individuals doing our own thing but supporting one another. But the time had come to move on. Home is Lewisham in southeast London and that has proved a good base.

Andy, I think it is fair to suggest that you are largely seen as a postal history specialist.

I've always been interested in postal history. I made some mistakes to start with, of course. I've learnt a lot from collectors, especially Cyril (Dulin) who was happy to point out the errors of my ways. Of course the market has trended that way. One is selling covers for a few pounds today that would have been unlikely to find a home for in the 70s. Most of my buys today are from other dealers and at auction. I need to chase around to buy; it is by far the hardest part of the business. There is more specialisation and buying gets harder and harder.

Will stamps make a comeback?

They never really went out. Good material will always sell. Commonwealth is the same. The market is becoming more and more collector orientated. Fortunately I never got swept up with the 'investment nonsense'. My enjoyment is servicing collections and reputation is very important for me. To be truthful it is a dying hobby. Just look at the age profile. There are no kids today – just look at Stampex. I'd like to think that there will always be stamp collectors who display the pleasure of the collector, who don't look at life as an

investor, those who enjoy collecting and have fun with the material.

Do you collect yourself?

Kent postcards. I am always happy to spend out on good cards.

Are you ever sad to sell a good item?

I have a few items which stay in stock and I never show. not so much Irish but other countries which remain my secret!

Your family, Andy?

My wife is now a school chaplain, previously she taught Spanish. Sadly our two children, Anna, 24 and Chris, 21, show no interest in stamps. We are very happy at Lewisham – we've been in the same house since 1981.

In conclusion?

I love what I do but stamps are so labour intensive. This is a show I particularly enjoy. One should make a living doing as I do but never a fortune; that said, I just thank the Lord I never went into teaching!

A ROUTE FORGOTTEN



The recent acquisition of the above cover (a commercial usage dated September 1902) serves as a reminder of the long withdrawn ferry services from Heysham in Lancashire and Holyhead to Greenore, Co Louth which connected into the Dundalk, Newry and Greenore railway service to Newry and thence to Belfast. The railway closed in 1951 when the final ferry service was terminated. To this day, Greenore remains a busy commercial port but the hotel is long gone.



(crest on reverse of cover)

To my knowledge, no cross-channel mail was ever carried on the route 'via Greenore'. Please tell me if I am wrong.

This cover together with the articles on pages 11 (Dundalk Station) and 14 (Newry Head Office) combine to give a fleeting insight to the postal history of an often forgotten corner of Ireland that has suffered so much as a result of partition.

This article will have the effect of tidying up the 'oddballs' from the articles which have appeared in recent issues of Irish Philately. In those issues, I have worked my way through a hoard of some 600 covers addressed from Northern Ireland to a mission in Co Wicklow, those covers being from the years 1984 to 2004. Now, in order to round off the subject of 'premium rate' mail I take this opportunity of showing other related services operated by the British Post Office which our readers in the Republic and elsewhere beyond these islands are unlikely to see, the services being officially restricted to internal British usage.

Fig 1 below shows an example of the Royal Mail 'Guaranteed Delivery' service – an internal service but used erroneously at Toomebridge to Co Wicklow, for the service was not available to the Republic. This November 1993 item is stamped at the correct internal rate (£2.94) for such an item, but quite simply the service did not exist to the Republic so one must assume the item was treated as 'International Registered' although there is no evidence of such treatment. The hoard yielded just one such cover.



fig 1

This service, introduced on 28 June 1993 superceded both the internal 'Express' and 'Registered' services on that date. Royal Mail described the service as a 'Premium Service'. With advances in technology bar coded tracking became available within the United Kingdom and delivery was guaranteed for the following day. The initial cost was £2.94 (£2.70 plus internal postage of 24p). It is also believed that Royal Mail in casting aside the word 'Registered' may have been seeking to reduce the apparent attractiveness of items sent by the service to those of evil intent!

By c1995 the service had been renamed 'special delivery' and a different and smaller label was affixed at top left now specifying a 12.30pm guaranteed delivery time the following day. I do not have an example of the service used to the Republic; however fig 2 shows an example of the service used

from a Co Tyrone office to Guernsey in July 1996 (note year above date in the datestamp). The charge was now £2.95.



fig 2

By c2000 the label affixed to such mail was changed again and the service now called, at least on the label 'Special Delivery 12' as a 12noon delivery was now guaranteed to all but a few far flung destinations (mostly Scottish and Channel islands). Unsurprisingly, an example of this internal British service has been found in the 'hoard of covers' addressed to the Republic (fig 3). As noted above the service does not exist to the Republic. The opportunity is taken to note that Royal Mail also currently operate a 'Special Delivery 9' service with a 9am delivery guaranteed – one pays a high premium for this service, effectively a courier delivery service. Your editor has not seen an example of the service used in, to or from Northern Ireland.



fig 3

One further service was introduced by Royal Mail in June 1993 – 'Registered Plus' to provide registration for higher value packets up to £1,000. The service was little used and was withdrawn by c1998. An example (fig 4 on next page) is shown from a border office in Co Fermanagh dated June 1995 on an item unlikely to have carried more than a certificate, there being some confusion at many smaller offices as to the need for registration rather than special or recorded delivery, No example of this service used to the Republic has been seen – such should, of course, not exist.



fig 4



fig 5

Finally Fig 5 shows an example of a well used British internal service 'Recorded Delivery'. This service carries limited compensation and primarily serves to obtain proof of delivery. Introduced c1960, this service is not and never has been available to the Republic, not even when the Republic was treated as 'internal' (prior to 20 October 1986). However, over the years I have seen several examples of the service being so used in error, fig 5 showing such from Birmingham to Galway dated November 1993 (I do not have an example from Northern Ireland). The postmark shows that Recorded Delivery items are not given special treatment throughout the journey. The item is placed in the 'normal' mail sack at the office of acceptance, passes through cancelling machines and is only treated separately when 'walk sorted' for delivery. It is most unlikely that any signature was obtained on delivery at Galway – there was simply no mechanism to do so.

Readers will be relieved to learn that brings my study of modern British Premium Rate mail to a close. One aspect on which I, perhaps, should comment is the use of Northern Irish regional stamps. From the illustrations included in these articles it will be noted that little used is made of those values over and above the basic first and second class letter rates. Whilst it would be wrong to describe commercial usage of such values as rare, I have concluded that such usage is sufficiently scarce to merit being regarded as very collectible and given time, I suggest we will find that commercial use of those stamps on clean covers may come to be regarded as 'little gems'. Equally, examples of many of the individual short lived registered rates will also prove to be elusive. Quite simply the registered/ premium services are not used today as they had been in the past and all too often the envelopes are of an uncollectible size – I for one have given up checking through the office mail each day and I suspect I am not alone!

DUNDALK STATION

I have been passed an extract from the Dundalk Argus of October 1989 which I trust that learned journal will not mind our plagiarising in part.

A lease was originally entered into between Her Majesty's Postmaster at Dundalk and the Great Northern Railway (I) in 1894 and was finally terminated in October 1989 when use of the railway for the carriage of mail ceased at Dundalk. The office had been located close to the ticket office and had been used to sort both letters and parcels. At one time three staff were employed, a sorter, a postman and a clerk and both letters and parcels could be posted at the station.

The lease was amended in 1927 so that the Department of Posts and Telegraphs replaced the local Head Postmaster.

The Station postmark is not especially scarce and two examples are shown below.



These are respectively recorded in use from 1930 to 1935 and from 1939 to 1957. Another mark similar to the latter item but with larger lettering is known used in 1937 and a skeleton (my copy not being fit to reproduce) was in use in September 1938.

DR STAFFORD JOHNSON KSG, MB, B Ch (NUI) (1888-1983) A SHORT BIOGRAPHY - Héloïse Mitchell

Born in Cork in 1888, Dr John Stafford Johnson came to Dublin, to 6 St Mary's Road in Ballsbridge, where he lived from c1914 until the early 1940s, after which he moved to 15 Fitzwilliam Square. He served in the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) during World War I, which brought him to Africa, India and the Middle East. One of the leading medical practitioners of his day, with a practice at 21 Upper Fitzwilliam Street in Dublin, he was an ear, nose and throat surgeon attached to the Richmond Hospital in Dublin and St Michael's Hospital in Dun Laoghaire. His youngest son, Barney Johnson, was a gardening expert who hosted Ireland's first gardening series on RTE in the 1970s, and his grandson, Colin Stafford-Johnson, is a wildlife cinematographer who also appears on RTE.

The 1923 *Who's Who in Philately* lists his interests as "GB line-engraved, USA to 1869, Spain, Triangular Capes and India". However, the 1937 volume specifies "Irish postmarks and postal history; Hungary". He concentrated on Irish stamps and postal history, forming remarkable collections of Irish postal markings, postage stamps used in Ireland and the Newspaper Stamps of Ireland. He acquired several 'earliest known' markings and other rarities over the years, and one of his major discoveries was the Dublin Dockwra-type marking. He had a particular fondness for pre-stamp entires and the Dublin Penny Post and he also formed an unusual sideline collection of objects connected with the postal service, such as pistols used by mail coach guards; old handstamps; a mail bag used for secret despatches from Dublin Castle; and various rare early postal road maps.

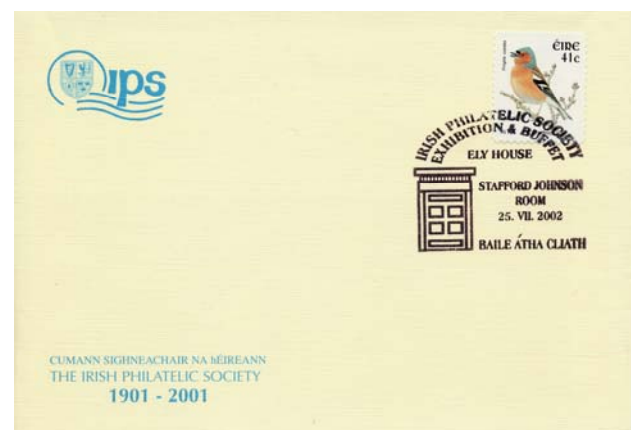
Stafford Johnson became a member of the Irish Philatelic Society (founded in 1901) around 1917 and took over as Honorary Secretary and Librarian in November 1920 but, unfortunately, pressure of work brought about his resignation in March 1923. He was in office during the hectic year of the 1922 Irish overprints and was twice responsible for thwarting the racketeers. In his early days as Secretary, he established the format of a display and bourse at all meetings and this has remained virtually unchanged to this day. The Stafford Johnson Cup for the Specialised Class in the Irish Philatelic Society remains as a memorial to him since its institution in 1983.

Stafford Johnson was on the organising committee of the third Irish Philatelic Exhibition, held in the National Museum, Kildare Street from 23 October to 4 November 1944, under the auspices of the Irish



Philatelic Society. He is recorded as having provided three notable exhibits, as well as being a judge of the other entries.

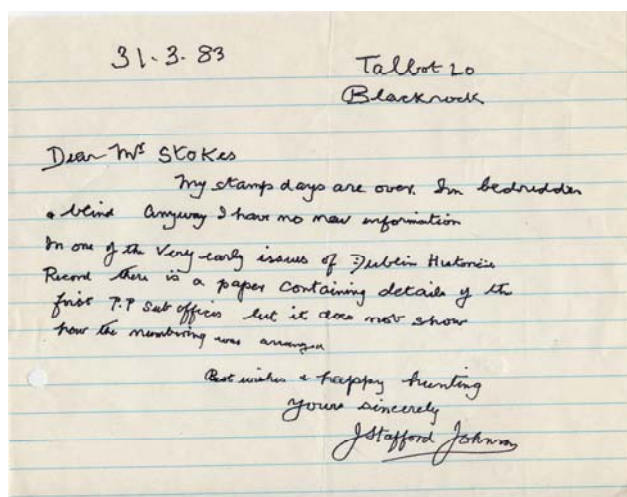
His name is perpetuated in Ely House, headquarters of the Knights of Columbanus, where there is a Stafford Johnson Room commemorating his period as Chief Knight from 1942 to 1948. It is the finest room in the building and is renowned for its superb Stapleton plasterwork on walls and ceiling. His portrait hangs in Ely House with that of the other Supreme Knights, and the Irish Philatelic Society, of which he had so long been a member, has held its fortnightly meetings there since 1994.



He was deeply involved with the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes from 1950 until the 1970s, being its medical leader, a member of the Bureau Médical International de Lourdes, which examined the medical evidence of 'cures' at Lourdes, and Vice-President of the Dublin Hospitalité, the group of

volunteers, nurses and doctors who worked for the pilgrimage. The title of Knight of the Papal Order of St Gregory (KSG), was bestowed on him in recognition of his work for the Lourdes Pilgrimage, and it was through his connection with the Lourdes Pilgrimage and with Ely House that he became the closest lay friend of John Charles McQuaid, Archbishop of Dublin.

Stafford Johnson sold most of his collection while he could still use the proceeds, putting some of the money into a fund to send invalids to Lourdes. His Irish postal history collection was auctioned by Robson Lowe on 2 April 1958, and the 243 lots fetched what seemed very high prices at the time: 66 sub-office markings sold for £20; 416 mileage marks made £57; the H & K Collection, including "Saved from SS Leinster", went for £44; and a Penny Black FDC from Cork fetched £67. This was not the end of his philatelic career - for several years he persevered with plating the Brazil bi-colour issues of the 1890s but failing eyesight forced him to abandon this project not long before he died.



above: perhaps his last philatelic letter written shortly before his death, addressed to Arthur Stokes.

Few covers addressed to Dr Stafford Johnson appear to have survived. Alongside, with his name misspelled, is an example dated July 1938. This was clearly sent to him for the postmark which must rank as the ultimate in rubber skeleton postmarks, the office name being completely omitted but believed to have been used at Coon, Co Kilkenny.

Awards and achievements

- Various exhibition awards, including Silver for Lombardy-Venezia at Berlin in 1930
- Elected a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society of London in 1926
- A member of the 'Ireland Study Circle' (forerunner of the Irish Philatelic Circle)
- A member of the Postal History Society from its foundation in 1936, in which he made the Irish Study Circle its most active study group.
- The first signatory, in 1980, of the Irish Roll of Distinguished Philatelists

Publications and Research

- ***The Dublin Penny Post Office 1773-1840*** (1938)
- ***Postal Markings of the H & K Packet Service*** (1938)
- ***Irish Mileage Marks*** (1939)
- ***Irish Charity Stamps*** (1939)
- ***The Dublin Penny Post*** (Dublin Historical Record No. 3, 1942)
- Revised, and contributed to, the ***Handbook of Irish Postal History to 1840*** (1975)
- Made a major contribution to the Irish sections of the Alcock and Holland Handbook

Stafford Johnson published many important articles on Irish philately in Alcock's ***Philatelic Adviser*** and other journals. Most of his writings concerned postal history as what little had been produced was sketchy and unreliable. He was the first person to undertake comprehensive philatelic research by studying records and directories and looking at vast quantities of old letters, which could be bought very cheaply at the time.

Stafford Johnson, Ireland's most eminent philatelist and postal historian, died on 12 August 1983 in the Talbot Lodge Nursing Home in Blackrock, Co. Dublin soon after his 95th birthday. He is buried in Dean's Grange Cemetery.



THE OPENING OF NEWRY HEAD OFFICE – 12 JUNE 1963

In this edition we vary our usual post office page to make use of an item which has recently arrived on my desk thanks to An Post regional office at Dundalk – a copy of the programme for the opening of Newry's Head Office in 1963, a building which as will be seen from our 1994 photograph (*thanks to the late Tony Graham*), that did little to ingratiate its surroundings.

The Programme was-

- 3pm Guests assemble
- 3.05 Mr H Stevenson – Head Postmaster
- 3.15 Col M G Holmes – Director N.I. Post Office
- 3.25 Mr H H Wightman - Architect
- 3.30 UDC Chairman – Mr T Markey makes the first purchase
- 3.40 Mr W V Hogg – Chamber of Commerce President
- 3.45 Mr P Crilly – Staff representative
- 3.50 Tour of the building followed by refreshments

The programme then provided some notes about Newry Head Office

1. The foundation stone of the old office was laid on 22 February 1899 and the office was opened on 24 March 1900. The cost of the building was £5,700. The contractor was Mr Alex Whelan of Newry.

2. The new building in Hill Street was designed by Mr H H Wightman, of the Chief Architect's Branch, Ministry of Finance. The main contractor was John Sinton Ltd of Tanderagee. The building cost over £62,000.

3. The sorting office space has increased from 1,700 sq feet to 3,760 sq feet and the public office space from 567 sq feet to 840 sq feet.

4. The number of letters and parcels delivered weekly in the town of Newry has increased since 1913, the earliest available record, as follows:- Letters 22,400 (1.8 per head of population) to 40,800 (3.2 per head). Parcels from 750 (.06 per head) to 1,600 (.13 per head). The total number of letters and parcels passing through the Newry Head office has increased as follows:-

	1924	1963
Letters	92,000	204,600
Parcels	2,400	6,200

5. There is a postal staff of 38 and an administrative and counter staff of 22 employed at the Head Post

Office. There is a fleet of 15 vans at the Head Office and 10 at subordinate offices.



6. The turnover at the Newry counter of all types of business is about £27,000 per week. Some of the individual figures are:- pensions and allowances paid £10,000, Postal drafts paid £4,600, Money and Postal orders paid £2,500, National Insurance stamps sold £2,800, Postage stamps sold £300.

7. There are 42 subordinate offices in the 270 sq miles of area controlled by Newry Head Office stretching along the whole South Down coastline to Glassdummond, embracing the whole of South Armagh, stretching north to Poyntzpass and eastwards to Rathfriland, Hilltown, Cabra and Killoo areas. There is a postal delivery staff of 73 in the subordinate area.

8. The Head Postmaster is Mr H Stevenson since 1 September 1960. The Assistant Head Postmaster is Mr T J Cunningham since 19 March 1961.

Editor's notes:

a) It was the same Col Holmes, at this time, Director of the Post Office in Northern Ireland that arranged for your editor to be shown around London's Mount Pleasant and Foreign Section offices c1971 when he was, from memory, London Region Controller immediately prior to his retirement.

b) To equate 1963 prices to 2009, multiply by around 30 times. The £300 of stamps sold weekly was the equivalent of 24,000 'first class' stamps.

c) Of the 204,600 letters it is estimated that at that time perhaps some 2/3rds would have been small 'collectible' envelopes at that time. Not so now!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1.10 New member Anders Jorgensen in Denmark has sent a scan of the enclosed label which has Irish stamps (uncancelled as seems to be the increasing practise), a 'nasty' label and a British 'Postage Paid' mark seemingly dated 5 days after the item was originally sent and asks for explanations. Could it be that the item was forwarded and the British mark applied to show it was prepaid?



2.10 Tony Best believes he has located a copy of the 2d die II Harrison 5 line coil (Hibernian T24, SG 29a) with reversed watermark but not with inverted watermark (which is listed by Hibernian as T24wc, Gibbons 29ay). He surmises that at least 239 more must exist but has any member ever seen one?

2.11 Tony also notes an example of the 2d die II 3 line overprint (Hibernian T50, SG 55) with frame break under 'N' of pence. His example is in a control block of 6. He enquires 'has it been recorded on used copies' (*I don't see why not – Ed*) or on the coil stamps? He also notes that all his other examples of the break appear on the 5 line overprints and wonders if this could be from a 'stray sheet'? (*which would shut me up! – Ed*)

ANSWERS

7.09 David MacDonnell writes - 1872 Irish telegraphic circular date impressions are common, only for this year, because of a large quantity of

telegram forms purchased from a paper merchant by Charles Nissen. Please see the various histories of the Stock Exchange shilling forgery. (for anybody who does not know the story of the Stock Exchange Forgery, I suggest a Google or Wikipedia search on the net should reveal all!)

8.09 David MacDonnell comments - TPO 495 looks like it may belong to a previous series, and may not be the one issued to the Sorting Carriages (TPO 190 is a much more squat diamond and D67/D68 were tall ovals). I would add that I agree with David. There is little doubt that there were some numbers in the 470s and 480s allocated which have not been recorded in the surviving lists. I believe that some may well have been allocated in the late 1850s when mail coach routes were revised in Cork and Kerry. Of that more another day but I would welcome reports of any items that do not feature in the Brumell list. Ed.

LATE FEES. In the last issue the subject of Late Fees was aired. Although correspondence was invited, the only response has, once again, come from David, who adds 'Re Late Fees: Fred Dixon repeatedly wrote on the difficulties of distinguishing the private late charges levied as perquisites by P.O. Staff, and official charges, up to about 1850. Please see our Auction catalogue lot 144 (May 2009) for a picture of a letter at the late window, circa 1790. This is ex Fred. It is reasonably certain that Late Fees were not included in rates on Irish letters prior to 1840, and in Dublin later than that. If there is a late charge on the Belfast letter which Fred wrote about in 1961, it is almost certainly Edinburgh. Late fees went out with the introduction of Courier mail (*ie: c1995 – does anyone have an exact date? – Ed*). The FROM 7 to 8 PM mark must be viewed in light of the Mail Coach Route, and not just the time. The mail for this one probably closed at 6pm, and the Coach departure was at 8pm. It may be that, from 6 to 7pm, the late charge was 1d., from 7 to 7.30pm, 3d., and 7.30 to 7.45pm, 6d. (1846 PO Directory). The Adamstown item shows the top of the sliding scale at 6d. Late Fee.'

There is clearly a lot of work to do on this subject. I have not as yet been able to trace a full listing of the 'FROM - TO' marks of the 1840s, which is perhaps an good starting point. I would like to see more research done on the subject of Irish Express Mail in general – surely a subject for a series of future articles. I am hoping a volunteer will come forward to follow up on the subject and provide us with those articles. There must be some interesting covers out there for us to illustrate! Ed.

AUCTION WATCH - Erinman

Ebay having been very poor of late, I shall concentrate on MacDonnell Whyte Ltd's auction held in Dublin on 5th December 2009.

The auction featured several modern printing varieties. One of the feature items, was the recently discovered experimental 2007 Flowers 48c self adhesive booklet printing without phosphor frame and perf 13 (flat perfs) and with booklet cover in green map design instead of the original red GPO design. Only two booklets are known. The lot made 6750euro against an estimate of 5000euro

Not previously recorded, an example of the 1977 birds 32p robin ISSP printing with magenta omitted which results in the bird having a yellow breast and yellow berries instead of red, used on piece with a normal 32p and tied by a 10 x 97 cds of Dundalk, sold for 1300euro against a pre sale estimate of 750euro.

The continuing health of the varieties market was also illustrated by a 1998 Walsall phosphor 35p Stonechat in a right marginal pair with value omitted and with 35p value transposed to right. Each stamp having a single phosphor band in the centre. Only 10 pairs are possible from the only sheet recorded. The item made 2400euro (estimate 2000euro).

A less spectacular variety but one which a few years ago could be bought for around 80euro in unmounted mint condition is the 1990 Heritage 52p with variety black doubly printed. The lot on offer sold for 160euro.

Commemorative colour errors are also eagerly sort after. An example of the 1976 US Bicentenary 7p missing silver (country name and inscription omitted) unmounted mint went under the hammer for 2500euro against the pre sale estimate of 1500euro.

In the commemorative section, a lot which exceeded expectations was a complete sheet of 20 se-tenant pairs with gutter, unmounted mint with slight creasing of the 1995 Marconi/Radio 32p. A pre sale estimate of 40euro was quickly passed as the item sold for 360euro.

The highlight of the airmail section was a 1932 Mollison First Transatlantic East-West solo flight, ATLANTIC AIR MAIL AUGUST 1932 overprint in magenta on SE watermarked 1/- on cover tied PORT MEARNOG 16 V111 32 cds.

Against an estimate of 2000euro the item made 2700euro. A similar example on piece made 925euro.

The air stamps from the 1948-65 issue with *specimen* overprint are rarely seen. On offer were the 1d. 3d., 6d., and 1/- values unused with slight trace of gum. Against the pre sale estimate of 400euro the lot sold for 825euro.

As usual there was a very strong overprints section containing many choice and scarce items.

On offer were separate lots comprising the 1927 composite narrow and wide se-tenant pairs used on piece tied by Dublin 3 OC 27 cds.

These very scarce items made respectively 2/6d brown 2200euro (estimate 2000 euro), 5/-rose-red 4200euro (estimate 3000euro), 10/- blue 7250euro (estimate 5000euro).

Another outstanding item was a block of 4 proof overprints in blue on white wove paper. Each proof with Dollard handstamp ORIGINAL PROOF DOLLARD 17.2.22 on reverse and initialled BJB. The pre sale estimate of 4000euro was readily surpassed with the item going under the hammer for 6000euro.

Scarce controls are always in demand. A 1922 Thom 2d orange Die 1 (SG 12) 5 line overprint in black, in corner block of 6 with control T22 imperf in mint condition sold for 825euro (estimate 500euro). Similarly a 1 1/2d Thom 3 line overprint in blue/black (SG 54), corner block of 6 with control T22 imperf mint went under the hammer for 370euro (estimate 250 euro) and not to be outdone a 10d corner block of 6 (SG 62) with control T22 imperf made a healthy 700euro (estimate 450euro).

Amongst the later definitive issues on offer, were two lots, and as far as is known are unique, of coil leaders from the Gerl period. Described as "1970 Gum Arabic Coils: 2d Dog vertical coil, green leader T £4 for 480 stamps with strip of 16 incl. join, hs 23 SEP 1970. The item sold for 2500euro (estimate 1500euro). Similarly "3d dog vertical coil, blue leader Z £6 for 480 stamps with strip of 9, hs 25 Sep 1970, slight gum tones" made 250euro (estimate 1500euro).

A good result was obtained for the first definitive se watermarked set complete in unmounted mint gutter pairs. The set sold for 1550euro against the pre sale estimate of 1000euro.

The postal history section contained many desirable and choice items.

An unrecorded tiny *ship* in black dated 1753 and rated "11" with 19/AP London Bishop over flap sold for 1450euro (estimate 1000euro). The handstamp which is from the same correspondence as the 1745

shipp handstamp has not been definitely attributed to a specific port.

An 1815 entire from Firgrove to Mallow at 5d with clear INNOSHANNON/133 in black, unrecorded by Moxte, went under the hammer for 90euro (estimate 35euro) – see below (Ed).

An “1851 E Mauritius to London per Mary Ellen with Mauritius Ship Letter, crowned Mauritius/GPO cds and circular PAID, landed in Ireland and with blue QUEENSTOWN/SHIP LETTER and QUEENSTOWN cds, rated “8” uniform Ship Rate” sold for 675euro (estimate 500euro).

Continuing the interest in ship letters, an 1846 entire from Buenos Aires per HMS Pkt to Edinburgh landed at Crookhaven with black mixed face CROOKHAVEN/Penny Post and blue SKIBBEREEN/Ship Letter, rated “8”, (Crookhaven did not have a specific Ship Letter handstamp) attained a healthy 775euro against the pre sale estimate of 400euro.

The rarely seen lozenge PAID AT/KELLS in dark green (1846 front) and the same handstamp in bright blue on entire dated 1847 sold for 420euro (estimate 350euro)

An item which far exceeded expectations was an 1858 printed Postmasters Circular from G.C. Cornwall (Secretary GPO Dublin) introducing the system of green tape to distinguish registered mail selling for 525euro (estimate 75euro). Similarly an 1859 circular with instructions as to how to apply the special green tape made 410euro (estimate 75euro).

A cover to a passenger on the SS Eturia showing the framed SHIP SAILED of Queenstown in black, dated 1898 sold for 230euro (estimate 150euro).

Covers from the troubles always find ready buyers. An 1921 OHMS envelope tied BLACKROCK cds 21 JU and with violet handstamp CENSORED IRA, twice on face and on flap attracted a bid of 380euro (estimate 250euro). Similarly a 1921 newspaper wrapper dated with red PASSED BY CENSOR I.R.A. on face and reverse sold for 230euro (estimate 180euro) and a cover with large CENSORED/BY/I.R.A. of the type used at Dundrum dated 9th June 1921 made 280euro (estimate 150euro).

Transition covers are also in demand. A cover from Dublin to Boston UK bearing unoverprinted GB2d and charged 4D/186 on front and British 4d postage due, tied with Boston 4 Ap 22 and with Dublin cds 3Ap 22. This being the official first day that

surcharges should be raised on unauthorised use of GB stamps in the Provisional Government, sold for 525euro (estimate 350euro).

A less celebrated item being a RIALTAS Inspector of Taxes envelope with circular OFFICIAL/PAID but with crown removed dated Aug 10 1922 made 115euro against pre sale estimate of 50euro.

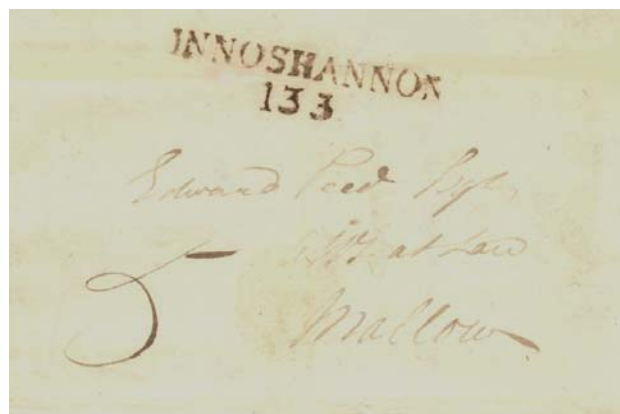
From the civil war period a “severely damaged” cover with 2 strikes of SALVED FROM/FIRE GPO DUBLIN and OFFICIALLY SEALED labels with “edge faults and front separated from back” attracted a winning bid of 390euro (estimate 250euro).

From the same period, a cover posted from Cork 3rd October 1922 to Bere Island, intercepted by rebels and with Recovered from Raided Mails and Post Office FOUND OPEN labels dated 9th October 1922 Bantry cds sold for 190euro (estimate 80euro).

Modern postal history should not be forgotten. On offer were two lots of 1969-70 from lighthouses or light vessels. One lot sold for 50euro (estimate 35euro) and the other for 105euro (estimate 60euro).

Booklets especially the early issues are eagerly bid over. An example of the 1944 2/- booklet serial 26 complete sold for 975euro (estimate 750euro) and a similar booklet but serial 27 sold for 1250euro (estimate 750euro). A 1947 2/- booklet serial 30 went for 390euro (estimate 250euro).

A scare item dated 1861 showing on reverse the LON. & HOLYHEAD R.P.O. / IRISH MAIL DAY in black from Belfast to Tavistock attracted a winning bid of 190euro (estimate 150euro)



The Innoshannon (Innishannon today) item referred to above. My wife gave me no option but to buy this, it being family correspondence, written we believe by her great, great, great grandfather. The contents are a hard to read letter relating to problems in connection with a tenancy, monies apparently going astray. – Ed.

BACK TO THE ALPHABET



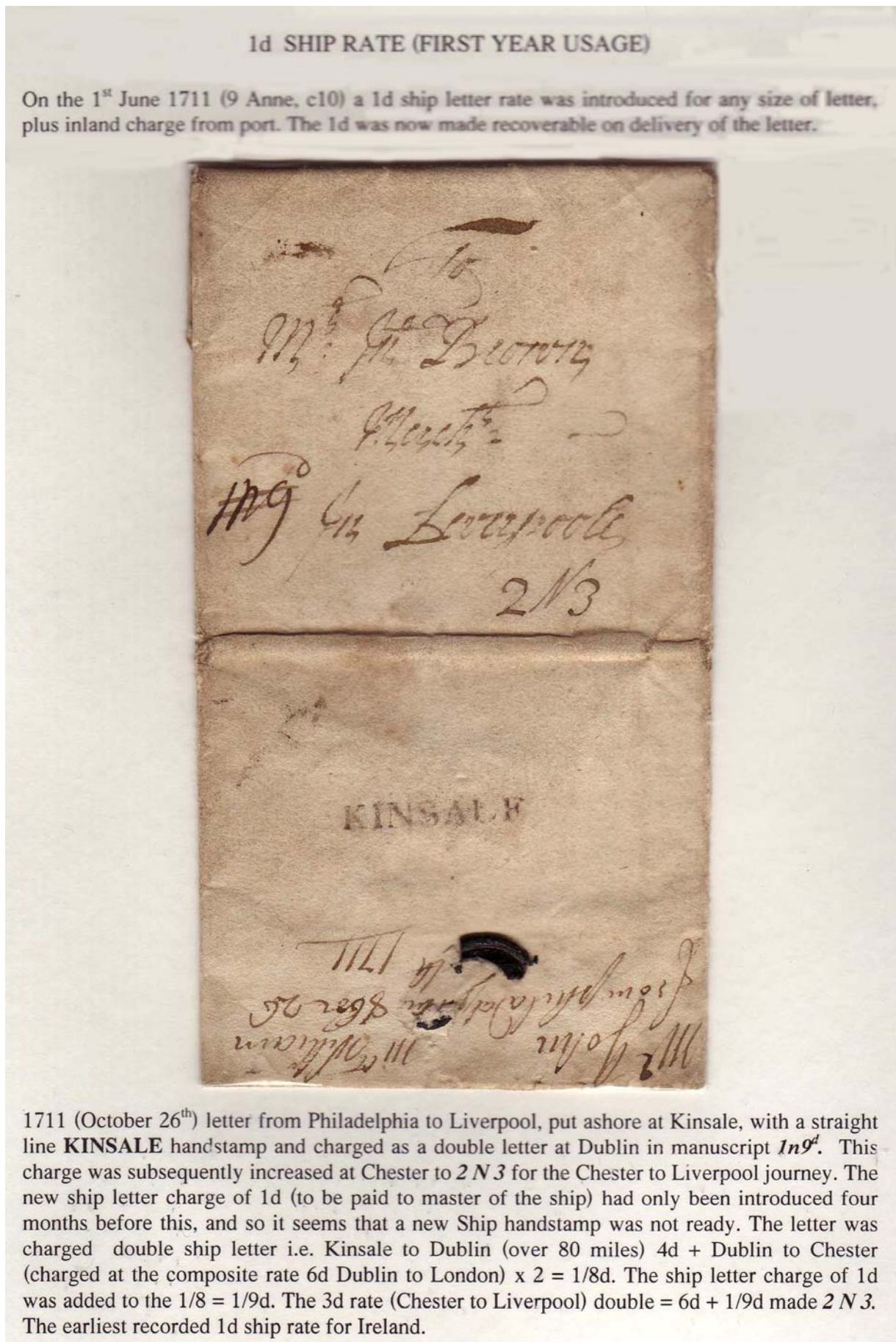
At Stampa last October, David MacDonnell showed me the above, my attraction being drawn to the Alphabet mark at upper right which I had not consciously seen previously and so far as I can see is not shown in 'Feldman and Kane'. The item ties in rather nicely with John Lennon's article on the subject of 'Alphabet' which appeared in the September 2008 edition of Irish Philately and helps

to confirm John's observations. For those that missed that article, the Alphabet is best described as a forerunner to the PO box system. Interestingly, the Commander in Chief did not qualify for free postage. A passing query: does the star after the '4' in the Dublin arrival mark at lower right have any connection with the alphabet – I suspect not, but further confirmation appreciated - Ed.

LONDON 2010 – A PREVIEW - Des Quail

Editor's note: Des Quail's name will be well known to many of our members. Your Editor understands that his is the only Irish based entry accepted for the London International Exhibition in May 2010. To describe much of Des's material as rare to very rare is probably an understatement and collectors of postal history are urged to ensure they get to London to see the items 'in the flesh'. Des has kindly let us have a preview of some of the items he will be exhibiting which for the benefit of those unable to travel are shown on the **NEXT SIX PAGES**. Rather than try and edit into our normal format, I shall reproduce the pages exactly as Des has sent them to me. Please enjoy them and do try to make sure you get to the London Show and also be at the Circle's AGM on Saturday 15 May!

LONDON 2010 - A PREVIEW – Des Quail
(see note on previous page)



REGISTRATION

Some of the most unusual members of the Post Office staff were known as *Window Men* and are remembered by the receipt they issued for registered post. This receipt comprised of an impression from a steel engraving, which was bound in book form and when torn out, the left hand side had a jagged edge. Letters containing money were required to be handed in at the post office *Window*, where double postage was charged and a receipt given. There were two types of this receipt.



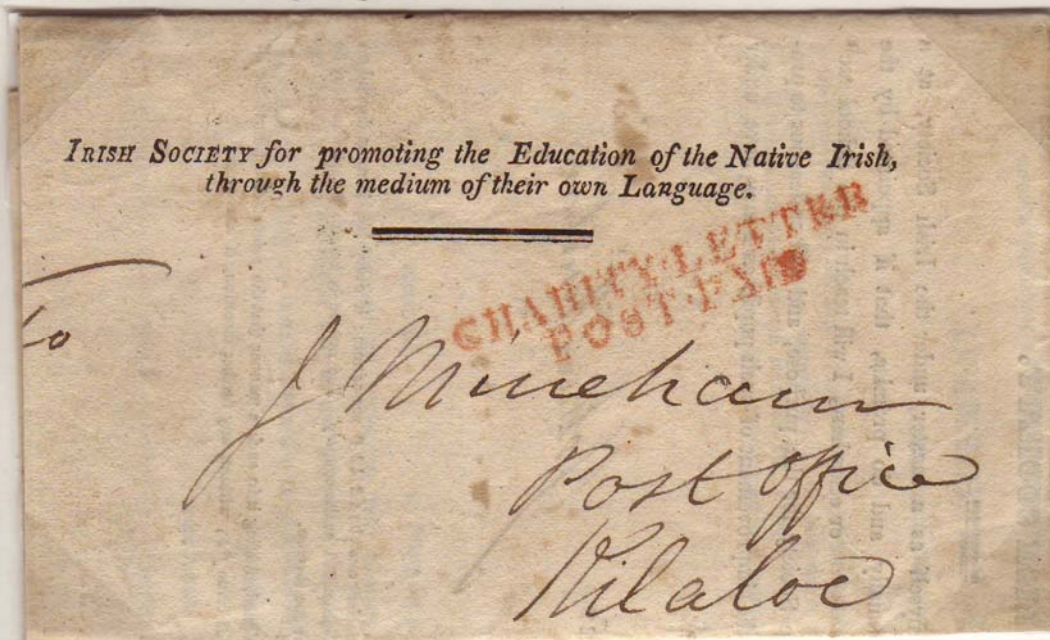
1826 (December 25th) larger type 1 *Window Man* (with sun rays) receipt for Christmas Day for a money letter N^o3 Rec^d A Letter with s4 D6 Postage 25 day of Dec 1826 AB Window Man and initialled by Arthur Baker. Arthur Baker was appointed a clerk in 1819 and was in office as a *Window Man* from 1826 to 1830. One of the two examples recorded for the year of 1826.



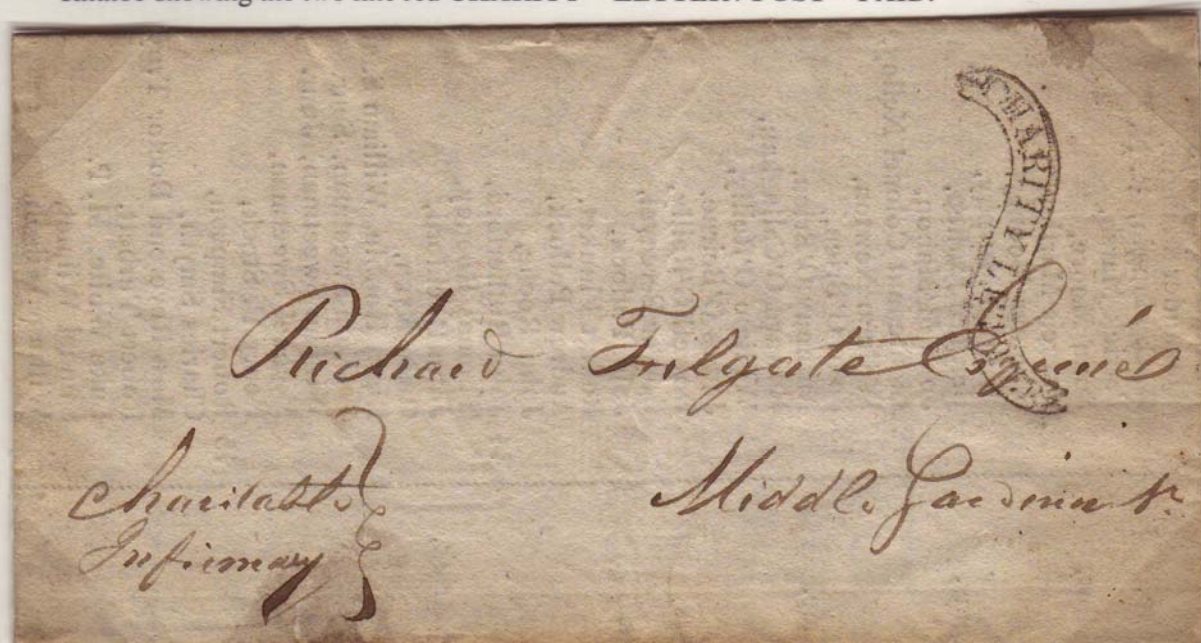
1829 (January 19th) smaller type 2 *Window Man* (without sun rays) receipt for a money letter N^o6 Rec^d A Letter with s4 D6 Postage 19 day of Jany. 1829 AB Window Man, initialled Arthur Baker, Clerk of the Window and annotated in ink by the sender *This Rect. Is for the Letter covering a Draft on Drummond for 200£ Same Date T. Plunkett*. This is contemporary proof of use for what was then understood as Registered Mail. One of the two examples recorded for the year of 1829.

CHARITY LETTER RATE

The Act (59 George 3, c108) passed in 1819 authorised special postage rates for single unsealed printed notices sent out by Charitable Institutions within Ireland. A charge of 1d was levied for 12 or less notices and a further 1d for every additional complete 12. Two types of handstamp were used at Dublin during this period.



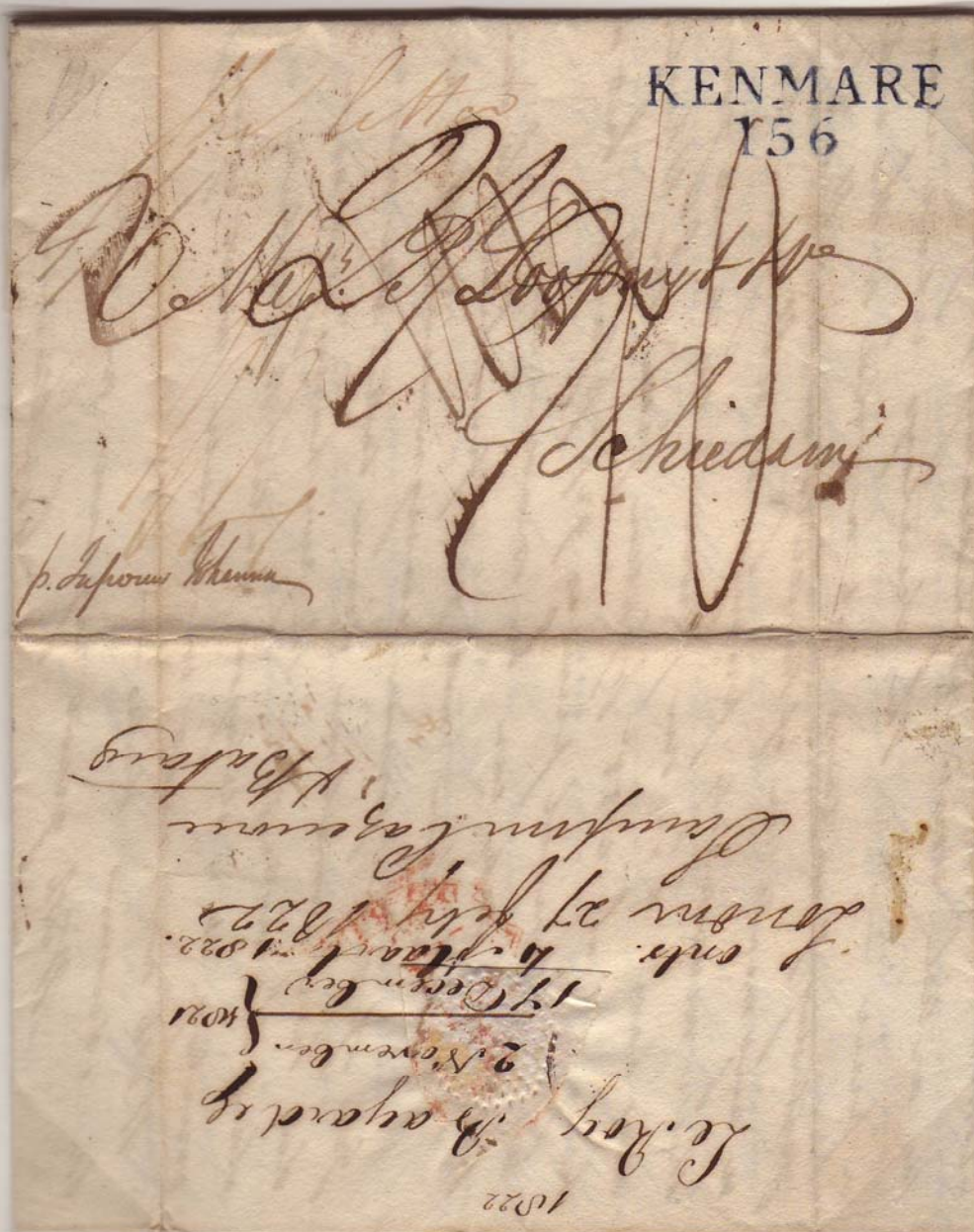
1822 (November 28th) notice from Sir Edward Lees at the Dublin Post Office to the *Post Office Kilaloe* showing the two line red **CHARITY • LETTER / POST • PAID**.



1823 (January 6th) notice sent locally in Dublin showing the scroll type **CHARITY LETTER** in black and endorsed *charitable Infirmary*.

MENAI BRIDGE CHARGE

To help defray the costs of improving the road to Holyhead a special supplementary postal rate was set by an Act (59 George 3, c 48) 1d single extra between Dublin and Holyhead known as the Menai Bridge charge.



1821 (November 2nd) letter sent from New York to Schiedam in Holland *p. Jufrouw Johanna* with a **KENMARE 156**, mileage mark in blue and a manuscript red *Ship Letter* alongside. It is probable that the *Jufrouw Johanna* was blown off course and arrived at the tiny port of Kenmare by accident. As the postmaster did not have a ship handstamp, he used the Kenmare mileage mark with the manuscript *Ship Letter* possibly marked in Dublin, more probably at the Ship Letter Office in London. Postage initially assessed at $\frac{1}{4}$, revised to $\frac{1}{6}$ was made up of the 6d ship rate and 12d inland charge to Dublin (over 150 miles). From Dublin to London a further $\frac{1}{3}$ was payable, subject to a rebate of 2d on letters going beyond London and recharged $\frac{2}{9}$ to cover 2d the packet rate to Holyhead, +1d Menai Bridge charge + 1/- the mileage rate to London. The letter was handled in London by forwarding agents, Messrs *Sampini, Cazenove and Batang*, who paid the postage to the Netherlands. Only one landing is known of ship letters at Kenmare and this is one of the 4 Kenmare ship letters landed on the same day, but the only one addressed to Holland.

GALWAY PACKET

The ROYAL ATLANTIC STEAM NAVIGATION Co. was formed in 1857, (popularly known as the GALWAY LINE) to provide a service to New York. Disasters and misfortune dogged the service and in early 1864 it failed.



1858 (December 10th) letter from St. Johns, Newfoundland to Greenock, Scotland endorsed in manuscript *per Prince Albert* (Galway Line Packet vessel that made 14 eastbound voyages) showing a small blue circular arrival datestamp GALWAY / B / DE 17 / 58 and blue straight line **SHIP LETTER** of St. John's. The letter is packet rated 6, and shows a circular **ST. JOHNS-NEWFOUNDLAND / PAID / DEC 10 / 1858** handstamp in red. On the reverse are arrival datestamps of Dublin and Greenock.



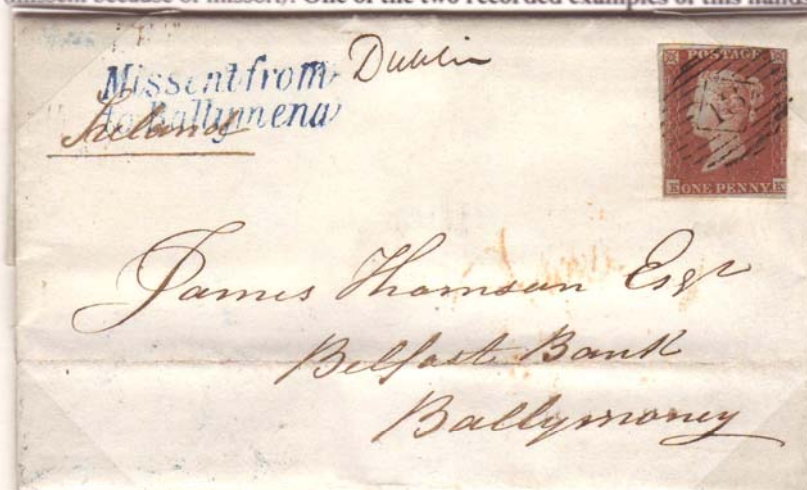
1860 (May 21st) letter from New York to London showing a circular GALWAY / A / JU 12 / 60 in blue, endorsed *ffr Brazil* (formerly *Lady Jocelyn*, one only Galway Line voyage) rated 9½^d. The letter didn't enter the US mails (loose letter) and under the 1848 Anglo – US Postal Convention, Liverpool treated it as due only the transatlantic packet rate of 16 cents plus UK inland of 3 cents, total 19 cents, or 9½^d. The only 9½^d rate yet recorded on a Galway packet.

ADDRESS MISREAD / MISSORT

Post towns like Ballymena and Ballymoney with a similar (Bally prefix) sometimes caused the sorter to misread the address. A similar misread occurred for Dalkey and Gorey. A *Missent* handstamp was used at Ballymena and Dalkey to indicate to the recipient the cause of the delay. Dublin devised a *missent* handstamp to deal with mail mistakenly sorted into the Irish mailbags.



1862 (December 6th) envelope from Basingstoke to Gorey showing a 1d red tied by a black oval numeral 52 of Basingstoke and showing a two line diminutive **MISSENT TO / DALKEY** in black (missent because of a misread). The only example yet recorded of this handstamp. 1851 (April 23rd) envelope sent from Bristol to Edinburgh showing a 1d red imperforate tied by a 134 oval numeral of Bristol and showing the distinctive convex **MISSENT TO DUBLIN** in black (missent because of missort). One of the two recorded examples of this handstamp.



1851 (May 15th) letter sent from Camberwell, London to Ballymoney showing a 1d imperforate red cancelled by a 13 numeral of Stratford London 2 / MY 16 / 1851 / E, and a two line blue italic *Missent from Dublin / to Ballymena Ireland* applied as a result of a misread by the sorter. The letter is backstamped with a red circular receiver of London 2 / MY 16 / 1851 / E, double arcs in blue of **BALLYMENA / MY 17 / 1851 / M** and **BALLYMONEY / MY 17 / 1851**.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Jim Rankin looks at County Antrim's Skeleton postmarks, Héloïse Mitchell provides another biography, Florence McCarthy visits Crookhaven Wireless Station, the Editor's interview, various snippets that have come my way plus whatever else our members produce – contributions gratefully received!