

IRELAND
THE POST OFFICES
AND
DATE STAMPS
OF

THE COUNTY OF LEITRIM

BY

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Post Offices



THE POST OFFICES AND DATE STAMPS
OF LEITRIM 1922 - 1966

Leitrim, in the Province of Connaught, extends for over fifty miles from the Longford - Roscommon borders to Donegal Bay where it has a coast line of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It is divided into two parts almost wholly separated from each other by Lough Allen. The area north-west, and extending down to the east of the lake, is a maze of carboniferous limestone hills with peaks up to 2000 feet. In the southern part, the hills which drain away towards Cavan, are lower and more fertile. To quote Paul Henry on Leitrim, "It is boggy, soggy, rushy land, full of burrowing streams, tiniest crevices of water everywhere, and this I found very affecting, as if I was travelling with a lovely but tearful woman".

It is the most thinly populated county in Ireland, with far too many roofless houses staring vacant up at the heavens. One can drive all day without meeting another car, and with scarcely a living creature anywhere. It is remote, wild and completely unspoilt. Perhaps it is the loneliness which brings forth the welcoming smile when one enters a sub post office, and the reluctance to see a visitor depart. Otherwise I could communicate with my own thoughts, or dwell on the stories and myths related to me on my wanderings.

The following notes on the Post Offices were started during a visit in 1964. This was my first attempt at a study of this kind. With no preparatory work and only a small scale survey map, I got completely lost. Road signs are at a minimum, and when present were not always helpful. During a second visit in 1966 I visited more Post Offices in four days than in my two weeks previous holiday.

The General Post Office divides the county into three areas for postal administration. North of Lough Allen comes under Sligo, and the South is administered from Carrick-on-Shannon, apart from five sub post offices in the south-east which come under Cavan.

There are 58 Post Offices in the county, one more than in Monaghan, and all but three were visited. I have to thank the Post Masters at Cavan and Sligo for answering many letters, and Mr. O'Riordan at Carrick-on-Shannon was most helpful, as were his staff after his departure to take charge of the Post Office at Mullingar. Mr. F.E. Dixon was helpful, as ever, with details of the early stamps. With one exception, I met extreme kindness and a friendly welcome everywhere.

The date stamps are classified as for Monaghan, but a different listing of the Post Offices has been adopted. The Carrick-on-Shannon section is described first, followed by that of Sligo, and lastly those administered by Cavan. In the first section the Post Offices are described in the order of collection, as this makes it easier to locate them on the map.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE DATE STAMPS

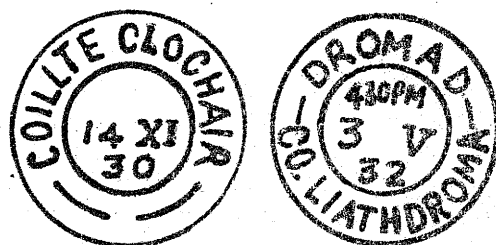
As for Monaghan there are two main types in use during the period covered:-

1. With double circles, which are grouped under three sub-types.
2. With single circles, of which there are at least four sub-types.

Double Circles

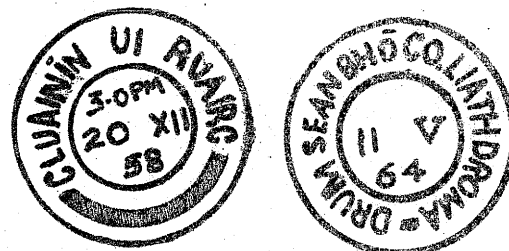
A. With two bars.

Carriick-on-Shannon 1930 - '34
Kiltyclougher 1930 - '66
Dowra, with Cara Drama Roisg added 1930 - '66
Dromad, with county added 1931 - '66



B. With single bar.

Carriick-on-Shannon 1929 - '30
" " (short bar) 1934 - '45
" " (thick bar) 1958 - '66
Dromahair (thick bar) Feb. 1929 - '68
Drumkeerlin (thin bar) 1929 - '35
Manorhamilton (short bar) 1927 - '52
This date stamp was recut
in 1934
Manorhamilton (thick bar) 1956 - '64

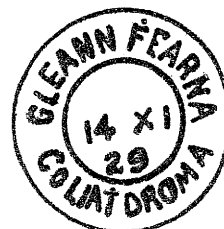


Note: The letters in the broad thick bar type were smaller than those in the short thin bar type.

C. With county added and without bar.

Aghacashel 1966
Ballinamore 1929 - '64. Recut 1933
Drumshambo 1934 - '45
Glenfarne 1929 - '66
Keshcarrigan 1930 - '66
Mohill 1929 - '56. Recut 1935

Drumshambo had a new type issued in 1959 or earlier with a 2 x 1 millimetre bar, and with the county added. This is illustrated under B. A similar type was seen from Mohill in 1950.



Single Ring Type

D. Town and county, a short thick bar and five pointed star.

Aghavas	Derradda	Kilbracken
Annaghmore	Drumcong	Kilclare
Aughamore	East Bars	Killargue
Beagh	Farnaught	Killegar
Bornacoola	Foxfield	Kilnagross
Buckode	Garadice	Lawderdale
Cooligrain	Glenade	Rossinver
Corrawallen	Glenboy	Spencer Harbour
Corriga	Gorvagh	Tawnylea
Corry	Gurteen	



E. Town only, wide thick bar and five pointed star.

Aughnashsellan	Kinlough	Manorhamilton
Ballinaglera	Largydonnell	Tullaghan
Eslin Bridge	Leckaun	
Gortgarrigan	Lissingroagh	



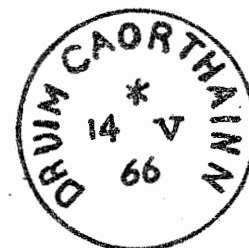
F. As last but with a very thin bar.

Carrigallen	Leitrim	Tullagh Coola
Fivemilebourne	Newtowngore	
Glencar	Shanvaus	



G. The bar is absent and there are many minor varieties.

Carriick-on-Shannon, with nine pointed star.
 Carrigallen, with six pointed star and
 27 millimetre circle.
 Cloone, with eight pointed star.
 Drumod, with county added ('44 - '66).
 Drumkeerin, with six pointed star.
 Drumsna, with county added and a 26.5
 millimetre circle. The broken star
 was probably originally seven or eight
 pointed. In use from 1929 to 1966.



CARRICK - on - SHANNON

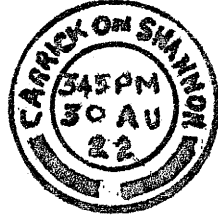


Fig. 1

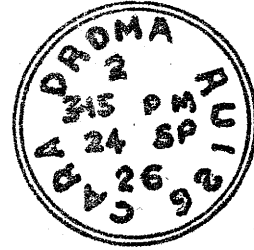


Fig. 2

Carrick-on-Shannon is the county town of Leitrim and has a population of some 1500. It is an untidy, graceless town. The Dublin - Sligo railway passes through it on its way to Boyle and Sligo. A new Post Office was built here in recent years and, unfortunately, all the old date stamps have been discarded. It is an important mail centre taking in south Leitrim and part of Roscommon.



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

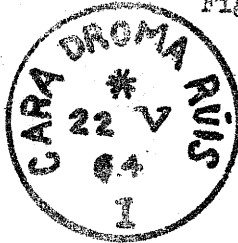


Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

DATE STAMPS

- Fig. 1 Only one example seen.
- Fig. 2 A skeleton type seen from 15 May to 24 September 1926.
A similar type was used in Clones in 1930 with No. 16.
Type B double circle seen from 25 June 1929 to 17 March 1930.
Type A double circle 7 October 1930 to 18 June 1934.
A new B type seen from 24 April 1934 to 8 November 1945, looked very like a recut of the first type B.
- Fig. 3 This metal date stamp was probably constructed from an English type.
- Fig. 4 This skeleton may have been prepared for the Xmas rush, but this seems an early date.
- Fig. 5 This is an unusual type, and it was very worn when seen, with a broken outer rim. I have not seen it on letters.
- Fig. 6 Dates 10 November 1956 to 22 May 1964.
- Fig. 7 For use on registered mail.

In addition to the foregoing, there is the normal rectangular rubber parcel stamp. The "POST NA MBEART" seen in F.E. Dixon's collection is very well worn, and must have been in use for many years before its date 18 December 1930. There was a new type of "BEARTPOST" in use when I visited the post office during May 1964.

There are three circuits worked from Carrick-on-Shannon by motor vans, with two visits per day to the post offices.

- CIRCUIT 1. Drumsna, Eslin Bridge, Mohill, Gorravagh, Cloone, Annaghmore, Farnaught, Barnacoola, Rusk, Dromod, Aughamore and two post offices in Roscommon, Kilmore and Hillstreet.
- CIRCUIT 2. Leitrim, Drumshanbo, Arigna (Roscommon), Altagowlan (Roscommon), Lough Allen, Spencer Harbcur, Drumkeerin, (with postman to Tawnylea), Corry, Dowra, (with postman to Cooligrain), Glengavlin and Ballinaglera.
- CIRCUIT 3. Kilclare, Kilnagross, Keshcarrigan, Foxfield, Lawderdale, Ballinamore, (with postman to Derradda), Garadice, Newtowngore, Aughnasheelan, Aghacashel and Drumcong.

CIRCUIT 1

DRUMSNA, Drúim Shnaima. Turn to the right from the main road when the village is reached from Carrick-on-Shannon. The post office is in a private cement faced house, and the postmistress, Mrs. M.M. Healy, was most helpful. The same date stamp in use from 1 December 1928 or earlier to May 1966. By then it looked well worn and the star had disappeared.



ESLIN BRIDGE, Droichead Aislinne. Turn on to the Mohill Road and at a roadside Post Box turn left to Eslin Bridge. The postmaster, Mr. Denis P. Reynolds, ran a small provision shop in conjunction with the post office. He was most helpful. At least three rubber date stamps in use from October 1930 to November 1941. Mohill in the 1930 type was replaced by Co, Liathdroma in 1933. A type E single ring in use in May 1966.



MOHILL, Maothail Manchain. Turn back to the main road to get to this busy village with a population of 653. It is 12 miles from Carrick-on-Shannon. The name over the post office is in English only, the second example of this seen among some two hundred post offices visited. Received no help in this post office, and my records come from ever helpful Dixon. A double ring MAOTHAIL Co. LIATHDROMA from April 1929 (with an Irish modification of the Roman IV) to December 1934. The altered spelling MAOTHAIL Co. LIATHDROMA appeared in 1938, and this type continued to 1959. A modification with a short bar was seen for 1950.



Carrick-on-Shannon Circuit 1

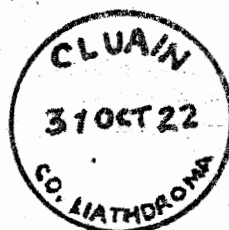
GORVAGH, Gorbhaachadh. We travelled north towards Fenagh to reach this post office. It is a general store and post office standing by itself at a crossroads.

A rubber date stamp seen for 1943, and the first metal date stamp seen for 1958 had the spelling Co. LEITHDRUMA but this had been corrected to Co. Liathdruma when seen in May 1966.

From Gorravagh we travelled to the Mohill - Fenagh road emerging at the roadside POST BOX No. 63, half way between these towns.



CLOONE



This sub-post office lies on a side road off the Mohill - Carrigallen road. It forms part of a pleasant modern shop, with a young and very helpful Mr. P.A. O'Higgins as a sub-post master.

There is a very unusual and interesting date stamp story which is illustrated. A rubber English type in 1922, succeeded the same year by an Irish rubber type, and then a resurrected English metal date stamp from 1928 to 1938. It looked well worn in 1928, and only traces of the star above the date were seen.



ANNAGHMORE. Turning back on to the main road and proceeding towards Mohill, take the first turn left to this post office. Were it not for the notice outside, one would presume that this pebble dashed house, with its rose tree, was a private house. Inside, however, there is a grocery store and the post office occupies one counter the charge of Mrs. E. Heaney.



The first type of rubber date stamp seen is illustrated. This was followed in 1934 with a type with larger letters and with Maotail omitted.

The present date stamp is very worn and the outer rim is damaged.

Carrick-on-Shannon Circuit 1

FARNAUGHT. Proceeding further south we encounter this stone built sub-post office at a road junction. The usual shop and sub-post office the charge of Mrs. Elizabeth Tiernan, who was most helpful. The first type of rubber date stamp is illustrated. A second type in use in 1941 had serifs, the 12 point de Vinne type.



The present type D was first seen in 1961, but had obviously been in use for some years.

BAFNACOLA. On a side road south west of Farnought. I could not find this place on any map, and probably would never have found it without directions from the postmaster at Carrick-on-Shannon. The simple way to find it is to approach from the main Carrick-on-Shannon - Longford road, looking for a direction sign to Johnston's Bridge. My visit was on a Sunday but had the usual cheerful reception in this combined grocers shop and post office.



The reason for the use of a skeleton in 1935 is difficult to explain, and is most unusual in a post office of this size. The present date stamp is type D.

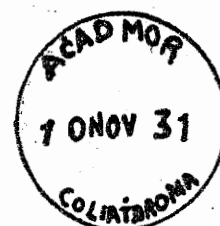
The next three stops are in Roscommon; Rusky, Kilmore and Hillstreet. The collecting van now returns to :-

DRUMOD. A small village, the only one in Leitrim on this circuit.

A circular metal English type in 1928 followed in 1931 by a type A with county added. This was still in use in 1966, and a pleasant young postmistress could not give an explanation of the metal type in use in 1944. This date stamp is no longer in the post office.



AUGHAMORE. Lying well in off the road back to Carrick-on-Shannon, this small sub-post office is difficult to see. The LYONS TEA notice was more prominent than that for the post office. The postmistress, Mrs. M.J. Faughn, was very pleasant.



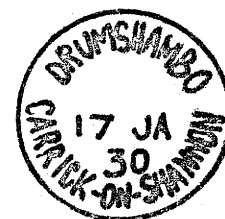
Two early rubber hand stamps are illustrated. The Irish type was seen up to 16 January 1933. The present date stamp is type D.

Carrick-on-Shannon Circuit 2

LEITRIM. Proceeding north from Carrick-on-Shannon this village is reached after six miles. An extremely clean sub-post office and shop managed by Mr. B.V. Donnellan, who did his best to be friendly but could not.

The present date stamp is Type F.

DRUMSHAMBO. With a population of over 500 Drumshambo is classified as a town. The sub-post office is located in a private house.



The Irish spelling in the date stamps is Druim Seanbho but over the post office it is Druimseanboc. The English metal type illustrated is recorded from 6 SP. '22 to 25 Ju. '32. A Type C from 31. XII. '34 to 5. III. '43 and Type B with county added from I. I. '59 to 1967.

The next two towns Arigna and Altagowlan are in Roscommon.

LOUGH ALLEN named after the lake on which it stands and part of the lake opposite is in Roscommon.

SPENCER HARBOUR, Doire na hInse. Situated on Lough Allen, a tiny village with the post office located in a private house.

An Irish rubber date stamp recorded in 1931 and Type D in 1964.

DRUMKEERIN. This village is located near the head of Lough Allen. The post office is entered through an old coachway and the post office notice is above the archway. It is combined with a general store.



Type B was in use from I. VI. 29 to 2. VIII. 33. The present date stamp is Type G. There is a straight line DRUMKEERIN for telegrams.

Type B

TAWNYLEA. Going north from Drumkeerin the second turn to the right leads along a side road for a mile to Tawnylea sub-post office and its pleasant post mistress Mrs. G. Horan.

1929 A rubber date stamp TAMNAC LIAT ?, CARA DROMA RUISG. In 1930 a new type appeared TAMHNACH LIATH, Co. LIATDROMA and in 1933 a third type with larger lettering was introduced. The present date stamp is Type D.



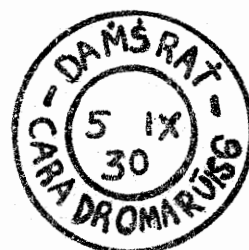
Carrick-on-Shannon Circuit 2

CORRY. A roadside cottage with a tin roof, north of Lough Allen. Curiously the letter box was inscribed POST OFFICE, LETTER BOX on a white background, instead of the usual P7C on a green background. Similar boxes were seen at Aughnasheelan and Cooligrain.



A skeleton, which is illustrated, was used probably from 1931 and in 1934 was altered to a type with smaller letters and with serifs. The present date stamp is Type D.

DOWRA. A small roadside sub-post office standing on its own. A single date stamp.



Its story is simply told. An English single ring metal date stamp 4 Nov. '21 to 11th July '29 and a Type A from 25 IV. 30 to 1967 or later.

COOLIGRAIN. To reach this sub-post office involved a three mile journey up a sideroad along the Cavan border. The road had a mud surface and was full of potholes. To add to my discomfort it was raining heavily. I doubt if any car but a Mini would have coped with the conditions. When I arrived at the cottage post office it was closed and the post mistress was away. The English type post box has been described under Corry. Mail is collected by a postman from Dowra.



Irish rubber date stamp 6 JUL 33 to 22 Jan 35. A type with serifs was used in 1944. The present date stamp is Type D.

GLENGAVLIN the next call is in Cavan and has a double ring three bar type unrecorded in Leitrim.

BALLYNAGLERA on the right upper bank of Lough Allen. In a narrow lane and difficult to find, this cottage post office of a cheerful Mrs. Cullen. The post box had obviously been white originally, probably similar to Dowra's, but it had been painted green except for a small central section showing ER B.



English rubber date stamp Aug. 1922 and as the first type illustrated in 1929 to '30. In 1932 the 3c of gCleireach had been changed to GC and with Co Liathdroma at base. Serif type in 1940 with gC and, finally, a plain type without serifs in 1944. the present date stamp is Type E.

Carriack-on-Shannon Circuit 3

KILCLARE, Cill an Clair. Proceeding north again we take a right turn before reaching the town of Leitrim and about three miles further on arrive at the roadside general store, petrol station and post office of Kilclare.

An Irish rubber date stamp for 1933, CILL AN CHLAIR, Co. Liathdroma. The present date stamp Type D shows signs of ill usage.

KILNAGROSS. A small shop and post office at a crossroads. Rubber date stamp as illustrated in 1928 with the usual succession of types. The county name was substituted for Cara Droma Roisg in 1932 and the serified was in use from 1945 to 1949. Type D at present in use shows a badly damaged outer ring.



KESHCARRIGAN is a small village near Lough Scur. The post office and shop has the old English enamelled notice:-
"POST OFFICE for Money Order, Savings Bank, PARCEL POST, Insurance, and Annuity Business".
The usual post office notice was so worn as to be almost unreadable.



English metal single circle 1928 to 1929. A Type C Seen from 19 VII. 30 to 1967. It is now very worn and the inner circle does not record though it was still there when I examined it. There is a new type of abbreviated straight line stamp for telegrams, K G N with date.

FOXFIELD, Fiodhnach. Another four miles west we reach Foxfield, consisting of a few houses, the post office with shop and a church. My visit was on a Sunday but a charming post mistress was only too pleased to apply a Sunday stamp on my postcard.

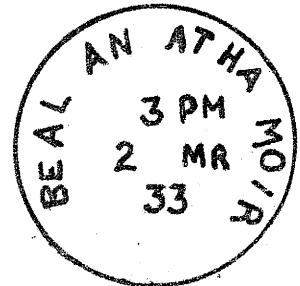
There was the usual run of rubber date stamps from 1929 to the serified type in 1949. The present date stamp is Type D.

LAWDERDALE, Druim Raitne. A small roadside post office in a one story cement faced building. The type illustrated is a typical copy of earlier English rubber handstamps. It was in use from 1929 to 1931 and is was extraordinary how clear this small print came through during the three years in the specimens seen. By 1934 there was a type with larger letters, Druim Raitne, Co. Liathdroma, and in 1939 the serified type. At present a Type D is in use.



Carrick-on-Shannon Circuit 3

BALLINAMORE, Beal an ata Moir. This is a large market town with a population of 725. The post office occupies a counter in a store in High Street, and looked promising, but I never before met with such studied impoliteness - almost pathological.



The following details were as usual obtained from Mr. F.E. Dixon. The first English type, as illustrated, would appear to be an office type, as the second English type illustrated should have been also available at this time. However, I have seen a similar type used in Lawderdale in 1912 where there could have been only one date stamp. The double circle type has been seen from 26 Nov. '27 to 7 Sep. '28. The first Irish Type C appeared in 1929 and normally had a time plug. The only times seen were 2.30, 3 and 7 P.M. This type was seen up to 9 Nov. '32.

The skeleton used in 1933 may have been necessary while the last date stamp was being recut. This type skeleton was also used in December 1929 or 1939, the year was not quite clear in the specimen examined.

The Type C at present in use as seen from 1941 to 1967 reads BEAL AN ATHA MOIR, CO. L' DROMA.

DERRADA. Take the road to Swanlinbar and after three miles a turning to the left to this roadside cottage post office. Mail is collected by a postman from Ballinamore. The first type rubber date stamp seen is illustrated. There was a serif type in 1944.



The present date stamp is Type D.

GARDICE is on the main road from Ballinamore to Killeshandra in Cavan. It is a roadside post office run by a genial farmer.



The two earliest rubber hand stamps are illustrated. In 1931 the more normal type GARADHA DEAS, CO. LIATHDROMA was used. The present date stamp is Type D.

Carriack-on-Shannon Circuit 3

NEWTOWNGORE, Maghachadh. A small roadside post office. Only one rubber date stamp seen and this is illustrated. The present date stamp is Type F, and judged by its condition not in use for more than a few years. There is also the usual harp type seal for bags.



AUGHNASHEELAN, Achadh na Sileann. A solitary, very clean shop and post office on the mountain road from Ballinamore to Drumshambo. Some three miles from Ballinamore, the mail is collected by a postman from this post office.

The first Irish rubber date stamp seen was dated 1 SPT. 33, and read ACHADH NA SILEANN, CO. LIATHDROMA. The lettering was very small. A serified type was seen from 16 JAN. 35 to 15 OCT. 38 and was still in good condition.

The present Type E is reproduced on page 3 and was first seen for 12. III. 64.

AGHACASHEL, Achadh Caisil. Another solitary post office on the mountain road, combined with a general store.



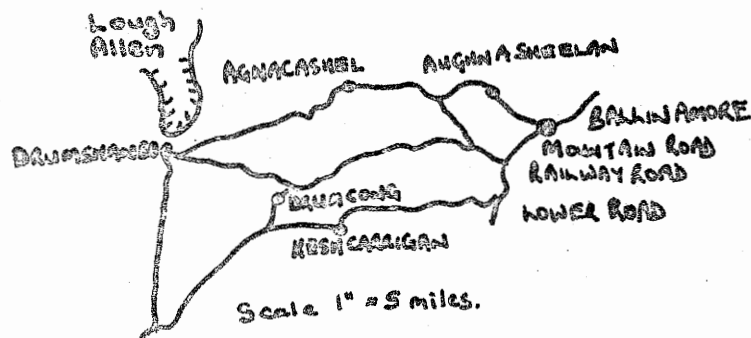
The English metal type illustrated was seen from 3 OC. 29 to 7 FE. 33. Mr. F.E. Dixon tells me that it was registered on the 1st February 1918.

Type C now in use shows considerable signs of wear.

DRUMCONG, Drum Chango. A solitary roadside post office on the connecting road between the Railway and Lower Roads.

Rubber date stamp Drum Chango, Cara Droma Ruig 21 JAN. 29 to 7 JUL. 30. With Co. Liathdroma 26 OCT. 31. A serified type dated 4 MAR. 45 was very distorted.

Type D now in use shows some signs of wear.



LEITRIM POST OFFICES ADMINISTERED BY SLIGO

Twenty-two of north Leitrim's post offices are administered by Sligo Post Office. These are taken in alphabetic order. Two we failed to locate, but time was limited, and one of the problems was getting suitable accommodation. The only good hotel was in Carrick-on-Shannon and this involved a return journey of at least fifty miles.

BEACH, Beitheach. The mail from this post office was collected by a postman from Dromahair. A rubber "Beiteac, Druim da Eitiar" in the upper part of the circle, and "Co. Liathdroma" at the lower part in 1930. "Beitheach, Co. Liathdroma" in October 1933. A Type D in 1959.

This post office was closed on the 30 April 1961. See under Tulagh Coola.

BUCKODE, Bucoid. Located between Kinlough and Rossinvar. I must have passed it twice but did not see it.

An English rubber single circle "BUCKODE, MANORHAMILTON" 10 OCT. 29 and BUCOID, Co. LIATHDROMA in 1933. In 1939 there was a similar type to that of 1933, but with very small letters. The present Type D reads BUCOID, Co. SHLIGIGH.

DROMAHAIR, Druim Dha Eithiar. Situated near Lough Gill, it is by far the most attractive village in Leitrim. It has a population of 262, but one got the impression of a deserted village, a village of older people.



The sub-post mistress runs a neat orderly post office and her care of the date stamps over the years makes an interesting story.

A single copy of an English metal type was seen in 1922. The first Irish Type B with Druim Dha Eithiar was seen dated 4 FE, 29, and this date stamp is still in use after 43 years. In 1950 a Type E appeared, and this also is still functioning. One of the most interesting features was that all over the years in Type B the month was in letters, and in E in Roman figures. This never varied, and when I pointed out the fact to the post master at Sligo, he stated that obviously the plugs had different fittings. But it was not so. In 1962 the post mistress went on leave and her assistant put the Roman figures in B and the letters in E, a strange event for Type E at this time. They were soon corrected, but I found two later lapses, the next again during holidays.

EAST BARS, Barra Thoir. This sub-post office is situated about 6 miles from Manorhamilton on the road to Glenfarne. There is a small shop combined with the post office. A single copy of a rubber date stamp was seen for 8 OCT. 29, reading BARRA THOIR/GLEANN FHEARNA CO. LIATHDROMA around the circle, necessitating very small letters.

The present Type D, first seen in 1964, reads BARRA THOIR CO. LIATHDROMA.

LEITRIM POST OFFICES ADMINISTERED BY SLIGO

FIVEMILEBOURNE, Cartron Maiteoige. Located just inside the Sligo border on the road to Manorhamilton from Sligo, it is located in a very pleasant bungalow and the sub-postmistress, Mrs. B.E. Marin, was most helpful. Type E now in use.

GLENADE, Gleann Eada. A small roadside house on the road from Kinlough to Manorhamilton. A rubber date stamp GLEANN EADA, Co. LIATDROMA in 1934. The present date stamp Type D reads Gleann Eada, Co SHLIGIGH, an unusual spelling of Sligeach.

Between Largydonnell and Glenade, there is a church with a post office wall letter box on the entrance gate. I wondered at its proximity to the sub-post office and, when I commented on this, was told; "Sure its for the convenience of His Reverence, and why shouldn't it be?". This box is emptied by the post van from Sligo.

There is another box on a telegraph pole two and a half miles past Glenade at Lechanarainely. This is emptied by a postman from Glenade.

GLENBOY, Gleann Buide. I really do not know how I reached this post office. A few miles from Manorhamilton, on a turning to the right it was reached some two miles further on. The Cooligrain road was good compared with this and I probably would have given up, but it was impossible to turn on the road. There was a very old and friendly sub-postmaster. He lived in a modern bungalow. A rather long interlude, mainly on medical matters.

There was a rubber date stamp "GLEANN BUIDE, Co. LIATHDROMA" in 1933, and it was still in use in 1939, a long life for a rubber type, but it cannot have had much use in this isolated spot. There is a Type D with similar spelling now in use.

GLENCAR, Gleann an Chairthe. I did not find this post office but a letter to the sub-postmistress produced a fine strike of Type F.

GLENFARNE, Gleann Fearna. This post office occupies a section of Clanceys "Hardware, Grocery" shop, near the border at the junction of Leitrim, Cavan and Fermanagh.

A Type C in use since 1929 and still giving good impressions.

GORTGARRIGAN, Gort na gCarrigan. Near Dromahair, but I did not find it. A copy of Type A received from the sub-postmistress.

LEITRIM POST OFFICES ADMINISTERED BY SLIGO

GURTEEN, Goirtin. The next post office after Fivemilebourne on the road to Manorhamilton. It lies some distance up a side road and there is a shrine at the main road junction.

A rubber date stamp "GOIRTIN, Co. LIATHDROMA" in 1936 and now a well worn Type D, with similar wording but the post office name plate gives the spelling "GUIRTIN".

GORTAHILL. This sub-post office is in Co. Cavan but the mail is collected by a postman from Glenfarne.

KILLARGUE, Cill Fhearga and Cill Fearga on the post office name plate. On the road between Drumkeeran and Dromahair, the village consists of a church, a pub and the sub-post office.

A rubber date stamp Cill Fhearga 1929 to 1931, a new type with the Co. Liathdroma added in 1934 and with at least two rubber date stamps with serifed letters up to 1949. In 1964 there was a Type D in use and in 1966 this date stamp was very eroded with gaps in the outer circle.

KILTYCLOCHER, Coillte Clochair. A roadside post office on the Fermanagh border. A double ring skeleton type in use in 1923. Type A in use in 1930 and still functioning in 1966.

There are three postmen attached who collect and deliver mail. I met one of these postmen on the road. He appeared to be more than seventy years and had an overloaded cycle. He told me that his maximum permitted load, including 2 lbs. for food, was 50 lbs., but he carried much more than this; parcels of all kinds, private shopping for the houses he called on. He believed in being a good neighbour. He did not carry food on this occasion as his lunch was provided by a convent on his round. I met many examples of this kind spirit in Co. Leitrim.



KINLOUGH, Ceann Locha. At the top of Lake Melvin. An English single ring metal date stamp as for Dowra, with Kinlough S.O. Co. Leitrim was in use until 1956 or later. A time plug was inserted in 1929, but not later.

A Type E now in use.

LEITRIM POST OFFICES ADMINISTERED BY SLIGO

LARGYDONNELL, Leargaidh Dhomhnaill. From Kinelough the road divides to the left along Lake Melvin and to the right along a hilly road through Largydonnell, Glenade to Manorhamilton.

The sub-post office is in a small roadside cottage but was later directed to by the Priest from Glenade church. The Rev. Father gave me a conducted tour of the church and the old graveyard which contained a gravestone with the carving of an otter, said to have killed the lady in the grave.

There was a single metal date stamp as illustrated under Dowra but with Largydonnell, Co. Leitrim, in use until 1954 or later. In 1964 a Type E Leargaidh Dhomhnaill.

LECKAUN, Leacan. The sub-post office is in a small roadside shop between Manorhamilton and Dromahair. Spelt Leacain over the post office. A Type E Leacan, Sligeach in use since 1954 or earlier.

LISSINAGROACH, Lisin na gCruach. On a side road near East Bars. A rubber date stamp LISIN NA GCURUACH in use in 1929 and a serifed LISIN NA gCRUACH, Co. LIATHDROMA in June 1941. A Type E LISIN NA gCruach in use in 1966.

MANORHAMILTON, Cluainin ui Ruairo. The second largest town in Co. Leitrim but it would be classified as a village in England. It is the hub of north Leitrim with five roads radiating from it.

There was a small double ring metal date stamp, Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim in use in 1922 and by 1927, or earlier, there was a Type B Cluainin ui Ruairo, with large letters and a short bar. This was well worn when withdrawn in 1934. There was a skeleton type date stamp in use from September 1934 to January 1935, or later, until a recut date stamp arrived in this year. By 1956 another new date stamp had arrived with smaller letters and a long broad bar, illustrated in Type B.



When I visited this post office in 1964 there was a Type E in use on the counter. I asked if there was another date stamp and was told that it was in the inner office and not available. Wondering about another approach my thoughts were interrupted with; "Where are you from anyway?" and before I had time to answer, another question; "Are you from Broadcasting House?". A non-committal answer brought an immediate response; "Mary, bring the other date stamp here at once". It was a recut of the last Type B.

I was finally seen off by two smiling girls with waving arms and my opinion of myself was at its lowest ebb.

LEITRIM POST OFFICES ADMINISTERED BY SLIGO

ROSSINVER, Ros Imbhir. At the foot of Lake Melvin, the neatest and the prettiest sub-post office so far seen. It was transferred to Sligo on the 1st December, 1926.

The first rubber date stamp seen was dated October 1929 and read "ROS IMBHIR, COILTE CLOCHAIR, Co. LIATHDROMA". A strange attachment but the mail was probably collected by a postman from Kiltyclogher. In 1931 a new rubber date stamp appeared reading "ROS IMBHIR, Co. LIATHDROMA". There were two further date stamps with serified letters up to 1949. When I visited the sub-post office in 1964 there was a Type D in use reading "ROS IMBHIR, SLIGEACH" and with a longer bar than normally seen in this type.

SHANVAUS, Sean-Mhas. Although it had a definite location on the map I failed to find it. A postcard sent to the sub-postmistress (An Bun-Mhaistir Poist) was returned with a Type F reading Sean-Mhas but the second leg of the M was missing giving an apparent Nhas.

TULAGH COOLA, Tulach an Chuaillle. Opened on the 1st May 1961 after the closure of Beagh sub-post office which it replaced.

The new sub-postmistress, Mrs. Dolan, removed the Beagh date stamp and used it at Tulagh Coola from the 1st May to the 28th October 1961 when a new Type F arrived. This matter only came to light when I asked the Chief Secretary to the Post Office about the continued use of the Beagh date stamp after this sub-post office had closed down. The postmaster at Sligo knew nothing of the matter until the Chief Secretary wrote to him about it and I will leave you to imagine what he said to me about it when I next met him.

The new sub-post office is in a small shop and the only notice reads, "Parcel Post Office" in blue letters on a white background but there are the usual Afton Cigarette, Lyons Tea and other coloured notices, looking wholly out of place and garish.

TULLAGHAN, Tulchan. The most northerly post office in Co. Leitrim and is located in a pleasant flower bedecked cottage.

An English double ring metal type seen for 1933 and probably used until 1958 when the present type was issued.



The mail from the Kinlock, Largydonnell and Glenade areas were collected by this post office up to 1963 but starting from 1964 they are collected by a van from Sligo.

LEITRIM POST OFFICES ADMINISTERED BY CAVAN

There are six in this group - Aghavas, Carrigallen, Corrawallen, Corriga, Kilbracken and Killegar.

AGHAVAS, Achadh an Mheasa. My own pronunciation of Aghavas defeated local inquiries until I got it correctly, Ah-hav-ass, but when pronounced quickly it sounded more like Avas.

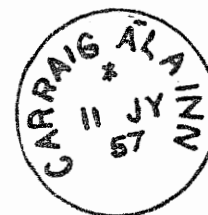
Located on the Mohill - Carrigallen road, this post office had been demolished some time before my 1966 visit and it is now located in a shed which is also a store for farm implements. The postal notice on the outside gate reads ACAD AN Measa and there is a similar spelling on the postal bag seal.

The type of date stamp in use in 1930 is illustrated. By October 1930 this had been replaced by a rubber ACHADH AN MHEASA, Co. LIATHDROMA, in very small letters and it remained in use until 1933. From 1934 to 1946 there were at least two replacements with serified lettering, the circle and lettering getting larger with each replacement.

There is now a Type D dating from 1962, or earlier, but reading ACHADH AN MHEASA, Co. AN CHABHAIN.



CARRIGALLEN, Carrig Alainn. It is located near the Cavan border on the Kileshandra road. It has been placed on the map on the location of Corrawallen but it is marked, un-named, past Aghavas on the main road. It is a small village and the sub-post office is located in a very modern shop, certainly I saw nothing better in Co. Leitrim. The postmaster, Mr. Thomas Lochart was most entertaining and an hour passed quickly, looking over his private treasures and hearing local history. There was even a small restaurant in the village where food was good, plentiful and inexpensive, with a service which one only finds in a place like this.



The type of date stamp illustrated I have seen from 1928 to 1957 and was an obvious metal type adapted from an English type.

The present date stamp is Type F and looked new in 1966. There is a straight line Carrigallen in serified letters for telegrams.

LEITRIM POST OFFICES ADMINISTERED BY CAVAN

CORRAWALLEN, Cor an Mhailin. Located some five miles north of Carrigallen and on the map provided it is where Carrigallen is shown in error. The sub-post office is located in a small shop with faded blue ensemble and with CORRAWALLEN POST OFFICE in large white letters above the shop, and above this a small board in green with white letters - Oifig an Poist, Cor an Mhailin.



From 1929 to 1932 there was a rubber hand stamp, Cor an Mailin, Caban, and in 1950 a single specimen has been seen with Co. Liathdroma at base. The present date stamp is Type D and it looked very new in 1966 but has now reverted to Co. an Chabhain.



CORRIGA, Cairrgeach. Situated on a narrow road below Aghavas, it was located in a very tidy little shop. One wondered again why the "Gold Flake" was more prominent than that of the post office and by now had decided that they harmed the eyes as well as the lungs. There was a rare treasure here to compensate, a well preserved G R letterbox though now painted green. It came up very well in a black and white photo and I hope it will continue to have the same care as it obviously has had in the past.

The first type of rubber date stamp seen had Co. Liathdroma at the base and the serified type seen for 1938 was similar. There were probably more than two issues as their normal life was three years, though in a small post office, such as this, it may have been longer.

The present date stamp, as seen in 1966, is Type D reading Cairrgeach Co. an Chabhain and judging from its condition was probably two to three years old.

KILBRACKEN and KILLEGAR. These last two post offices I failed to locate and have to thank the postmaster at Cavan for copies of the date stamps.

Both were Type D with Co. an Chabhain.



LEITRIM POST OFFICES

THE PAST AND THE PRESENT

I have been unable to find any early records of the Leitrim post offices, other than those given. Sir John Gilbert tells that, during the period after the flight of King James to 1784 when the Irish Post Office remained subject to that of England, communications by post were very uncertain. In Co. Kerry there was but one post office and Leitrim possessed none whatever. (J. Stuttard, St Martine le Grand, No. 106).

Certainly, if Co. Leitrim was the last county to have a post office it now has its revenge with the highest proportion of post offices per head of the population that I have been able to find in Ireland.

The postmaster at Carrick-on-Shannon has taken me to task for my description of this town and I have replied in detail. Apparently there have been improvements in the past seven years.

I also hear of improvements in the hotel in that lovely village of Dromahair? I hope so as I hope again one day to get back to the peace, the stillness and the friendliness of Co. Leitrim.