

DOES THE IRISH DOUBLE OVERPRINT ON THE WATER- LOW 10/- of 1935 EXIST ? A REPLY

by Hans G. Zervas



(Figure 1)

What follows will, I believe, prove that Dr. deBurca is in error in his reasoning, but also that the stamps in the Field collection are genuine.

There is a copy of this stamp in my collection, acquired from H.R. Harmer of New York in 1950 (see Figure 1), also there is an illustration of this stamp in the Robson Lowe catalogue of the auction sale of the Preston collection July 8th, 1959 (see Figure 2). Study of these illustrations and the stamp in my collection lead me to the conclusion that these stamps are the result of the peculiar method Dublin Castle used in producing these overprints.

Let us examine first the method used at Dublin Castle for producing these overprints, as all Castle overprints, narrow date, composite, and wide date show evidence that they were produced by the same method. This method was well explained in an article in The Revealer of March-April of 1958 from which I quote- "it is clear that the overprint forme (plate) consisted of twenty settings arranged in five rows of four, each row separated from the next by the space of one stamp. The sheet, which comprised forty stamps in ten rows of four, was put through the press and received overprints on the 1st, 3rd, 5th 7th and 9th rows. It was then put through the press a second time to be completed with overprints on the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th and 10th rows." The article was in connection with an illustrated block of the 5/- value narrow date, showing a properly placed overprint on the odd numbered rows and a drastically tilted out of position impression on the even numbered rows (see Figure 3).

Further proof can be offered on the basis of an offer made in 1956 by a prominent dealer of London as follows: "partly reconstructed pane of 40, owned by a client, of the 10/- with Government Saorstát narrow date overprint, S.G. 85, with double overprint (one inverted) on the even rows, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10, odd rows normal." To my knowledge no part of this offer got into collector albums because of the exorbitant price at which they were held, even TE Field

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DEATH OF A DESIGNER

Newspapers of 29 December 1965, reported the death at the age of 96 of John Joseph O'Reilly, whose Sword of Light design was used for the 1/2d, 5d, 6d, 8d and 1/- of the definitive issue.

TREASURER'S REPORT - August 31, 1966

Income

Income from Dues.....	\$392.00
Income from Sales of Revealers...	110.87
Income from Interest.....	24.29
Income from Gratuities, Gifts, and Auctions.....	28.19
Total.....	555.35

Expenses

Postage expense.....	66.82
Printing of Revealer.....	434.83
Miscellaneous Expense.....	19.88
Profit for Year.....	33.82
Total.....	555.35

AN APPEAL FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

The sensational rises in prices of Irish stamps, and postal history material of all periods, are clear evidence of growth of interest in Irish philately

The E.P.A. can claim some of the credit, it being the first, the largest and the most active Association for the collectors with this interest; and the REVEALER has published (especially in its recent Supplements) a vast amount of useful information to guide collectors, old and new.

Unfortunately its membership has not grown as one would have expected, so that the REVEALER's printing and distribution costs are overtaking the revenue from subscriptions. Please play your part by bringing in fresh members, especially the younger generation who are only just discovering the fascination of Irish stamps and postmarks. Explain to them that the E.P.A. is not just a group of advanced philatelists, but that it aims at putting in touch with each other everyone sharing their common interest.

SCOTT TO PUBLISH HANDBOOK

We are pleased to announce that Scott Publications is contemplating the printing of a Handbook of Irish Philately and has requested the cooperation of the members of the E.P.A.

Secretary Gil Roberts will coordinate our efforts and Fred Dixon and your Editor will assemble and prepare the material submitted. We ask our members to help us with their suggestions and material.

(con't) balked. Be that as it may it proves that the narrow date overprint was produced by two runs through the press as above explained.

The Composite Overprint also shows evidence of the same manner of overprinting (see Figure 4). Note that the arrangement of the wide and narrow date overprints on the 2 1/2 and the 5 & 10/- values repeat in the odd and even rows throughout the sheet, again indicating a double run through the press.

Although the evidence is not as prominent in the Castle Wide Date Overprints, a study made of a complete sheet of these stamps, from the collection of M.G. O'Reilly, shows the same duplication of earmarks in

odd and even pairs of rows. These similarities consist of minor defects in the impressions in the odd numbered rows repeating in the next row below or the even numbered rows. Here also we have evidence of two runs through the press.

Although I have not had the opportunity of examining large multiples of the Waterlow overprints I am of the considered opinion that they were produced by the same method as were the previous Castle overprints. A study of the illustrations of these double overprints will prove my point.

Our first observation will be that in all four illustrations the relative position of the two overprints is approximately the same. Note that the heavy overprint is slightly higher and to the right of the lighter impression. Note that the shifting to the right of the heavy impression is approximately the same in all four illustrations giving the impression that they would have been the product of a printing unit containing four subjects, which would equal one line of the overprinting plate (see above).

A closer observation of the four illustrations will show that the heavier overprint is superimposed on the lighter impression; note the overlapping of the lighter impression by the heavier impression. Dr. deBurca has been to great pains to prove that the lighter overprint is bogus. Can he explain how the Government printing plant could overprint a sheet of stamps to which bogus overprints had been applied, as very definitely the heavy overprint is the second impression on these double overprints?

Now we seek to explain how these double overprints could occur. Lacking definite proof we must theorize, and two theories offer themselves, both involve a malfunction in feeding the sheet into the press.

First - a sheet of stamps was improperly inserted into the press by the operator, offering only part of the sheet to be printed, and realizing that an improper printing of the sheet would occur withdrew the sheet from the press but not before the sheet had come in slight contact with the printing plate resulting in what printers call a "kiss print" on two odd numbered rows. This would account for the much lighter impression of the first impression as compared with the second. Rather than consigning this sheet to printer's

FIG. 2

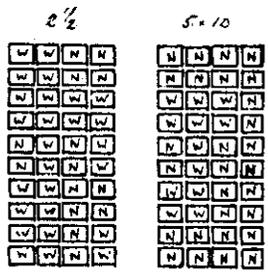


BROUGHT
£75.0.0
AT SALE

1935 10/- indigo, variety overprint double used, with telegraphic cancellation. (See Photo) £80
NOTE: Only three mint copies are reported to exist and the very few used copies known all have telegraphic cancellations

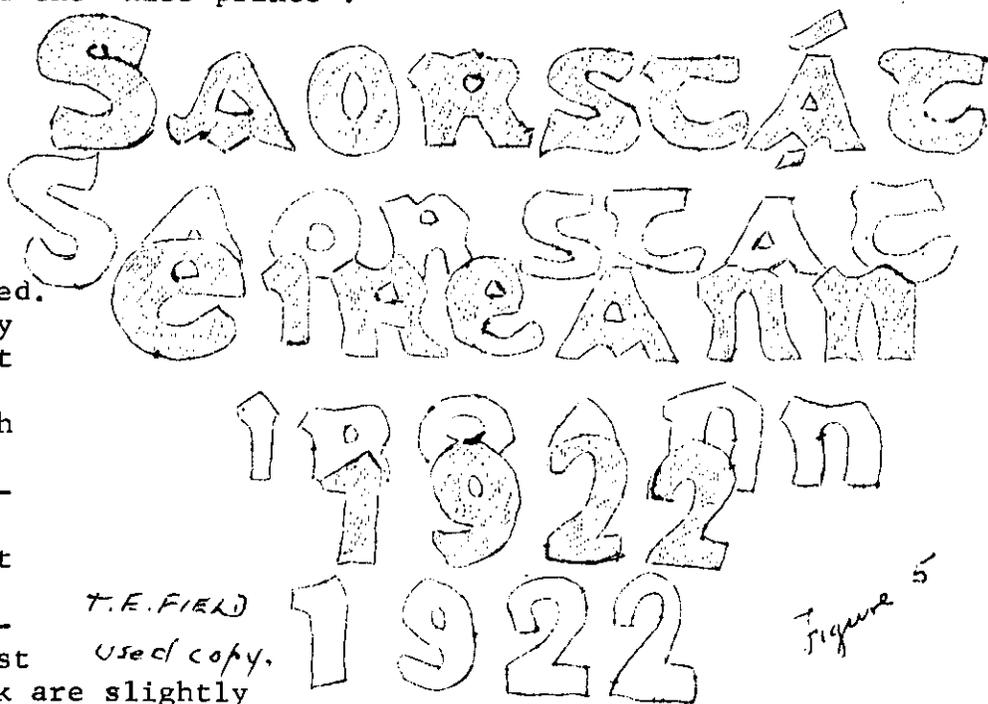


(Figure 3)



waste the operator put the sheet back into the batch to be printed. Now going through the normal printing routine the sheet would receive normal overprints (the heavy impressions) on all 40 stamps and have double impressions on two rows which had received the "kiss prints".

Before offering the second theory a practice employed by typographers should be described. During printing the recesses in the type or stereotypes become clogged with ink and must be cleansed. This is usually done by applying an ink solvent to the type and scrubbing it thoroughly with a stiff brush. Afterwards the type is blotted several times to remove the solvent, but usually a small amount remains and when printing is resumed the first few applications of ink are slightly



diluted resulting in pale or light impressions. This is commonly observed in newspapers where an occasional lightly printed page will be noted in an otherwise well printed paper. Now to our second theory.

Second- as a result of the above explained procedure a sheet of stamps received a light first impression but was not rejected but went into the batch for a second run through the press to overprint the even numbered rows. Here a sheet feeding malfunction occurred resulting in only part of the sheet being inserted in the press and two odd numbered rows that already had a light impression received another, giving rise to a double impression. At this point the sheet still had no overprints on the even numbered rows and the operative simply put the sheet through the press again this time overprinting the even numbered rows. The sheet now had 40 overprints showing two rows with double overprints one light the other heavy.

Now I would like to discuss some of Dr. deBurca's arguments for believing the light overprint bogus. In the article in the Journal of the Irish Philatelic Circle he uses two illustrations which I have numbered Figures 5 & 6 which are hand drawn from enlarged photos, to show variations in the type of the overprints in the two stamps in the T. E. Field collection. These I cannot accept as proving anything because this sort of comment requires photographic comparisons. Just one example, if the drawings are to represent the overprints note the square ends to the accents. In my study of overprints since they first were issued in 1922 I have never come across a square ended accent. I believe that it has escaped Dr. deBurca's attention that the overprints were applied to an uneven surface which could result in malformations of letters in the overprints.

Damaged type in the setting machine such as, flat tailed "9s", or otherwise damaged type, could also account for malformed overprints. Further, misshaped letters could come from poorly taken stereotypes resulting in imperfectly formed overprint impressions. Among the copies in my collection of the Waterlow stamps I have closed "S" in Saorstat, outlined "S", over-inked "S", heavy and light accents, all upper ends rounded, open and clogged "2" in the date,

even a "9" with the bottom of the tail sliced off. The over-prints in general give the impression of having been poorly produced. T. E. Field in his correspondence always referred to these overprints as being "fuzzy", which properly describes them, and the more they are enlarged, as in Dr. deBurca's illustrations, the more malformed the overprints will appear.

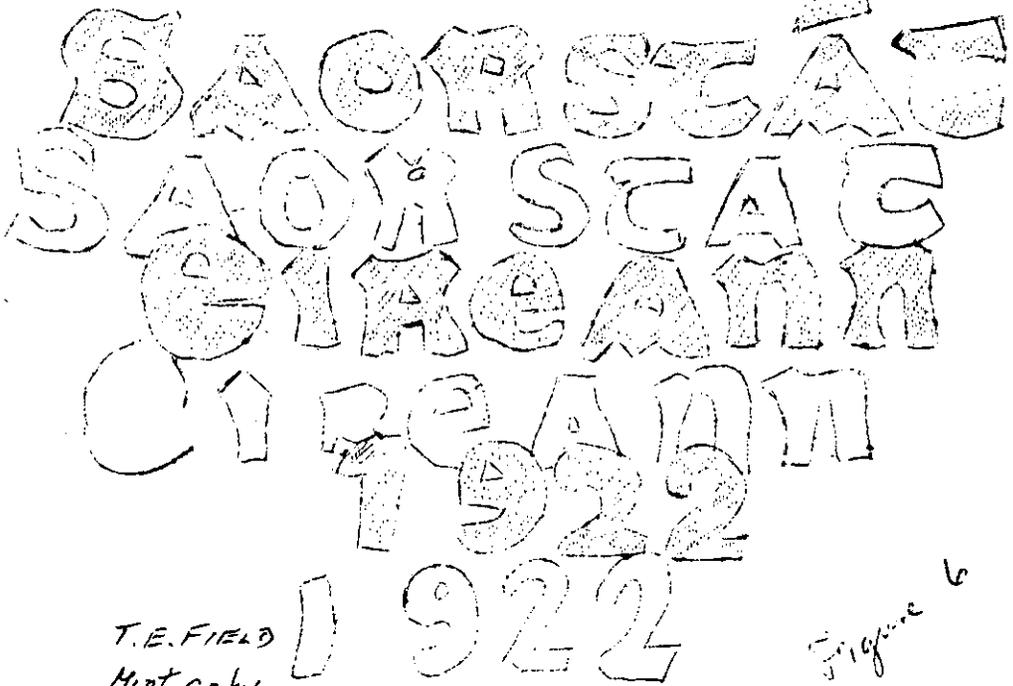
The Waterlow stamps were made from re-engraved dies made from transfer rolls used by Bradbury Wilkinson for entering their plates for the high values. Both Bradbury Wilkinson and Waterlow stamps are intaglio printed. Such stamps have an uneven surface. Note that all lines of an intaglio printed stamp will vary in height depending on how deep a line has been cut into a die to bring out the various nuances of shading required to properly depict the subject being engraved. To overcome the problem of printing on an uneven surface pressure was applied to the overprinting plate against a rather soft blanket resulting in an embossing of the overprint on the back of the stamps. I suggest an examination of the unused specimen of this error in the Field collection with a view to determine whether the stamp shows any embossing on the back. Any embossing on the back of the stamp would be evidence that it had been overprinted at the Castle, and if only one embossing were present it would confirm the theory of the "kiss print" as no pressure would be exerted in such an impression. If two embossings were present it would confirm the second theory as both impressions would have been made under pressure.

While the above examination is being made I also suggest a re-examination of the used Field copy as to the date of the cancellation because both my copy and the Preston copy show the date as 12 VII which is the 12th of July and not August (see Figure 1), which is the date given by Stamp Collecting of July 30, 1938. This same article also states that two copies were found in a mixed lot by a dealer. This would indicate that some telegraphically cancelled stamps could and did get out, or the stamps so stamped were used for some other purpose as Dr. deBurca suggests. So the cancellation per se cannot have any effect on the status of these double overprints, especially the three unused copies known.

Without presenting any further evidence I believe that the above explanations prove what was proposed in the first paragraph, and show how the Castle overprints were produced on the Waterlow stamps, and how the double overprints could have occurred. My conclusion, therefore, is that the double overprints in the Field, Preston and my collection are genuine.

(The End)

Editorial note: The Field stamps were offered in the Harmer London Sale of the late T. E. Field collection in May of this year.



T. E. FIELD
Mint copy.

Figure 1

British Varieties and Irish Overprints

by Gerard Brady, Dublin, E.P.A.

BASIC PLATE FLAW VARIETY - THE "PQ" IN THE NINE PENCE OVERPRINTED

Perhaps one of the most interesting, yet much neglected Basic Plate Flaw varieties is the PQ for PO in POSTAGE which occurs on the Nine Pence Sage Green SG 42 and SG 61. Little has been written of this elusive error which to date has not been recorded on the un-overprinted British stamp.

The variety occurs in the word POSTAGE in the left hand side panel of the stamp. On page 147 of Hans Zervas' "Translation of the Kohl Handbook" published by the Collectors Club Philatelist in 1941 it is written "...Further in a few sheets of the Nine Pence a left marginal stamp showed a Q like O in POSTAGE." It is curious that the position on sheet has not been listed (cf Meredith 4th Edn Page 39). It is difficult to calculate the number of this variety known but very few copies can exist.

The flaw occurs on the 1st stamp of the 3rd Row from the top left hand corner of the sheet. The Control number is T 22 Imperf and the watermark three.



Photograph No. 1



Photograph No. 2

Examination of the photographs will show that the variety is in fact compound and consists of two distinct parts. Firstly there is a pronounced "V" cut into the outer frame line below the perforations and over the letter O in POSTAGE. The second part, which describes the flaw consists of a downward stroke from the "O" making this letter appear as a reversed Q. When looking directly at the word POSTAGE this downward stroke comes off the "O" in the '7 o'clock' position.

Previously this variety was thought only to exist with "Three Line Saorstat Red" overprint in mint condition. However the variety is now known with two different overprints, namely the "Five Line Thom (Red)" from Plate 9 S.G. 42 (Photograph No.1) and of course the "Three Line Saorstat" (Red) from Plate 3 S.G.61 (Photograph No. 2). The former is very much more scarce and has not been recorded. I do know of a rare single used copy with the Three Line overprint.

The scarcity of the "PQ error" is readily made apparent by the few occasions that it has been offered for sale at Auction in some of the finest Irish collections. The following is a list of some such auctions:

- (1) The Agnew Sale [Harmer] 26th May 1930 Lot 213
- (2) The R. M. White Sale [R. Lowe] 15th June 1955 Lot 333

(3) The J. S. Preston Sale [R. Lowe] 8th July 1959 Lot 62

(4) The T. E. Field Sale [R. Lowe] 11th May 1966 Lot 755

These Sales offered mint blocks of four and a pair with "Saorstát" overprint. A confusing point arises from the "White Sale 1955" which offered the error with a Dollard overprint. If this were correct it must have been on an Agate printing from Controls S 21, S 22 Perf or Imperf with black or red overprint. There appears to be no evidence that would substantiate such a claim. Therefore it must be assumed that the Auction Catalogue description was not correct.

Further references to the "PQ" appeared in King "The Postage Stamps of the Irish Free State" 2nd Ed. 1931 page 14. It is mentioned in Robson Lowe's Encyclopaedia 2nd ed. Two listings appeared in "The Revealer". Firstly, in an article by Perry Adams, Whole No. 13 (1953) page 101 and secondly in Supplement No. 5 (1962).

BASIC FLAW VARIETY - "FOUR PENCE" OVERPRINTED

An interesting Plate flaw occurs on the Four Pence (1912-22) Gray Green George V stamp, various overprints.



This is a multiple Plate flaw which occurs in various stages on the second stamp of the nineteenth row. It clearly shows as a diagonal break above the "O" of "FOUR PENCE" and a similar break may also occur on a slightly higher level above the "U", though this latter break is not found in every instance.

This variety has been found with many Controls which I list as follows:

I. Dollard black R-21 Perf or Imperf

red R-21 Perf or Imperf

carmine R-21 Perf or Imperf

carmine S-22 Perf or Imperf

II. Thom (Five Line) S-22 Perf only

T-22 Perf or Imperf

III. Thom (Saorstát) U-22 Perf only

V-23 Perf only

Perhaps other members may have noticed the variety on other Controls. In view of its position on the sheet in relation to the Control Number it would appear likely that readers with Control collections would have some copies.

This flaw is recorded by R. C. Alcock and C. W. Meredith on Page 69 of "British Postage Stamp Varieties Illustrated" and is also described on Page 4 of the Philatelic Adviser, April 1951.

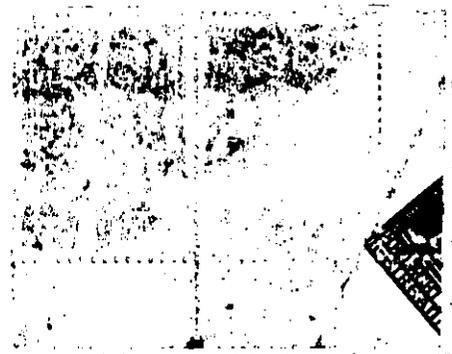
1950 HOLY YEAR ISSUE - PRINTING ERROR

Scott No. 142

2 1/2 d

Violet

S.G. No. 149



#1 Front (open)

#2 Flap over

#3 Gummed side flat

(From the collection of Leon W. Davis, E.P.A. # 63, Hamilton Square, New Jersey. Photography by Ralph Clark and W. Hickey)

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New Issue Notes and News.



The 50th anniversary of the death of the Irish patriot, Roger Casement was commemorated by the issue of a special stamp on 3rd August 1966. The commemorative stamp was in two denominations, 5d (20 million) and 1s. (2,250,000) made up in sheets of 120 stamps. Printing was by photogravure on paper watermarked "E". Perforations 15 x 15. The design of the stamp is by Raymond Kyne of Signa Ltd., Dublin and is based on a photograph.

The stamps were scheduled to be released on Wednesday, but several of the smaller offices by mistake began selling the stamps on Tuesday, 2nd August and Mr. Dixon in his Random Notes (No. 111 August 1966) reports that the Post Office instructed that such letters be intercepted and that those intercepted after the canceling either had the postmark (and hence stamp) defaced, or the date altered by hand from 2 to 3. The defaced covers are of curio value but could easily be faked by mutilating genuine first day or later covers.

According to the "Irish Times" some of the prematurely posted letters arrived duly cancelled, but with the date space blank. These, too, could be faked by scraping out the date from later used examples.

IRISH EXHIBIT WINS MEDAL AT SIPEX

Karl Hemmer of Soest, Germany was awarded a Bronze Medal at the Sixth International Philatelic Exhibit held in Washington May 21-30, 1966. Mr. Hemmer's exhibit was both comprehensive and impressive. It included items of postal history beginning with Bishop Marks and some very interesting shipletter and penny post markings. The 1840-1922 period was well presented with Mulready and PennyBlacks used in Ireland, Maltese Cross markings, including the seldom-seen Mullingar Cross (a clear strike), barred diamond and spoon cancellations. Also included in 642



The Irish Post Office issued the EUROPA 1966 postage stamp on 26th September. The stamp, designed by the brothers Gregor and Josef Bender of Regensburg and Bonn, shows a stylised boat in full sail and bears the inscriptions "EUROPA" and "CEPT" together with the name of the State and the value numerals. The design symbolises the progress of the European Community, and in particular the successful co-operation of the Postal and Telecommunications Administrations. The basic design has been adapted for use on the Irish stamps by Mr. Raymond Kyne of Messrs. Signa Ltd., Dublin. The stamps were made up in sheets of 120 and were in two denominations, 7d.- colours Reddish Orange and Green (2,250,000) and 1/5, colours Greenish Grey and Green (2,500,000). Printing was by photogravure on paper watermarked with the letter "E". Perforations 15 x 15.

The Ballintubber Abbey stamp will appear on 8th November in 5d and 1s.

News has come from Ireland that folders of the 1916-1966 Commemorative Issue sold so well that there is to be a further printing. In May, it was also announced that there is to be a further printing of 1 million stamps each of the 7d and 1s.5d, raising the totals to 2 1/4 and 2 1/2 millions respectively.

this portion was a beautiful copy of the Q.V. £5 orange with a Belfast c.d. s. and several examples of the "emergency" 1916 Dublin GPO cancels. The overprints were well represented with proofs, controls, and varieties including the PENC F error. The E.P.A. congratulates Mr. Hemmer.

Joseph Foley
Vice President, EPA.

A NEW FISCAL YEAR IS NOW BEGINNING
FOR THE EIRE PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION.
PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES PROMPTLY.