

**THE NUMISMATIC SOCIETY OF IRELAND**

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**Occasional Papers  
45 – 51**

**Edited by  
Ronan Fitzpatrick**



Dedicated to passed members who have enriched our knowledge through their  
commitment to the study of numismatics and their engagement with  
The Numismatic Society of Ireland.

Front cover: The pin of the Society. Actual size 15.5mm

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Edited by  
**RONAN FITZPATRICK**

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**PATRON**



**CENTRAL BANK &  
FINANCIAL SERVICES  
AUTHORITY OF IRELAND**  

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**EUROSYSTEM**

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## P R E F A C E

Once again it has been a welcome challenge and highly rewarding occupation to bring to publication this volume of the Numismatic Society of Ireland's Occasional Papers.

This edition contains papers on traditional topics like coins, tokens, banknotes and medals. It also includes a very informative paper on buttons, artefacts which are not typically collected by current members. As always, it is because members have researched and taken the time to record the results that it is possible to publish this volume. For this occasion we have a first hand account of how Irish banknotes came into being. We also have a first hand account of the daily use of Dublin market tokens. Those who can attend our monthly meeting will have enjoyed a number of these papers when they were first presented and this publication brings them to our broader and international membership. Other papers have not yet been presented and these report painstaking research, seeking out historical detail for formal recording. The committee extend their sincere thanks to all and it has been my privilege to assemble the work and edit it for your library.

Readers' corrections, additions, critiques or recommendations are welcome.

Ronan Fitzpatrick,  
Dublin,  
Autumn 2011

# IRISH BANKNOTE CONNECTIONS

**Louis O'Byrne**

Thank you for inviting me to talk this evening on a subject which has, for many years, been very near to my heart and, I suspect very near the heart of most people - banknotes. It is an honour for which I am very grateful.

I have called the talk 'Irish Banknote Connections'. I am considering a book on these lines. There are books specifically designed for banknotes collectors, for example, Mairtin MacDevitt's fine publications. But what I have in mind aims at a somewhat different angle and a somewhat wider audience. It will aim to provide an explanation of the designs on the banknotes and the historical connections involved in the three/four series of Irish pound banknotes which were issued by the Irish State between 1928 and 2001. I think it would be of interest to many people and I would be particularly grateful for any feedback you may be willing to give me.

To begin with, I would like to spend five minutes or so taking a brief look at the development of banknotes in Ireland and then turn to the Irish banknote issues of three quarters of a century. With the aid of some slides we will look at the documents themselves as pictures, as designs, as pieces of history in their own right. During the development of the euro banknotes, I remember one of my European colleagues saying that we must be very careful to put strong symbols on the new banknotes and another colleague pointing out that the banknotes in themselves become powerful symbols. This is definitely true of the Irish banknotes.

## ORIGINS

Banking and banknotes have a long and interesting history in Ireland. The first mention of the word 'banker' that I can find in Irish law is in the Act of 1709 and that deals with banknotes. It provided for notes or receipts issued by any "banker, goldsmith, merchant or trader". These notes or receipts, issued in exchange for deposits of gold, foreign cash, loans etc., were the forerunners of banknotes. The practice grew of endorsing such notes over to others for value received. Soon there were non-assignable notes payable to bearer which circulated throughout the community. As this practice grew, it was no longer practical to write each note by hand. By the early eighteenth century, first printed forms, then printed notes became the norm. This is where the story of banknotes as pieces of paper with graphic interest begins.

Quite early on in the eighteenth century, the issue of banknotes payable to bearer on demand became the distinguishing feature of the banker. A relatively small number of private banks operated in Ireland and carried on a note issuing business. While the total number at any one time varied between three and eight only one, La Touche's, lasted throughout the century. (The name survives to this day in some odd ways. For instance, there is a small theatre group operating in Parnell Square to this day called the "La Touche Players".) A member of the famous La Touche

family was involved in an event in 1783 which changed the financial scene dramatically - the establishment of the Bank of Ireland - as an approximate equivalent of the Bank of England. For a former central banker it is interesting to note that the Bill was entitled one "for establishing a National Bank in the Kingdom of Ireland".

The Bank of Ireland dominated the scene in subsequent decades and became commonly known as the national bank. Its notes were regularly referred to as 'national paper' and were regarded, in an era of recurrent banking crises, as being as good as gold. The reference to the national bank and national paper became particularly confusing with the launch, in 1834, of the new National Bank<sup>2</sup> promoted by, among others, Daniel O'Connell. Now I'm sure that Daniel O'Connell could never have intended to cause any such confusion.

Throughout the nineteenth century the format of banknotes in Ireland was slowly developing away from their relationship with bills of exchange. As this development took place, the notes themselves were becoming more sophisticated as printed documents. At first they were printed on one side only. But the script used became more and more elaborate as a security device. The type face available in ordinary printing was avoided where possible. Seals became less commonly used. Small vignettes began to appear of subjects like the Three Graces, or Erin, or Britannia. There was a very touching one of Erin holding hands with Britannia. Sometimes small scenes were used of for example, a ship or a plough or indeed both. Locations seemed incidental and were not often identifiable, although a fine £1 note issued in Cork in 1837 by the Southern Bank of Ireland showed ships sailing past Blackrock Castle. An interesting treatment of this period can be found in 'The Emergence of the Irish Banking System 1820-45' by G L Barrow

## **SAORSTÁT ÉIREANN**

In the period immediately after the establishment of Saorstát Éireann in 1922, British currency continued to circulate freely. Whether the British notes were actually legal tender or not after the new Saorstát Constitution came into force on 6 December 1922 could be a matter for legal debate. While banknotes issued by Irish banks had been given legal tender status, as an emergency measure, in 1914, this status was withdrawn in 1919. In the early days of the State, therefore, the British banknotes or no banknotes had legal tender status in Ireland. While there was a nice point of principle here the practical effect was slight.

The view seems to have been taken by the authorities at the time that conditions were unsettled enough without adding further confusion by changing the currency arrangements. Not only were conditions unsettled on the political front with the World War, the War of Independence and the Civil War following each other in quick succession, but the situation was also highly unstable in relation to sterling and the gold standard. These events militated against any move, no matter how desirable in theory, to arrange an independent banknote issue. The critical factor in any banknote is that the holder must be completely certain of getting full value for the piece of paper. There seemed to be a certain nervousness in this regard on the part of the rulers of the new State for quite a number of years.

These considerations did not apply so strongly in relation to coins and very quickly, in October 1923 in fact, an informal committee was established to advise the Minister for Finance, Ernest Blythe, on the question of an independent token coinage. The committee included two of the Minister's official advisers who subsequently had a long association with currency matters - Joseph Brennan and J J McElligot. The Committee's work did spill over somewhat into the banknote area in that the question of a ten-shilling note of limited legal tender was also considered.

In January 1926, a Coinage Bill was introduced in Dail Eireann. During the debate on this Bill, Ernest Blythe seemed to make his intention in relation to banknotes abundantly clear:

*"I believe that the State, struggling to get on its feet economically, struggling to get going,*

*would be hindered and handicapped by any change in the currency position or any departure from the state of affairs that exists at the present time, in which we have the British currency as our real legal tender.”*

Even before the Bill was enacted, however, in April 1926, an announcement was made of the people who had been invited to become members of a Commission of Inquiry into Banking and Currency. The Commission, chaired by Professor Henry Parker-Willis of Columbia University, USA, generated a series of reports - four interim reports and a final report. Two of their central recommendations were that a Saorstát Government legal tender note issue should be created and that the separate banknote issues of the existing banks should be replaced by a consolidated note issue. Another recommendation was that the new Irish currency be based on sterling with “when as and if desired a gold monetary base of its own”.

The Commission decided against the establishment of a central bank. Their principle reason seems to have been the absence of a capital market and a short-term money market in Ireland. It should be mentioned also that the Minister for Finance, Ernest Blythe, whose opinions were always far stronger than his capabilities, referred to another factor: “the disturbance that would have been involved in the setting up of a central bank in opposition to the existing institutions”. (Debate on Currency Bill, 1927). Instead the Commission proposed the establishment of a Currency Commission. The Government acted very quickly. The final report was dated 31 January 1927 and the Currency Act, 1927 became law on 20 August in the same year.

The aims of this legislation are set out clearly in the full title to the Bill as introduced in the Dáil on 30 March 1927:

*“An Act to authorise the issue of gold coinage, to make provision for the issue of currency notes having legal tender quality, to terminate the issue of bank notes by individual banks and substitute an issue of bank notes by a central authority, and to establish a commission to manage and control the issue and redemption of the said currency notes and the issue of bank notes and to exercise certain other functions in relation to the currency.”*

And apart from issue gold coinage, this is precisely what the Currency Commission (and its successor, the Central Bank of Ireland) did for forty years. When I joined the organisation in the mid-1960s, it was very much the same as it was at the end of the 1920s.

## **IRISH LEGAL TENDER NOTES**

The Currency Act, 1927, Part V sets out the arrangements for the issue and redemption of legal tender notes. Seven denominations were provided for - ten shillings, one pound, five pounds, ten pounds, twenty pounds, fifty pounds and one hundred pounds. These were to be legal tender for any amount. The form, size, design, manner of printing, paper and manner of numbering and authentication were the responsibility of the Currency Commission to prescribe, with the sanction of the Minister for Finance. It is worth noting that the legislation provided for the issue of banknote denominations up to £100, and £100 notes were actually issued from the start, when the highest Bank of England denominations up to the 1940s was the £5 note.

As it was a new currency, the question of confidence was critical. The approach taken to ensure that there was no question about the value of the currency was set out in Section 49(1) of the Act. It provided that

*“Every legal tender note shall be payable by the Commission on presentation at the London Agency and shall be so payable in money in any form which is for the time being legal tender in Great Britain for unlimited amounts.”*

This is the legal source of the sterling link - the one-for-one no-margins parity with sterling which continued until March 1979.

## **CONSOLIDATED BANKNOTES**

The Currency Act, 1927, Part VI sets out the arrangements for the issue and redemption of consolidated banknotes. Only six denominations were provided for in this case. The denomination omitted was the ten-shillings. As in the case of legal tender notes, the form, size, design, manner of printing, paper and manner of numbering and authentication were the responsibility of the Currency Commission.

To underpin confidence in the notes, Section 58(4) of the Act provided that consolidated banknotes be payable on presentation to the responsible bank in coin and notes

“which are at the time of such presentation legal tender in Saorstát Éireann for such amount”

The Act also gave the Commission power to set a maximum limit for the amount of the issue. It set the limit at £6,000,000. Before the passing of the Act five of the eight major banks in the State had issued notes. Now the right to issue was distributed among all eight. While the conditions attaching to the issue were more restrictive than before, at least the right to issue notes had been preserved. Only four of the banks, however, issued the full range of denominations. The National Bank issued no £20, £50 or £100. The Hibernian, Northern and Provincial; issued no £50 or £100 notes.

The issue or reissue of all banknotes, other than the new consolidated banknotes, ceased on the ‘Appointed Day’, 6 May 1929. From that date the Currency Commission insisted that all their previously issued notes be withdrawn by the note issuing banks. The Central Bank Act, 1943, provided for the termination of the issue of consolidated banknotes and, on 31 December 1953, the last date allowed by the Act, issue and reissue of these notes ceased.

## **DESIGNS**

So the scene is now set for the issue of the State's own banknotes, a practice that was to continue for almost seventy-five years, until we slipped gently into the euro at the beginning of 2002.

The Currency Commission established an advisory committee to assist it in deciding on the designs of both types of new notes. The Committee consisted of three people, all of whom had been members of the 1926 Coinage Committee. They were Dr Thomas Bodkin, Director of the National Gallery of Ireland, Lucius O’Callaghan, former Director of the Gallery, and Dermot O’Brien, President of the Royal Hibernian Academy - the Tom Ryan of his day. A J Bull of the London County Council School of Photo-engraving was consulted on the colours and inks that should be used for protection against forgery. A S Roberts, Director of Stamping in the Stamping Office of the Revenue Commissioners was consulted on the question of establishing a banknote printing plant.

This is where my real story begins. First let us look at the official version. Sir John Lavery, RA, one of the most famous Irish painters of the day, was commissioned to paint ‘an emblematic female figure’ for use as the central feature of the design of the new legal tender notes.



The painting he provided is now on permanent loan by the Central Bank to the National Gallery. *Coins and Medals* periodical once (June 1965) commented:

*“The wistful simplicity of this portrait rivals the Mona Lisa.”*

But, hinting at another story, *The Irish Times* (14 September 1928) said

*“The striking resemblance between the colleen painted by Sir John Lavery on the new Irish Free State currency notes and Lady Lavery, has been commented upon by many persons.”*

This first series of legal tender notes, which the Central Bank refers to as the “A Series”, is often referred to in other quarters as the “Lady Lavery Series”. The big question is whether the portrait, which forms the main feature of the notes, is Lady Lavery or the ‘emblematic female head’ described in Dr Maurice Moynihan’s book. It was certainly intended to be an emblematic female head representing Erin. But in the background there are ‘plots and stratagems’.

Dr Thomas Bodkin was the newly appointed Director of the National Gallery. But he had ambitions. He was very keen to be appointed High Commissioner in London in succession to James MacNeill, who had just been chosen as Governor General in succession to Tim Healy in 1927. [There had indeed been talk of Sir John Lavery himself being offered the post of Governor General, a prospect which Hazel would have truly relished.] Hazel lobbied strongly for Bodkin as High Commissioner in London among her contacts at the highest level of English society. It was to her disappointment and especially to Bodkin’s that Professor Smiddy was eventually appointed to the post.

Simultaneously, Bodkin sought to get Hazel’s portrait onto the new currency notes. Privately he discussed the possibility with the Laverys. Well, at least, with Hazel. Then when the Committee came to the conclusion, in December 1927, that there were major problems, in the prevailing circumstances of the time, with finding notable Irish figures to place on the notes, he circulated photographs of Hazel as a possible emblematic portrait, the Committee agreed that this was the best idea before them so far. But (according to Bodkin’s account) every jealous woman who fancies her looks will ask ‘why was Lady Lavery put on the notes instead of myself?’

Bodkin accordingly proposed to the committee that Sir John Lavery be asked to paint the picture of a beautiful Irish type. He wrote to Hazel “It is quite understood by the Commission that Sir John is to select for his type of Irish feminine beauty the model who most appeals to him.” Other artists were suggested by members of the Committee but were rejected by Bodkin and finally the Committee agreed to approach Sir John Lavery.

## *Irish Banknote Connections*

Sir John, while very pleased with the approach, lobbed a neat little spanner into the works. He suggested to Bodkin that Sean Keating was the ideal choice to design the notes or even an open competition. This rattled Bodkin. He wrote to Hazel that Sir John "Showed...a reprehensible desire to do John Keating a good turn". Also there was not enough time for a competition. And, if there was, the Commissioners would wish to act as judges themselves and

*"...would probably favour a portrait of some farmer's daughter. They are men of business, but emphatically not men of taste. I know them all"*

Hazel was naturally extremely keen on the idea. But this did not stop her pointing out herself, in a letter to Bodkin that

*"Indeed apart from anything else I think a classic head, some Queen of Ireland, Maeve perhaps, would be best."*

It is a neat twist of fate that, in the next series of Irish banknotes, issued nearly fifty years later, Hazel's suggestion was realised and Queen Mebh appeared on the new one pound note. But Sir John was persuaded. And he decided not to paint a new portrait but adapt a 1909 portrait of Hazel (who by now was 48) and add a romantic Irish landscape background and call the painting 'Killarney'. Sir John stated publicly (Irish Independent) that "It was not to be a portrait of any particular person". But the Express pointed out that the portrait was indeed Lady Lavery. It later attributed this leak to Lady Lavery herself. The Minister for Finance, Ernest Blythe's response to an Irish Times report of the "striking resemblance of the portrait to Lady Lavery" was that "The head on the notes is NOT Lady Lavery and does not bear the slightest resemblance to her." This did not impress Hazel.

The portrait chosen for the watermark was taken from a sculpture by John Hogan. It was a sculpture of his wife who was Italian. Hazel's comment was:

*"It would be terrible for Mr Blythe if she should prove not to be Mrs Hogan but someone else's wife who sat for the 'emblematic head.'"*

How much did the Currency Commission know of all this manoeuvring? In September 1928 Joseph Brennan wrote to Dr Parker Willis in New York

*"...the head on the front was painted specially for us by Sir John Lavery. It is intended to be purely emblematic but, as is now generally known, Lady Lavery was the artist's model and the picture bears some resemblance to her although it cannot in any strict sense be considered a portrait of her."*

But poor Sir John believed that the commission for the portrait had been given to him as a major tribute by the Irish Free State to his wife and himself

*"A high compliment to my wife for the part she took in helping to bring together the unfriendly elements towards the Treaty and to me as an Irish artist."*

Don't forget that Michael Collins had a letter to 'Hazel Dearest' on his person when he was killed. Sir Shane Leslie was convinced that both Michael Collins and Kevin O'Higgins were 'hopelessly in love with Hazel. (O'Higgins wife Birdie was of similar view in relation to her own husband.) The Republicans intercepted her letters to Collins and decided to shoot them both. (Now there is something to follow up.)

Hazel's bete-noir in all this seems to have been Ernest Blythe. She was scathing in correspondence with the Irish Times. But I can't resist quoting the response to her from an Irish Times journalist with the unlikely name of Mr Boilbester on 29 March 1929:

*“Your attitude towards Mr Blythe and company interests me exceedingly, in view of your thorough knowledge of our new rulers and their ways....Blythe and his cultural alter-ego [Richard] Mulcahy are sour-faced Puritans with all the zeal of that type and all its fanatical obstinacy. Blythe is a Lisburn Presbyterian ...Mulcahy’s grandparents were Quakers. Both he and Blythe are rabid tee-totalers. So there you have the Free Staters’ woes in a sentence. Blythe and Mulcahy, the Orange convert and the soldier saint, as poor Kevin O’Higgins used to call them.”*

It’s a nice twist to the story that one of the designers of the ‘B’ Series was Mulcahy’s son Sean. Sinead MacCoole's book on 'Hazel - A Life of Lady Lavery 1880-1935' gives an excellent account of the episode. It's a fine book and I would strongly recommend it to anyone who has not got around to it yet.

## **THE RIVERINE HEADS**

One of the seven heads representing Irish rivers was chosen as the central feature on the back of each of the new legal tender notes. Both the ‘emblematic female head’ and the riverine heads were engraved by John Harrison, Chief Portrait Engraver of the English banknote printing firm of Waterlow and Sons. This firm later went out of business following a major fraud. (See: 'The Man from Lisbon', 'The Man Who Stole Portugal' etc.)

The seven heads were chosen from a total of fourteen sculptures of heads, representing thirteen Irish rivers and the Atlantic Ocean, which form the keystones of the main entrances and some of the windows in the Custom House. One of these river gods is depicted on the back of each denomination. They are the work of the Irish sculptor, Edward Smyth. Harold G Leask, in a paper read to the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland in November 1945, commented:

*“It is not too much to say that they are the finest sculptures of their type executed in the eighteenth century in Ireland, or perhaps anywhere else.”*

James Gandon himself said:

*“The colossal statue of commerce, with the bas-relief in the pediment, with the keystones representing the principal rivers of Ireland, some of which are equal to Michael Angelo, and the rest, are executed by Mr E Smith, a native of Ireland, a gentleman who, without having had the advantage of foreign travel or opportunity of seeing many specimens of sculpture, has given proof of abilities equal to any in the three kingdoms.”*

Gandon had been led to believe “that no high work of Art could then be had in Ireland”. He asked the contractor working on the Custom House, Henry Darley, about sculptors and Darley came up immediately with Smyth’s name. The idea of using such heads as keystones had already been used on Somerset House in London but the general view is that Smyth’s work is far superior to the sculptures on that building.

Only three of these heads have been absolutely identified but Leask has used internal evidence to identify, with reasonable certainty, the others. Taking them in ascending currency order:

**10/-** This is the River Blackwater. It is a sad face with deeply set eyes. The head-dress is a basket, apparently of apples. The Upper Blackwater valley was notable for its apples. From beneath the basket oozes a mass of small fish. Weeds hang down over the face.

**£1** This is the River Lee. It s a strong noble face. On the head is an upturned anchor and a cable draped across the prows of two ships which are loaded with barrels and bales. This points to the importance of the harbour and its trade.

**£5** This head is thought to represent the River Lagan. The face is slightly bearded with folds of cloth, obviously good Belfast linen, beneath the jaws and chin. On the head are two swans with intertwined necks. The comparative youth of the face and the cloth point towards the young city of Belfast.



**£10**

This is the River Bann. (Note particularly that the smile gets broader as the value increases.) Again we have cloth-like folds, this time on the head, with two loops of beads, clusters of cherries and what appears to be flax. This fits well with the Bann countryside well known for flax growing, linen making, brewing and fresh water pearls.

**£20** Here we have the River Boyne with laurel leaves and ears of wheat. Meath was then famous for grain rather than cattle. There is a not-so-subtle change between the sculpture and the banknote. On the headband of the sculpture is the date 1690, the date of the Battle of the Boyne. This does not appear on the banknote.

**£50** This is thought to be the River Shannon. There are oak leaves and acorns on the forehead and around the face. On the head is a trident flanked by cornucopias. The trident is a symbol of Limerick and the grain and fruits probably represent the wealth of the centre of Ireland. There was a great oak forest at Cratloe.

**£100** This is the River Erne. There is an amazing profusion of water creatures on the head and drooping weeds suggesting rich slow-flowing water. The Erne was noted for its great variety of fish and for its eel fisheries.

Much more detail is given in Leask's paper which was published in the RSAI Journal for 1945. One river is notable for its absence here but will appear later. There are wax models of twelve of these heads in the Civic Museum. The Commission selected the seven heads from photographs of these models and John Harrison made his engravings from these photographs.

## **PLOUGHMAN NOTES**

The Advisory Committee recommended that the main feature on the face of the Consolidated Bank Notes should be a man with a team of two horses pulling a plough. Dermod O'Brien, one of the members of the Committee made the drawing from which the plate was engraved. The notes have since become commonly known as the 'Ploughman Notes'.



A professional artist, E L Lawrenson, was retained to do the drawings for the backs of the Series. He made a set of drawings of buildings and views. Now I know that Derek Young in his 'Guide to the Currency of Ireland - Consolidated Bank Notes 1929 - 1941' refers to them as "almost picture postcard in their conception". But some of the engravings that resulted are, in my view, among the finest examples of intaglio engraving around. The originals of these drawings are still in the possession of the Central Bank. Because time is limited, I will comment on only one.



**Foster Place:** On the back of the £10 note is a view of the former Currency Commission and Central Bank premises in Foster Place. It has now achieved real fame as the Wax Museum. Before this, Foster Place itself had a long association with banking. Sir Thomas Leighton moved his banking business there from Fleet Street in 1797. The premises of this bank were occupied by the Royal Bank of Ireland in 1837 and that business, since incorporated into AIB, continued there until quite recently. In 1803, the Bank of Ireland took possession of the former Parliament House.

The Currency Commission looked at a number of sites in late 1927 and early 1928 in Westmoreland Street, Kildare Street (the former Maple's Hotel, now the Department of Industry and

Commerce Building) and Castle Street (the former La Touche's bank). It finally leased the Foster Place site from the Bank of Ireland.

The site contained a gateway and armoury, or guard-house designed by the architect Francis Johnson for the Bank of Ireland in the early part of the nineteenth century, - about 1812. There was also a passage from Foster Place to Parliament Row. This passage was closed when the Currency Commission offices were built. [But in the mid-1960s, I distinctly remember a very confused elderly lady wandering into the banking hall at Foster Place looking for "Kellys-back-of-the-bank".] The plans for the Commission's premises were prepared by T J Byrne, Principal Architect of the Office of Public Works, in the early months of 1928. The building included offices and strong rooms. By September 1928 a portion of the premises was available for dealing with the initial issue of legal tender notes. The building was effectively completed by the end of March 1930.

Francis Johnson's archway was changed substantially during the construction and, according to C P Curran in F G Hall's 'The Bank of Ireland 1783-1946' this

*"...characteristic expression of Francis Johnston's bold construction, has lost something of its noble severity."*

The Trophy of Arms which surmounts the façade is by the Cork born sculptor, Thomas Kirk, who was also responsible for the statue of Nelson which stood on top of his pillar in O'Connell Street until the famous explosion in 1966. Further details about the Foster Place premises can be found in 'Currency and Central Banking in Ireland 1922-1961' by Maurice Moynihan.

## **TIME FOR CHANGE**

The designs of the 'A' Series legal tender notes had a surprisingly long life. It is worth remembering, however, that when they were first issued, they were quite sophisticated for the period. Not only did they cover a much wider range of values than the Bank of England notes, but they also made a more interesting use of colour. They were, in fact, highly developed graphic objects within the culture of the time. But by the 1960s, however, it was clear that change was necessary. An Advisory Committee was established in 1964 to advise the Bank on designs for a new note series. Although a limited competition was arranged for selected artists, the results did not prove satisfactory and the matter was shelved for a time.

In December 1971, the Central Bank advertised in the national press inviting applications from professional artists, designers and design teams to design a new series of legal tender notes. An Advisory Committee, of course, was set up to advise on the designs and the choice of designer. It consisted of the Governor and Secretary of the Central Bank, Mrs FH Boland, Sir Basil Goulding, Paul Hogan, Maurice McGonigal, Sam Stephenson and James White. A small number of designers were selected and asked to make detailed submissions.

The group then selected for the project was Servicon Planning and Design whose members were Michael Biggs, Patrick Hickey, Brian Hogan, Richard Hurley and Sean Mulcahy. Servicon proposed a series representing Irish art and culture from pre-Christian times to the twentieth century.



The Central Bank had as its objective that the new printing works in Sandyford would be ready in time to print the new designs and that the new designs would be the first notes printed at the new works. It almost, but not quite, worked out. The Printing Works was completed in 1974 and the Irish banknotes were printed there from then on. However, it was not possible to issue the first of the new legal tender note series, the £5 note [Scotus], until 1 November 1976. The new £1 note [Mebh] was issued on 24 October 1977, the new £10 note [Swift] on 14 August 1978, the new £20 note [Yeats] on 4 February 1980 and the new £50 note [Carolan] on 1 November 1982. It was originally intended to issue a £100 note [Granuaile] also but the idea was dropped, partly because of lack of demand.

I would like to draw your attention to a particularly noteworthy feature of the ‘B’ Series - the calligraphy. As Servicon explained, it was:

*“an alphabet founded on the basic forms developed and so astonishingly perfected by Irish scribes in the eight century. Not only was this Irish script used by Alcuin, at the behest of Charlemagne, as a model on which to base a badly needed uniform hand for Europe .....Edward Johnston called the Book of Kells the most beautiful book in the world, and he was referring principally to the script.”*

All very interesting. But, in my view, the beauty of the script was particularly due to the talent of Michael Biggs. Michael was a sculptor who referred to himself as a stone cutter. But he was a highly intelligent and greatly underestimated artist.

## **TEN POUND ‘B’**

To look in detail at some of notes from this series, let’s take first the £10 denomination with its portrait of Swift. The note is associated especially with Dublin in the eighteenth century. The back of the note features a detail from John Rocque's steel-engraved map of Dublin and the Liffey. It was first published in 1756. The detail shows the area bounded approximately by Great Abby Street (now Middle Abbey Street) and Aston's Quay (now Aston Quay). It shows a flotilla of ships of the period in the Liffey. These ships, with the fine lines of their rigging, proved to be a surprisingly effective anti-counterfeit device in 1983 and 1984 when they were poorly reproduced in a major forgery attempt.

On the front of the note, beside the portrait of Jonathan Swift, is the Arms of Dublin from a woodcut on a resolution of the City Council dated 1713. The background is part of a letter from Swift to Eaton Stannard, Recorder of the City of Dublin, dated April 11th 1735.

*Irish Banknote Connections*

In his poem 'On the Death of Dr Swift', written in November 1731, Swift himself said:

Behold the fatal day arrive!  
"How is the Dean?" - "He's just alive."  
Now the departing prayer is read;  
"He hardly breaths." - "The Dean is dead."

Before the passing bell begun,  
The news through half the town is run,  
"O! May we all for death prepare!  
What has he left? and who's his heir?"  
"I know no more than what the news is;  
'Tis all bequeath'd to public uses."  
To public uses!" a perfect whim  
What had the public done for him?" [Shades of Sir Boyle Roche!]

This banknote is a small recognition by the country of what the Dean did for Dublin and literature.

*"He gave what little wealth he had  
To build, a house for fools and mad;  
And show'd by one satiric touch  
No nation wanted it so much."*

The letter to Standard reads:

*"Sir,  
I believe you may possibly have heard from me or publick report of my resolution to leave my whole fortune except a few legacies, to build an Hospital for Ideots and Lunatick in this City or the Suburbs, and after long consideration I have been so bold to pitch upon you as my Director in the methods I ought to take for rendering my Design Effectual; I have known and seen the Difficultyes of any such attempt by the Negligence or Ignorance, or some worse dealing by Executors and Trustees. I have been so unfortunate for want of some able Friend of a publick spirit, that I could never purchase one foot of Land. The neighbouring Country Squires always watching like Crows for a Carcase over every Estate that was likely to be sold; and that kind of Knowledge was quite the Life I have led, which in the Strength of my days chiefly past at Courts and among Ministers of State, to my great Vexation and Disappointment, for which I now repent too late. I therefore humbly desire You will please take me into your Guardianship as far as the weight of your Business will permit. As the City hath agreed to give me a piece of Land, My Wish would be to make the Lord Mayor Recorder and Aldermen my Trustees, Executors or Governors, according as You shall please to advise. And out of these Committees may be appointed to meet at proper times - My thought is that the City will be carefull in an Affair calculated wholly for the City's advantage. If you would favour me so much as to fix any day during this Vacation to dine at the Deanery, I shall be extreemly obliged to You; and give you my very crude Notions of my Intentions.*

I am with very great Esteem, Sir,  
Your most obedient and obliged Servant,  
JONATH : SWIFT"

Swift, of course, had a deep interest in currency matters. His influence through his 'Drapier's Letters' had a critical effect in the controversy over Wood's Halfpence. But then that story is well known and too long to do justice to here. There is a very interesting Article on the subject in the Society's Occasional Papers. However, Swift's legacy mainly lies in his immense contribution to

literature. Yeats was to write "Swift haunts me; he is always just around the next corner" which brings me to the £20 note.

## **TWENTY POUND 'B'**

The design elements in this note reflect the renaissance of literature in Ireland, both in Irish and English, in the early part of the twentieth century. The front of the note has strong Dublin associations. William Butler Yeats was born in 1865 at 5 Sandymount Avenue. The motif in the centre of the note is based on the Abbey Theatre symbol designed by Elinor Monsell in 1899. It is set against an excerpt from the manuscript of Yeats' play 'Deirdre'.

'Deirdre' was first produced in the Abbey Theatre on 24 November 1906 with some of the great early talents of the theatre in the cast.

Concobar	J M Kerrigan
Fergus	Arthur Sinclair
Naisi	F J Fay
Messenger	U Wright
Executioner	A Power
First Musician	Sara Allgood
Second Musician	Maire O'Neill
Third Musician	Bridget O'Dempsey
Deirdre	Miss Darragh
Scenery	Robert Gregory

My reaction on reading the cast list was "Who the hell is Miss Darragh?" Apparently, Yeats thought that a more professional actress than Sara Allgood or her sister should be brought into the Theatre and made a 'star'. Miss Darragh was brought over from England to play the part of Deirdre. Lennox Robinson in his 'Ireland's Abbey Theatre' says

*"Miss Darragh was Irish, an actress of great ability though perhaps not of the first rank. Her salary was much larger than that of the other ladies in the Company and there was naturally much jealousy, and after Deirdre she did not appear again."*

Sara Allgood's sister, of course, was Maire O'Neill who played the Second Musician in the play. She was romantically involved with John Millington Synge. Robert Gregory, who designed the set was Lady Gregory's son who was a pilot and who died in an airplane crash during the First World War. This was the subject of a very fine poem by Yeats - 'An Irish Airman Foresees His Death'.

The back of the note goes to the other side of the country and shows a group of the Blasket Islands. Under no circumstances should this map be used for navigation. I can now admit that, for reasons of aesthetics and balance, we moved Inish Tuisceart down a bit to get the overall picture right. You will remember that a famous politician, who frequented these waters, and who was known for a certain interest in money, crashed his yacht into Ireland in this area. The background on the note is an excerpt from an early edition of Tomas O'Criomhthain's book 'An tOileanach' which the politician was reputed to be reading at the time.

## **FIFTY POUNDS 'B'**



Let me take a quick look at just one more note in this series. There is an interesting connection here back to Swift. The note features Turlough Carolan. Carolan was a friend of Dr Patrick Delaney, Professor of Oratory at Trinity College. It was through the good professor that Carolan met Swift. However, Donal O'Sullivan in his 'Carolan: The Life and Times of an Irish Harper' quotes a number of anecdotes from an early nineteenth century History of the City of Dublin which indicate quite a close relationship between Swift and Carolan. Given the size of Dublin City and its artistic community at the time they almost certainly knew each other well.

The portrait of Carolan is taken from a painting by Dublin-born painter and sculptor, James Christopher Timbrell who lived 1807 to 1850. Carolan had actually died in 1738. Shortly after the issue of the note, we received a strongly worded letter from a noted newspaper music critic. He pointed out (correctly) that the picture of Carolan was the wrong way around. The harpist was not left-handed. Before exposing this example of phillistine incompetence, he was giving the Central Bank a chance to respond. The reason for the design decision to use a mirror image on the note of course was an aesthetic one. It was much better to have the harper facing into the banknote rather than looking away from it. This was explained in the reply. But critically a long list of precedents, which did precisely the same thing, presumably for the same reasons, from the publications ranging from Bunting, to O'Sullivan and even Moore's Melodies was included. The critic never mentioned the banknote in his columns. However, the harpist, Grainne Yeates did write a letter complaining of the orientation of the portrait, if I remember rightly, to one of the coin magazines. The background of the front of the note contains pieces of music by Carolan, John Field and from Bunting. On the back of the note is a fine piece of engraving based on a wood carving from the front of the organ loft in St Michan's Church. It is a beautiful grouping of seventeen musical instruments carved out of a single piece of wood. It is all the more remarkable to think that it was executed by an apprentice wood carver as his 'graduation' piece. The carving cost £8 in 1724.

## **THE 'C' SERIES**

The technology of reproduction was advancing rapidly during the 1980s. Costs were rising and budgets were tight. Size was also an important consideration. There had been a steady international move towards smaller banknotes for many years. The older notes were just too large

for modern wallets and the resultant crumpling and folding shortened to useful life of the notes considerably. Furthermore, banknote paper was very expensive and was purchased by the ton.

Above all banknotes are security documents. Whatever the thematic and aesthetic values, the first consideration must be protection against counterfeiting. Behind everything, the banknote is just a piece of printed paper. But it is a piece of paper in which people put their confidence that it will give them full value. Obviously, if that confidence in the piece of paper is eroded the banknote cannot fulfil its function. The extraordinarily rapid development in the fields of printing, scanning and photocopying made it necessary to bring in another new banknote series to keep ahead in the race against the counterfeiters.

Apart from the 'public' security features, such as up-graded watermark, security thread, security paper, intaglio and rainbow printing, micro printing etc., it was necessary to bring along more covert features. These included the electrical and magnetic properties of the security thread, the magnetic and infra-red properties of certain inks, the UV properties of the paper and inks and other more secret machine readable features. The objective of the work was to ensure that every citizen could be confident that the banknote in his or her pocket could be exchanged for value anywhere in the country without question. There was a secondary objective of ensuring that every banknote could be reliably verified by machine.

The first step, of course, was to establish the traditional Advisory Committee. This time it comprised Dr Pat Wallace, National Museum; Dr Patricia Donlon, National Library; Raymond Keaveney, National Gallery; Adrian Munnely, Arts Council; and Thomas Kinsella, poet, with Brian McArdle of the Central Bank. They recommended a theme based loosely around prominent Irish people of the nineteenth and early twentieth century who were seen to have contributed to important, but different, developments in the formation of modern Ireland. The Committee submitted a list of possible names and, after consultation with the Minister for Finance, the historical figures chosen were:

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>£5</b>   | Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy.   |
| <b>£10</b>  | James Joyce, one of the greatest of modern writers.   |
| <b>£20</b>  | Daniel O'Connell, the 'Liberator' who dominated Irish political life in the first half of the nineteenth century.         |
| <b>£50</b>  | Douglas Hyde, our first President and Irish language activist.  |
| <b>£100</b> | Charles Stewart Parnell, the 'Uncrowned King', who dominated political life in the second half of the nineteenth century. |

A limited design competition was held in the Summer of 1991. Nine Irish artists were asked to submit designs for the first note of the new series, the £20. Robert Ballagh was the clear winner. Following the success of his design for the £20 note, he was invited to design the new £10 note and, in turn, the £5, the £50 and the £ 100. Because of time considerations, I will look at only two of the notes from this series.

## **THE TWENTY POUND 'C'**

The main feature on the front of the note is a portrait of Daniel O'Connell against a background engraving of his home in Derrynane, Co Kerry. The striking resemblance between the portrait and a young Bertie Ahern is, of course, purely coincidental. The portraits on this series are very obviously larger than on the earlier series. Although portraits do have their inherent difficulties, I am a very strong supporter of this particular design element as an anti-counterfeit

measure. The human eye is programmed to pick out minute changes in a face and this can be used to prompt people, even sub-consciously, to suspect when something is not quite right.



I mentioned earlier that O'Connell was one of the founders of The National Bank. But it is often forgotten that O'Connell lived just around the corner, in Merrion Square, and was, at one stage, Lord Mayor of Dublin. When his long-awaited Municipal Reform Bill was passed by the Whig government as the Municipal Corporations Act, 1840, the Protestant hold on local government was radically weakened. As a direct result, O'Connell himself was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1841. On the day he was elected a huge crowd gathered at his house in Merrion Square. He dressed in the full robes of the office of Lord Mayor and promised "I shall yet address the speaker of the Irish Parliament in College Green". O'Connell may have been getting older and his old enemy Sir Robert Peel, 'Orange Peel' to O'Connell, may have come back to power but nonetheless, at the age of sixty-five he launched the second great campaign of his career, the campaign to repeal the Act of Union. The campaign effectively ended in the Dublin suburbs when the final rally, planned for Clontarf on 8 December 1843, was cancelled by O'Connell to avoid bloodshed. O'Connell was imprisoned on charges of creating discontent and disaffection among the Queen's subjects. Although ultimately acquitted, O'Connell and the campaign never regained impetus and O'Connell himself was dead in a little over three years.

On the back of the note is an engraving of the Four Courts designed, of course, by James Gandon and completed in 1802. [Daniel O'Connell was a lawyer.] The original is a line engraving by James Basire, sculptor, held in the National Library. It is taken from 'Reports from the Commissioners....' respecting the public records of Ireland 1810-1815 (Plate XIV) Luke Hansard and Sons, Printers, London. It is set against a background of a pledge, signed by O'Connell and others in 1845, which is now held in the National Gallery.

## **THE TEN POUND 'C'**

As in the 'B' Series, although not intentionally, the new £10 note is a Dublin note. It was not realised either when Joyce was chosen to go on the tenner, that he actually referred to the denomination as a "tenpound crickler" and a "tinpanned crackler" in *Finnegans Wake*. He...

*"wanted to know, laying all joking and knobkerries aside, if the change companion who stuck still to the invention of his strongbox, with a tenacity corroborating their mutual tentorial rights, happened to have the loots change of a tenpound crickler about him at the moment, addling that hap so, he would pay him back the six vics odd, do you see, out of that*

## Irish Banknote Connections

*for what was taken on the man of samples last Yuni or Yuli, do you follow me Capn? To this the other, Billi in the Boule, who had mummied and mauled up to that (for he was hesitancy carried to excelsism) rather amusedly replied: Woowoo would you be grossly surprised, Hill, to learn that, as it so happens, I honestly have not such a thing as the loo, as the least chance of a tinpanned crackler about me at the present moho-moment...."*

The portrait of James Joyce is set against a panoramic view of Dublin City and parts of counties Dublin and Wicklow. The map was drawn by T R Harvey in the early nineteenth century.



The back of the note carries a reproduction of one of the riverine heads, sculpted by Edward Smyth, for the Custom House, which was not featured in the 'A' Series. This one represents the River Liffey. The carving is over the central main entrance to the building, facing the river it represents. The Liffey head is the only female head in the group. [Is Anna Liffey an eighteenth century misunderstanding of the river's Irish name?] The head has braided locks and is crowned with flowers and fruit - blackberries, peas, pine cones - beneath a diadem of ferns ornamented with a trident. The head is set against a map of part of Dublin City featuring the Liffey. The map was completed by the Ordnance Survey and published in 1844.

The back also quotes the opening lines from *Finnigans Wake*:

*"riverrun, past Eve and Adam's, from swerve of shore to bend of bay, brings us by a commodius vicus of recirculation back to Howth Castle and Environs."*

There was a neat idea to use the full sentence in the design, bringing the ending of the book and the beginning together, but the Joyce Estate wouldn't wear it. And, if we are to accept the new edition of the book, edited by Danis Rose and John O'Hanlon, which was published last week, there are two errors in even that brief excerpt.

"Eve and Adam's", of course, refers to Adam and Eve's, the Franciscan Church at Merchant's Quay. Fr Gerard Rafferty OFM, *Guardian*, has pointed out to us that the church is probably the only place of public worship called after the famous couple from the Book of Genesis. However, the popular name of the church does not have a biblical origin. In penal times, the Franciscans served the catholic people of Dublin secretly. They had a Mass house at the rear of a tavern in the Cook Street area. The name of the tavern was Adam and Eve's. So the church got its popular name from a pub, not from the Bible. Joyce reversed the order of the names, not as a proto-feminist, but because it gave the letters STEVEAN as his first grandchild, Stephen had just been born.

\*\*\*\*\*

Well that's it for tonight. There is plenty more to say about the notes and the designs. Perhaps another time and another place. But the Irish banknotes are history now; still interesting;

## *Irish Banknote Connections*

still beautiful; but history nonetheless. Then along came the euro. There are no portraits on the euro. Let me conclude by making a little connection back to our old friend, Thomas Bodkin. Explaining the absence of portraits on the new Saorstát Éireann coins in 1928, he said

"even if eight such men [men, mind you] could be selected with a reasonable measure of public approval we would be faced with the difficulty of allocating them to the various denominations. Think of all the discussions that would have arisen in the press and among the public had we placed Robert Emmet above Wolfe Tone or vice versa."

In the early discussions on what to put on the euro banknotes and coins, it was déjà-vue all over again.

## AISÉIRÍ NA CÁSCA - THE EASTER RISING 1916 – 1966 Commemorative Medal in Gold and Silver

Derek Kerins

Throughout the last seven centuries Irish history has seen many rebellions and uprisings and the twentieth century proved to be no exception. Easter 1916 was a turning point in Irish history when a small band of courageous men and women took on the might of the British Empire then at its height. On Easter Monday 24th April 1916 under cover as manoeuvres the rising began in Dublin with the seizure of strategic buildings at the General Post Office, Boland's Mills, Jacob's factory in Bishop St., City Hall, South Dublin Union, and other buildings throughout the city. Pádraig Pearse Commander in Chief of the rebel forces read the Proclamation of the Irish Republic outside the General Post Office and the Tricolour was hoisted alongside the flag of the Irish Republic on the roof of the building. Amidst uncertainty and confusion a battle raged for almost a week and while the rebels lost that battle they ultimately won the war, when in 1921 a truce was agreed and Saorstát Éireann (the Irish Free State) became a reality. 1916 was and is of huge significance to Ireland, and in 1966 the 50th anniversary of the Rising, there were major celebrations and a variety of commemorative items produced to mark the occasion.



**Figure 1** – *The Aiséirí na Cásca medal.*

One such item is the handsome 1916 silver commemorative medal described as:

## *Aiséirí na Cásca - The Easter Rising*

*Obverse:* a depiction of the facade of the GPO in Dublin with flames shooting up through the roof and the legend Aiséirí na Cásca and below in the exergue 1916-1966.

*Reverse:* on a polished background, the signatures of the seven signatories of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic.

Thomas J Clarke  
Sean Mac Diarmada  
Thomas Mac Donagh  
P H Pearse  
Eamonn Ceannt  
James Connolly  
Joseph M Plunkett

The medal carries the special 1916-1966 Jubilee Sword of Light hallmark.

*Diameter:* 1½ inches.

The image of the facade of the GPO is an icon to the people of Ireland and the medal captured it exceptionally well, and on the reverse the signatures of the Leaders on a polished plain background is complemented by the diameter of the medal.

The medal was struck in 22.0 carat gold and in .925 silver, with the gold struck with a weight of 2oz., supplied with a numbered certificate and limited to an issue of 2000, the silver issue was struck with a weight of 1.125 oz. and was limited to an issue of 5000.

The gold medal was issued in a dark blue presentation case and the silver was issued in a transparent flat plastic container with the legend Aiséirí na Cásca and the date 1916-1966 printed on the outside in gold. Both types were Jubilee hallmarked. The Jubilee hallmark was issued only for the year 1966 and depicts the Sword of Light, and was discontinued after October 1966.

Prior to the striking of this medal an attitude existed in some quarters that it was necessary to go abroad to obtain a medal of high quality design and striking and it was in response to this attitude that the National Retail Watchmakers & Jewellers Association commissioned O'Connor's Jewellers of Dublin to produce the medal. The medal was designed and struck in house and was a collaborative effort between the skilled craftsmen in O'Connor's employ. The engraving was done by Paddy Herlihy one of their craftsmen, a native of Cork, and the dies were also produced in O'Connor's workshop. The final product was an excellent demonstration of the high skills available in Ireland at this time.



**Figure 2** – *Obverse and Reverse dies of the Aiséirí na Cásca medal.*



1916 IUDÁILE ÓRZA AISÉIRÍ NA CÁSCA 1966

**MAGNIFICENT  
1916  
COMMEMORATIVE  
MEDALLION**  
in Silver and in Gold  
1½" DIAMETER



**JUBILEE HALLMARKED**

Exquisitely designed and produced in Dublin by Irish craftsmen. The obverse side depicts the G.P.O. in flames with the rising sun as a background and the words 'Aiséirí na Cásca'. The reverse side carries reproductions of the seven signatures of the Proclamation together with the hallmark.

Strictly limited edition in 22 ct. gold — 2,000. Supplied with signed and numbered Certificate.

**SILVER**

1.125 ozs.  
In presentation case

**GOLD**

22 ct., 2 ozs.  
In presentation case

**AVAILABLE  
FROM RETAIL JEWELLERS**

Manufactured by



ADMAR

Figure 3 - The original flyer advertising the medals for sale at a price of £3-10-0 for silver and £55-0-0 for the gold striking..



**Figure 4** - *The Press used to produce the medal and which has pride of place in O'Connors showrooms .*

It has not been possible to establish if the artist who designed and cut the die produced any other designs before or after this medal issue.

The author would like to thank Mr N.O'Farrell, Managing Director of O'Connor Diamonds for the time and patience extended to me and for making information available. Also Mr Paddy Herlihy the engraver of the dies for information and advice.

## References

O'Connor Diamonds Archive

Hegarty & O'Toole Irish Times Book of the 1916 Rising

## IRISH UNIFORM BUTTONS

John O'Toole

A dictionary definition of a button is a knob or stud of metal or other material sewn by a shank or neck to articles of dress, usually for the purpose of fastening one part of the dress to another by passing through a *button-hole*, but often merely for ornament: in process of use, the name has passed from the connotation of the shape to that of the purpose, and been extended to all appliances of the kind, a common type being a disc, quite flat, or slightly convex or concave, of metal, bone, glass, mother of pearl, paste, etc., perforated or otherwise adapted to be sewn on by its central part. The earliest mention of a Button in English text is c1320.

In this presentation the buttons are round and are metal.

The same dictionary defines a uniform as a distinctive dress of uniform cut, materials, and colour worn by all the members of a particular naval, military, or other force to which it is recognized as properly belonging and peculiar. And, a distinctive uniform dress worn by the members of any civilian body or association of persons. The earliest mention of uniform in English text is 1748 relating to naval and military dress. So, combining both of these we can see that the history of uniform buttons can be traced to the mid eighteenth century.

In this presentation the buttons that are mentioned relate to military, family and civilian uniforms.

### Button Types and Manufacture



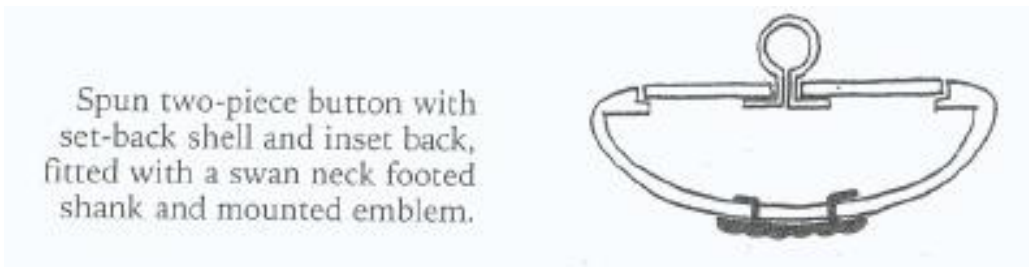
Flat one-piece button fitted with a footed "M" shank.

Convex one-piece button fitted with a half loop shank (open back type).



Closed "solid" assembly fitted with an un-footed shank.

*Irish Uniform Buttons*



While not expanded on in this presentation, the vocabulary of the two-piece button manufacturing process includes the die, lead impression, hardening, shells, stamping, backs, closing, mounts, and plating.

Buttons – mid to late 18th century



**Figure 1 & 2** – Early livery button – Earl Fitzwilliam, c1770s

Silver shell on bone back with crossed strands of cat gut for sewing button onto uniform.



**Figure 5** – Early military button – Officer.

Donaghmore Volunteers, Co. Down, c1780

Gilt shell on bone back.



**Figure 3 & 4** – Early military button – Officer, Royal Irish Artillery, c1770s

Gilt shell on bone back. Found at Fort George, Granada, Caribbean.



**Figure 6 & 7** – Early livery button – RW, Robert Waller (1735-1809), Allenstown, Co. Meath, c1750

Silver, stamp mark II, probably Joseph Johns, Limerick.



**Figure 8 & 9** – *Hunt button – The Merry Harriers, c1790*

Silver, stamp mark IS, probably John Stoye, Harold's Cross, Dublin.



**Figure 10 & 11** – *Hunt button – The Northern Rangers, c1790*

Silver. The hunt club was formed in 1774 and continues today as a dining club.

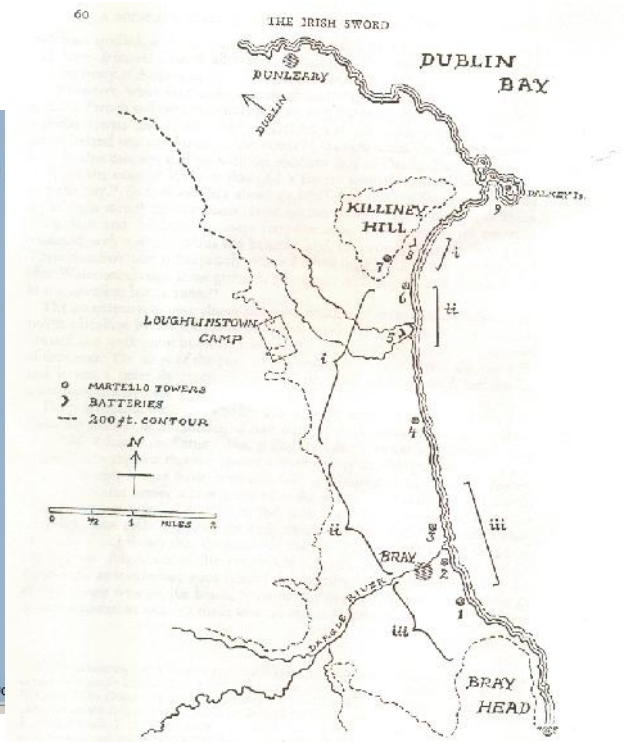
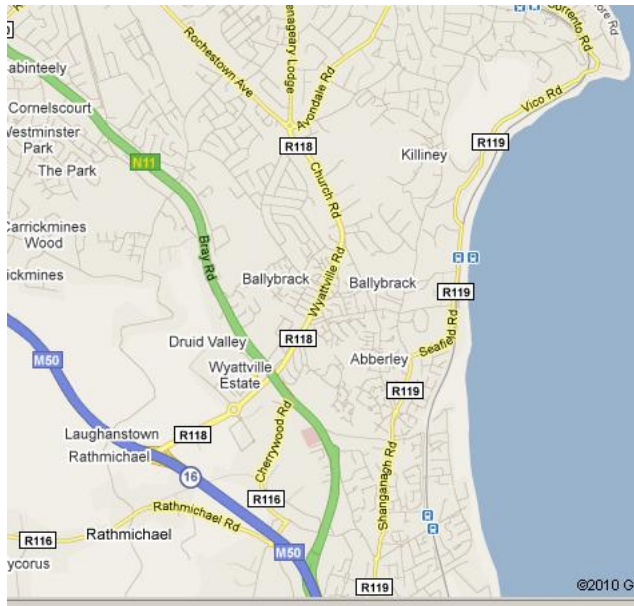


**Figure 12 & 13** – *Early military button – Officer, Lawyers Artillery, Dublin, c1790.*

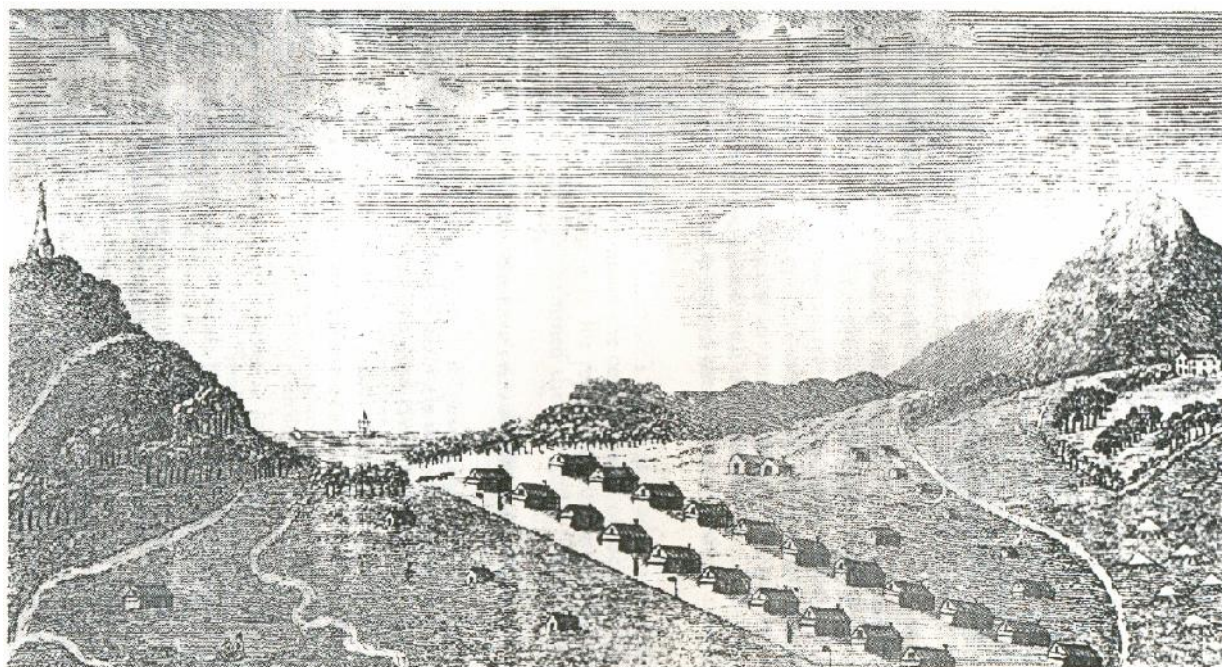
Gilt plated, John Lloyd, button manufacturer, Dublin.

## The Lehaunstown Military Camp

During the 1790s, in order to protect the King's dominions in Ireland from a perceived attack by the French, Killiney Bay was identified as a site that needed special protection. The Hon. George Napier, a colonel in the British army, concluded that Killiney Bay would be an ideal place for disembarkation because it was a firm sandy beach where 1500 men with field pieces could be landed at once, at any time of tide and not be up to their knees in water and could take possession of heights overlooking Dublin. He also concluded that this could be done before 800 soldiers from the Dublin Garrison could get from the town to meet them half way. So, acting on the advice of the Hon. Napier, The viceroy, Lord Camden established the Loughlinstown camp which opened on the 1st June 1795. This camp was in the townland of Lehaunstown which was the property of the Established church and was about one mile inland.



The map on the right from *The Irish Sword* shows the layout of Killiney Bay 1793-1815. Loughlinstown Camp is shown south-west of Killiney Hill and about one mile inland. The subdivision of the hinterland is shown by the brackets *i*, *ii*, *iii* with Killiney Hill forming a natural defense. The box brackets *i*, *ii* and *iii* indicate the costal areas more likely to be attacked.



LOUGHLINSTOWN CAMP IN 1796

From John Ferrar's *A view of ancient and modern Dublin*. Photograph by courtesy of the National Library of Ireland.

This view of Loughlinstown Camp looks south towards Bray and shows Killiney Hill on the left. Note the wooden structure of the 'tents'.

The life of the camp was over by 1799 as the authorities were satisfied that there was no further danger from either the French or the United Irishmen. In 1803 when war broke out again a series of Martello towers were constructed around the Irish coastline with many in the vicinity of Killiney Bay, but that's another presentation.

Between June 1795 and April 1796, some 9 Irish regiments are listed at Loughlinstown including the Westmeath Militia, Derry Militia, Fermanagh Militia, Longford Militia, Drogheda Militia, Westmeath and Drogheda Militia, Royal Irish Artillery, Donegal Militia, Clare Militia, together with some regiments from Scotland and England.

### **The Lehaunstown Buttons, late 1790s**



14

*Kilkenny Regiment (Militia),  
Officer, silver plated*



15

*Clare Militia, Officer, silver  
plated*



16

*Donegal Militia, Officer,  
silver plated*

*Irish Uniform Buttons*



17

*Wicklow Militia, Officer, silver plated*



18

*South Mayo Militia, Officer, gilt plated*



19

*South Mayo Militia, Other ranks, pewter*



20

*King's County Militia (Offaly), Officer, gilt. Mint condition*



21

*Kildare Militia, Officer, silver plated*



22

*Royal Irish Artillery, Officer, gilt plated*



23

*Royal Irish Artillery*



24 & 25

*Louth Militia, Officer, silver plated*



26

*Louth Militia, Officer, silver plated*

**Figure 14 – 19** – Military buttons of Kilkenny Regiment (Militia), Officer, silver plated (14); Clare Militia, Officer, silver plated (15); Donegal Militia, Officer, silver plated (16); Wicklow Militia, Officer, silver plated (17); South Mayo Militia, Officer, gilt plated (18); South Mayo Militia, Other ranks, pewter (19); King's County Militia (Offaly), Officer, gilt (20). This button is in mint condition. A relic example was found at Lehaunstown.; Kildare Militia, Officer, silver plated (21); Royal Irish Artillery, Officer, gilt plated (22). This example was not found at Lehaunstown. It was removed from a moth-eaten and is illustrated here to compare with button 23 which was found at Lehaunstown; Royal Irish Artillery (23). The Royal Irish Artillery amalgamated with the Royal Artillery in 1801; Louth Militia, Officer, silver plated (24 & 25). This example was not found at Lehaunstown. It is illustrated here to compare with button 26 which was found at Lehaunstown; Louth Militia, Officer, silver plated (26), found at Lehaunstown.

## Livery Buttons



27



28



29 a & 29b

**Figure 27, 28, 29** - Footman's livery – The Marquess of Headfort, Co. Meath, late 19th century. Livery button and ribband detail of the Taylour family crest showing the Marquess' coronet.



**Figure 30 – 32** - French button die with a button it produced displaying the British Royal coat of arms.

*Irish Uniform Buttons*



**Figure 33 & 34** – Livery button – *The O’Grady, Kilballuowen, Bruff, Co. Limerick.*



**Figure 40** – Livery button – *Londonderry Municipal Police (1848-1870).*



**Figure 35** – Livery button – *The Earl of Meath, Kilruddery, Bray, Co. Wicklow.*



**Figure 41** – Livery button – *Butter Market, watchman.*



**Figure 36 & 37** – Livery button – *Unidentified Irish urban district council.*



**Figure 42** – Livery button – *Kilkenny Borough.*



**Figure 38 & 39** – Livery button – *Hibernian Mineral Water Co., Dublin.*



**Figure 43** – Livery button – *Fitzwilliam Square, warden.*



**Figure 44** – Livery button – South Dublin Union, poor house warden.



**Figure 49 & 50** – Political button – Daniel O'Connell.



**Figure 45** – Livery button – Clare Lunatic Asylum, porter.



**Figure 51** – Political button – Orange Order, commemorating 1688.



**Figure 46** – Livery button – Mount Jerome Cemetery, warden.

### **Railway Button**



**Figure 52** – Railway button – Dublin and Drogheda Railway, c1860s.

### **Political Buttons**



**Figure 47 & 48** – Political button – Repeal of the Act of Union, (Daniel O'Connell, c1840s).

## **Backmarks**

Numismatists and medal collectors are familiar with the designer's initials or short name being discretely concealed in the obverse design. There is nothing discrete about the Buttonmaker's approach. They use the back of the button to boldly advertise their business with a backmark.

A backmark is the term used to describe these inscriptions or legends on the back of a button. These marks identify the manufacturer's name and address and are a form of trademark. Some times the backmark can refer to the quality of a button, typically Extra Superfine – Best Quality; Treble Gilt – Standard; Warranted Standard; and Rivet & Soldered. The lettering of these backmarks is embedded or impressed as part of the manufacturing process and are integral to the dies that are used.

## **Examples of Dublin Backmarks**



53 - JOHN WOODHOUSE,  
DUBLIN



54 - EDWD. JONES,  
73 DAME ST., DUBLIN



55 - MURPHY, HOEYS COURT, DUBLIN



56 - COMYNS & SON, DUBLIN



57 - H. GILPIN & Co., DUBLIN

*Irish Uniform Buttons*



58 – Back with shell removed and showing inside shell.



59

60

**Figure 58, 59 & 60** – *Compass or escape button – WW2 Royal Air Force.*

## **CENTENARIAN MEDAL OF UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN**

### **Her Excellency President Mary McAleese**

**Ronan Fitzpatrick**

**In the Millennium Year 2000**, Her Excellency President Mary McAleese instituted a new medal to be sent to Irish centenarians aged 101 years and older. The medal was an idea of the National Millennium Committee to honour those whose energies and sacrifices helped shape modern Ireland. It was presented to centenarians who were 100 years of age or more during the year 2000. Later it was decided that rather than have it as a one-off event, a new medal would be struck each year in honour of all those who were 101 years old and upwards. This new celebration and recognition of Irish centenarians is in addition to the cash bounty that each citizen receives from the President on reaching their 100 birthday. That bounty was instituted in 1940 by the First President of Ireland, His Excellency President Douglas Hyde. When instituted it was a gift of £5, and the gift increased over the years rising to €2,540 (IR£2,000) in 2000. Now, at age 101 years they receive this medal.

The obverse of the inaugural medal displays the Presidential Arms on a shield with a double wire border and the legend **UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN**. The legend is arranged to begin at 12 o'clock and read clockwise. This design changed in 2008 when a single border was used on the shield and the layout of the legend was rearranged to begin at 7 o'clock and read clockwise to 5 o'clock. For 2008 and 2009 the legend used was legend **UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN**. This changed again and for 2010 and 2011 the legend was **UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN**. The reverse changes each year. In the inaugural year the reverse displayed a passage of text appropriate to the occasion which came from the President's Office. It is written in Irish and English and reads "*a Witness to 3 Centuries Finné ar Thrí Chéad.*" in recognition of the recipient having lived in three centuries. For subsequent years the reverse text is a phrase or extract that is chosen from the work of an Irish writer. Each year a different Irish author, playwright or poet is chosen and already there have been writers from both parts of the Island of Ireland and writers in Irish and English. As far as possible, the design policy is to use a quotation from someone who was born 100 years earlier but sometimes there are no suitable literary or historical figures. In addition to the phrase or extract, an interpretation of the phrase or extract may also be illustrated in the reverse design. So, every year a different medal is struck and one is sent to each centenarian as they celebrate birthdays 101, 102, 103 and further birthdays.

Each medal is 40mm diameter and is made of fine silver. Its edge is plain and left unengraved. It is packaged in a dark blue presentation box with the Presidential Harp stamped in gold foil on the outside lid and the President's signature on the inside. The medal is posted directly to the centenarians with a personalised letter.

2000



**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2000.

Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.

Weight: 25.2 grams.

*Obv:* Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Rev:* Quotation: *a Witness to 3 Centuries FINNÉ AR THRÍ CHÉAD, ANNO MM DOMINI*, sunburst of 29 rays in upper left field extending to margin, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Recipients 139*



2001

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2001.

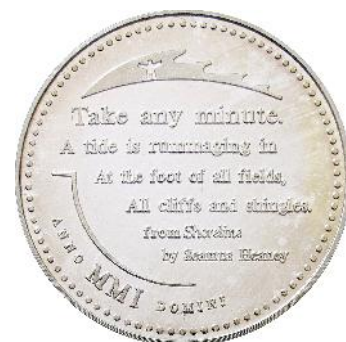
Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.

Weight: 25.2 grams.

*Obv:* Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Rev:* Extract: *Take any minute. A tide is rummaging in At the foot of all fields, All cliffs and shingles. from Shoreline by Seamus Heaney, ANNO MMI DOMINI*, a figure with outstretched arms standing on a shoreline in field above, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Recipients 127*



2002

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2002.

Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.

Weight: 25.1 grams.

*Obv:* Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA HÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Rev:* Extract: *Though leaves are many, the root is one from the coming of wisdom with time by W.B. Yeats, ANNO MMII DOMINI* forming a wreath which ends with seven leaves each side, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Recipients 161*



2003

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2003.  
Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.  
Weight: 25.1 grams.

*Obv:* Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Rev:* *Life is no brief candle to me; it is a sort of splendid torch...* in left field, George Bernard Shaw, below, with a partial lightburst in right field, Legend, *ANNO MMIII DOMINI*, above, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Recipients 171*



2004

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2004.  
Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.  
Weight: 20.0 grams.

*Obv:* Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Rev:* Extract: *... another happy day!*, Legend: *from Happy Days by Samuel Becket*, *ANNO MMIV DOMINI*, aerial dispersing pappuses above from flower in upper left field, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Recipients 157*



2005

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2005.  
Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.  
Weight: 20.6 grams.

*Obv:* Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Rev:* Extract: *TELL US WHAT LIFE HAS TAUGHT YOU*, around an inner circle containing a rotating and expanding spiral on a frosted field. Legend: *from AFTER FORTY YEARS OF AGE by Patrick Kavanagh*, *ANNO MMV DOMINI*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Recipients 178*



2006

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2006.  
Fine Silver 1000 MMVI on plain edge, 40mm.  
Weight: 20.6 grams.

Obv: Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

Rev: Extract: ... *Bua na Síor Óige* .... Legend: *AS CRÉ NA CILLE LE MÁIRTÍN O CADHAIN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

Recipients 177



2007

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2007.  
Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.  
Weight: 25.1 grams.

Obv: Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

Rev: Extract in legend and within a bounding circle: *WE BUILD TO FILL THE CENTURIES' ARREARS John Hewitt, MMVII*, a handshake on a frosted central field, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

Recipients 199



2008

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2008.  
Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.  
Weight: 25.1 grams.

Obv: Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of single border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

Rev: Extract: *Cornucopia na hAoise*, above the Cavancarragh carved wooden vessel. Legend: Within a bounding circle, *Sliocht as dán le Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, ANNO MMVIII DOMINI*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

Recipients 223



2009

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2009.  
Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.  
Weight: 25.1 grams.

*Obv:* Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of single border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Rev:* Extract: *THE WORLD IS MANY THINGS*, above a sprig of two oak leaves and two acorns. Legend: *BRYAN MACMAHON MMIX* from "*THE HONEY SPIKE*", mirror surface, partially beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Recipients 223*



2010

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2010.  
Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.  
Weight: 23.8 grams.

*Obv:* Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Rev:* Quotation: *Coigil aithinne d'aislinge MÁIRTÍN Ó DIREIÁN*, *MMX* in exergue, lighted candle with 15 ray halo in left field, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Recipients 256*



2011

**Ireland**

**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN**

Centenarian medal 2011.  
Fine Silver 1000 on plain edge, 40mm.  
Weight: 24.6 grams.

*Obv:* Presidential harp, strings vertical on heraldic shield of double border, Legend: *UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN*, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Rev:* Quotation: *Bua na gaoise toradh na haoise*, *MMXI* in exergue, hazel leaves with five hazelnuts, mirror surface, beaded rim, frosted detail.

*Recipients 296*



## Legend, Translations and Notes

1. *Uachtarán na hÉireann* President of Ireland.
2. *Finné ar thrí chéad* a Witness to 3 Centuries.
3. *Bua na Síor Óige* Triumph of Forever Young.
4. *AS CRÉ NA CILLE LE MÁIRTÍN O CADHAIN*  
from CHURCHYARD CLAY by Máirtín Ó Cadhain.
5. *WE BUILD TO FILL THE CENTURIES' ARREARS* is an extract from 'Conversations in Hungary, August 1969', John Hewitt, *The Collected Poems of John Hewitt* edited by Frank Ormsby, Blackstaff Press, 1991. The extract was reproduced on the Uachtarán na hÉireann Centenarian Medal presented 2007 by permission of Blackstaff Press on behalf of the Estate of John Hewitt.
6. *Cornucopia na hAoise* The brimming cup of time.
7. *Sliocht as dán le Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill*  
An extract from a poem by Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill.
8. *Coigil aithinne d'aislinge MÁIRTÍN Ó DIREIÁN*  
Keep the spark of your vision lit  
(From the poem Cranna Foirtíl (Stout Oars) by Máirtín Ó Direián)
9. *Bua na gaoise toradh na haoise* The gift of wisdom is the fruit of age.  
  
(From a speech by President McAleese at a reception for Senior Citizens, Áras an Uachtaráin, 13 December 2010).

## References

Wood-Martin, W.G. (1886) *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland, Wooden Vessels*, Hodges Figgis & Co., Dublin, Ireland, p100-101

## MODERN IRISH ERRORS AND VARIETIES

Christopher Budesá

Coinage of the Irish Free State was first authorized by the Coinage Act, 1926, No. 14/1926. Further specifications were set down in Coinage (Dimension and Designs) Order, 1928, S.R.O. No. 76/1928. Between those two items the range of acceptable Irish coin was defined. Any coin deviating from the specifications could be considered an error and subject to rejection and recycled. Typically coins which are considered to be errors are readily evident to the untrained observer. Whereas, varieties require closer examination of many coins.

Now, we will start at the beginning. Metal of correct alloy is rolled out into sheets. In 1928 there were 8 coins, so 8 different sheets of metal were required. A machine punched holes into the sheet of metal and the metal pieces exiting the holes will then go through a number of steps before they are finally fed into coinage presses. Coinage presses impart the design from the dies onto the planchets which are also known as blanks or flans.

Coins of SAORSTÁT ÉIREANN and ÉIRE were minted by the British Royal Mint (BRM) starting in 1928 and resulted in millions of pre-decimal coins being struck. The BRM minted all Irish decimal coins until 1976 when the new mint of the Central Bank of Ireland opened in Sandyford. After this the BRM minted fewer coins for Ireland.

The British Royal Mint is and has been one of the best mints in the world. As good as they are they would from time to time make an Irish error coin. We are all familiar with Murphy's Law. Significantly more decimal were manufactured than pre-decimal coins. The great majority of which were minted by the Central Bank of Ireland at its facility located in Sandyford, and with all things done by mankind errors are made. Steps were taken by minting authorities to reduce the number of error coins being released into circulation. When asked what methods of quality control are used neither the Central Bank of Ireland nor the European Central Bank are willing to provide anything other than the procedures used are secret. Such information is generally available to the numismatic press in the USA and has been provided by the US Mint.

For many years Derek Young kept track of Irish Error and Variety Coins in the pages of IRISH NUMISMATICS. Errors were found on most denominations but they were not very common. Typically errors are classified in three groups: planchet, die, or strike errors. There were a variety of planchet errors noted by Young. If the alloy is not correct the coin surface may peel or in extreme cases a coin may peel open like a clam. Both of these were noted by Young. Another type of planchet error occurred when the blank is punched out of the sheet of metal. On occasion the sheet of metal slips back into the machine and an area where a blank had been punched might get punched again resulting in a blank which is not perfectly round in shape (or 7-sided for the 50p.). The least common type of planchet error observed by Young was that of a wrong planchet was being used for a coin.



There are several types of die errors. Rarely during the production of dies is a mistake made. There are several double date Irish decimal coins which have come on the numismatic market. On occasion there will be no planchet in the coining chamber and the two dies will hit each other. When this occurs each imparts part of the design onto the other die. In all manufacturing facilities lubricants are used to keep machines running smoothly. Sometimes oil and other materials land on dies and when the coin is struck part of the design will be missing. At the end of their normal life dies tend to crack and these cracks will show up on the surface of coins as raised lines.

The 1d coins on which the body of the second chick is missing is a die error. The exact nature of the cause of the error is worthy of discussion. Typically when part of the design is missing the usual suspected would be oil or some other foreign material. In the case of the 1d coin the exact same error occurred in the exact same place on coins manufactured decades apart, 1942 and 1968. The chances of such a thing happening are more than astronomical. A possible explanation follows. In 1942 the reverse die of an EIRE penny was damaged, due to war-time constraints the die was re-finished and the body of the second chick was obliterated. The die was put back into service and used as needed. At the conclusion of minting the 1d the reverse die was put into storage (again, being saved due to war-time constraints rather than being tossed into the scrap pile). Decades later a reverse die was needed towards the end of a minting run and some worker may have remembered the die which was in the back of a closet somewhere. The original reverse die with the missing chick from 1942 was "pressed" back into service in 1968 and so the 1968 pennies with the missing chick were "born".

Another type of error occurs during the striking of the coins. On rare occasions loose pieces of metal may be in the coining chamber when a coin is struck and may actually be fused into the surface of the coin. In the pages of *IRISH NUMISMATICS* Derek Young showed an amazing pair of 1d coins. The first had a regular harp on one side and on the other side there was a mirror image of the harp, date and EIRE. The other 1d coin had a normal reverse while the other side had a mirror image of the hen and chickens. In each of these cases a coin which was previously struck remained in the coining chamber and imparted its design onto the next planchet to be struck. These coins were listed on eBay in 2008 but did not sell. Another type of error can be seen on the 1966 10 shilling coin. There is lettering on the edge of the coin. From time to time the machine imparting the letters would skip causing errors. In one type there is no space between the words and in another type words are actually overlapping. The pound coin required an additional step in its manufacture for security reasons. Rather than just having typical milling the edges were also engrailed. There are pound coins without engrailing or partial engrailing.

To date the number of errors found on Irish Euro coinage has been minimal. Several coins with bubbles in the copper plating were found on the Cu-plated steel coins.

The list of errors presented here is far from complete but does cover the most common types of error coins likely to be encountered.

There has been a gentleman selling a number of Irish error coins over the past several months on eBay. Most have been off-metal errors, that is, Irish coins were mistakenly struck on blanks intended for coins of other countries. How could such a thing happen? The Central Bank of Ireland, over the past thirty years, has been receiving pre-made planchets from a number of suppliers in Europe. Those suppliers made planchets for many countries and sometimes they sent a few wrong planchets to Ireland where they were mistakenly struck with Irish designs.

Most good workmen want to produce a high quality product of which they can be proud and the same is true for most mints. At every step in the production of coins things can be done to reduce the number of errors. When coin metal alloys are melted samples are no doubt taken for further analysis, perhaps even by an outside consultant. This was more important in the past when Irish coins contained silver, a precious metal. The expected die life is known and counters are used on coinage presses. Prior to the expected end of the die samples would be examined to see that the designs were being fully struck. If the coins were exhibiting die breaks the dies would be scrapped as would coins struck by failing dies. Struck coins are typically passed over two types of screens. For example, newly struck coins pass over the first screen and any coin which is smaller than the desired coin falls through. The coins then go over another screen and only coins with the correct diameter will pass through the openings leaving behind coins which are too large. This set of two screen catches an extremely high percentage of error coins. Theoretically error coins found by minting authorities are not released and are scheduled to be recycled. Just as nothing less than ABSOLUTE PERFECTION left the glass works of Waterford Crystal only perfect coins are issued. Nothing further can be postulated at this point.

## VARIETIES

A variety is an item which fits into the specifications but it is slightly different from other coins which are struck. They are acceptable for commerce and are a natural consequence of mass production. In no way does a variety hinder a coin from being spent or used as currency. Varieties are typically not terribly obvious to the naked eye. The most common example of a variety of Irish coin is seen on the 1966 10 shilling coins. On one variety the edge text is legible when the obverse is upright and in the other variety the edge text is legible when the reverse is upright.

The most commonly collected variety is that of the 1961 Mule Half-crown. The then normal obverse of the half-crown was matched with the reverse of the half-crowns from 1928 to 1937. This exciting variety was discovered by Derek Young. There was a long list of number spacing varieties in IRISH NUMISMATICS. Typically the distance between the numbers of the date was consistent. The distance between the third and fourth numbers of a date would vary. This variation was caused in the production stages of the dies.

An additional variety was discovered by the late Irish collector J.P. Whymark. It was a miracle that he even found the variety. The edge of nearly every coin is ignored, in the USA we would say that the edge is like the comedian Rodney Dangerfield, "they just do not get any respect." In 1976 for some unknown reason the milling of the 5p coin was changed. It was a tiny and seemingly insignificant change - one additional line of milling was added. How JPW even found the error is a mystery.

The edge of the €2 is milled and also has the additional security feature of numbers and stars. There is some variation in the size of the numbers and stars.

Some people collect error coins and others collect varieties. The more obvious something is, the easier it is to sell. For example, the 1961 Mule Half-crown is a fairly obvious and desirable coin, while the size varieties of the €2 are not so obvious. As with all things in collecting we must

remember supply and demand. If there is little demand the cost of something will be low. Generally demand for Errors and Varieties of Irish coins is low and costs for those items reflect that demand.

**For discussion:**

The Decimal Currency Act, 1969, No. 23/1969 specified the metal content of all six decimal coins. Coinage (Weight and Composition of and Remedy for Certain Copper Coins) Regulation, S.I. No. 100/1990 allows for the 1p and 2p coins to be struck in steel covered in copper. What would you consider the 1988 1p and 2p coins struck on copper-plated steel planchets: Errors or Varieties or something new?

**References**

*IRISH NUMISMATICS*, from 1968 until the 1990's. Derek Young, editor

On-line edition of the Irish Statute Book

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The Error Coin Encyclopedia by Arnold Margolis, second edition 1994



## A FEW CHURCHMEN

Victor Hamilton

By way of explanation: This paper, an abridged version of a talk I gave to the Northern Branch of the Numismatic Society of Ireland in 2007, stems indirectly from two factors: first that I prefer medals to coins because the higher relief found on medals gives greater scope to the artist; secondly that from my reverend Presbyterian grandfather I acquired an interest in matters ecclesiastical.

Like much else in my part of Ireland, my little paper is divided into two sections, Catholic and Protestant. I start with the former, as being chronologically older and rather more numerous. All my specimens are commemorative medals, except for the oldest, which is

A LEADEN BULL OF POPE ALEXANDER IV. This Pope, whose baptismal name was Rainaldo, was a member of the noble family of the Counts of Segni, who lived at Anagni, near Rome – Figure 1. He reigned from 1254 to 1261 and was a nephew of Pope Gregory IX. Alexander is charmingly described by the historian Gregorovius as "a corpulent, amiable gentleman, upright and God-fearing, but avaricious and weak". Hopefully history will be as kind to the rest of us. It is also worth mentioning that this Pope canonised Clare of Assisi, the foundress of the Poor Clares.

The Latin word *bull*a can refer to anything rounded and is etymologically related to the English word *bubble*. I have always assumed that the use of lead in authenticating Papal documents which might have to travel long distances arose from a desire for durability, combined with small monetary value and was hence a device to avoid the risk of theft.



Figure 1 - *Leaden Bull of Pope Alexander IV*

On the obverse we see ALEXANDER PP IIII. The PP stands for Pastor Pastorum, (Shepherd of Shepherds); this is still one of the Pope's titles, which he often uses in signing his name. The reverse shows Saints Paul and Peter, with the initials of their names.

Dia. 37mm.

Cast.

Metal: Lead.

Artist/engraver: Unknown.



**Figure 2** – *Medal of Pope Alexander IV*

My next exhibit is a medal portraying the same Pope - Figure 2. The inscription on the obverse: in abbreviated form, Alexander IV Pontifex Maximus (Supreme Pontiff), a title to be found on all Papal coins and medals. The reverse shows the keys and the inscription *Celorum claves regni* (The Keys of the Kingdom of the Heavens). Experts seem agreed that this medal is not contemporary and probably dates from the 16th century, which marks the beginning of a great period of Italian medal-engraving.

Dia. 38mm.

Cast.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Unknown.



**Figure 3** – *Medal of Pope Alexander VI*

Next we have a more notorious Alexander, ALEXANDER VI, the second and more famous of the Borgia Popes - Figure 3. The Borgias, originally called Borje, were a Spanish family. This Alexander had the baptismal name Rodrigo or Roderico. His mother Isabel was a Borgia, a sister of Pope Calixtus III. His father was Jofré Lenzuola and he seems at an early date to have adopted his mother's surname. The obverse shows his tonsured bust and his embroidered cope and stole, with the inscription *Alessandro Pont Max*. The reverse has the tiara and crossed keys over the Borgia arms and the inscription *Roderico Lenzuola D (Dominus, Lord) Borgia SP (Spagnuolo, Spaniard) 1492*. The dates of his reign were 1492-1503. He achieved special notoriety by his long affair with a married lady called Vanozza Dei Catanei, by whom he had four children, Juan, Cesare, Jofré and Lucrezia. It must be added that he was a most competent administrator. It was he who drew a famous dividing line on a map, determining how South America was to be demarcated between Spain and Portugal. This medal is attributed to an engraver called Giovanni Paladino, who was of the later 16th century and produced copies of 15th century medals.

Dia. 44mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Giovanni Paladino.



**Figure 4 – Medal of Pope Paul III**

Still in the 16th century, we come to the very important Pope, PAUL III, born Alessandro Farnese, from a noble Roman family – Figure 4. He was elected in 1534. He called the Council of Trent in 1545, gave his approval to the newly founded Society of Jesus and excommunicated King Henry VIII. His regnal dates were 1534-1549 and as the obverse shows that this is from year 16, it must date from the very last year of his reign. There is an obscure pun on the reverse. Ganymede, cup-bearer to Zeus, with the eagle, pours ambrosia on lilies, which were the symbol of the Farnese family. The Greek inscription says *ΦΕΡΝΗ ΖΗΝΟΣ ΕΥΠΑΙΝΕΙ*, that is, Property of Zeus, he sprinkles well. The pun is in the words *ΦΕΡΝΗ ΖΗΝΟΣ* which conceal the word Farnese. This medal is by Alessandro Cesati, commonly called *il Grecchetto*, the little Greek, who came from Cyprus and is generally considered one of the very best of the Renaissance medallists. He did much work for the Farnese family and his medals were greatly admired by Michelangelo. In the 16th century, the study of the Greek language was revived, following its eclipse during the Dark Ages. This renewed study of Greek came about because, on the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, many Greek scholars fled to the West. This Pope's moral life was not without blemish; but it must be said that he was a very great patron of literature and the arts.

Dia. 39mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Alessandro Cesati, (il Grecchetto).



**Figure 5** – *Medal of Pope Gregory XIII*

My last 16th century item is a somewhat gruesome one. On St. Bartholomew's Day, 24 August 1572, the French Queen Catherine de Medici, who was the widow of Henry II and was Regent during the minority of her son, Charles IX, ordered a massacre of the Parisian Huguenots. On hearing of the massacre, this Pope ordered a Te Deum to be sung in Rome. Ugo Buoncompagni, born at Bologna in 1502, when elected Pope in that year 1572, took the name of GREGORY XIII. His chief claim to fame is his reform of the calendar, his revised version being still called the Gregorian calendar. This medal – Figure 5, dating from year 1 of the reign, has the initials of the medallist, FP, standing for Federico da Parma. The reverse shows an angel with a sword and a cross, the corpses of the Huguenots and a woman with a shroud. The inscription on the reverse reads Ugonottorum Strages (the slaughter of the Huguenots) 1572. Looking at the matter as dispassionately as possible, one must bear in mind that in the short period from 1562 to 1598 France was torn apart by eight extremely bloody Wars of Religion. No doubt Queen Catherine felt that giving a short sharp knock to the Huguenots would be the ideal solution. Her daughter, marguerite de Valois married Henri de Bourbon (the future King Henry IV) in Paris the day before St. Bartholomew's Day. The bridegroom being at that time a protestant, many influential Huguenots came to Paris for the wedding. This gave Catherine her opportunity. Her son, King Charles IX, born in 1550, was of full age, but very much under his mother's influence. As to Gregory XIII, this Pope, in the late 1570s, tried to interest Philip II of Spain in invading Ireland and using this country as a springboard for an attack on England. When that plan failed, he encouraged, also without success, schemes for the assassination of Queen Elizabeth. Altogether, he was one of the most militant of the Popes.

Dia. 32mm.

Struck.

Metal: Brass.

Artist/engraver: Fererico da Parma.



**Figure 6** – *Medal of Cardinal Jules Mazarin*

Coming on now to the 17th century, we have a medal portraying Cardinal Jules Mazarin – Figure 6. He was an Italian, born at Piscina in Abruzzi in 1602. In the year 1630, as an officer in the Papal army, he was entrusted by Pope Urban VIII with the difficult task of making peace between France and Spain in the War of the Mantuan Succession. The reverse of this medal shows him standing between the two armies. The quotation says *infestas acies nutu dirimit* (the hostile lines he separates with a nod); it seems to come from the Roman historian Livy. This courageous intervention by Mazarin occurred at the battle of Casale in 1630. The Pope sent him as Legate to France in 1634. He impressed the chief minister Cardinal Richelieu with his ability, and through Richelieu's influence was himself made a Cardinal. Richelieu, when dying, recommended Mazarin as his successor. King Louis XIII died in 1643, when his son Louis XIV was only five years old. Louis XIII's widow, Anne of Austria was Regent during Louis XIV's minority. During this time Mazarin exercised great influence. He may have been secretly married to Anne of Austria, which would have been possible, because, although he was a Cardinal, he had never been ordained as a priest.

Dia. 53mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Unknown.



**Figure 7** – *Medal of Pope Urban VIII*

A handsome medal dated 1638 – Figure 7 - shows the above-mentioned POPE URBAN VIII. This was Maffeo Barberini, born in Florence of a noble family in 1568, elected Pope in 1623. Notorious for having condemned Galileo. In the 30 Years War 1618-1648 he supported the Protestant side (which was also Richelieu's side) against the Austrians. This medal, by Gaspare Mola, commemorates the construction of the suburban residence at Castelgandolfo. The inscription *Suburbano recessu constructo* contains a pleasing pun. It can either mean "the suburban retreat constructed" or "under Urban the retreat constructed". Urban VIII fortified and beautified the city of Rome, but in the process destroyed many Roman antiquities. Hence the phrase "*Quod non fecerunt barbari fecerunt Barberini*" (What the barbarians did not succeed in achieving, the Barberinis accomplished).

Dia. 40mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Gaspare Mola



**Figure 8 – Medal of Pope Innocent X**

Next a brass medal of POPE INNOCENT X – Figure 8 – is by Gaspare Morone Mo1a. a nephew of the Gaspare Mola who made the medal of Urban VIII. This Pope, who reigned from 1644 'till 1655 was from the Roman family of the Pamfili. He was born Giovanni Battista Pamfili. He dispossessed the Barberini family of the wealth which they had accumulated in the reign of Urban VIII. It was during his reign that the 30 years war was ended by the Treaty of Westphalia.

Dia. 30mm.

Struck.

Metal: Brass

Artist/engraver: Gaspare Morone Mo1a



**Figure 9** – *Medal of Pope Alexander VII*

Innocent X was succeeded by ALEXANDER VII, born at Siena in 1599. His name was Fabio Chigi and he was a grandnephew of Paul V. He was elected in 1655 and reigned 'till 1667. He disliked business and preferred to spend his time in one of his suburban villas engaging in literary pursuits. This medal shows on the reverse Bernini's colonnade at St. Peter's – Figure 9. It was made by Gaspare Morone Mo1a. The inscription, *Fundamenta eius in montibus sanctis* (His foundations are in the holy mountains) comes from Psalm 86 (Vulgate).

Dia. 40mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Gaspare Morone Mo1a



**Figure 10** – *Medal of Pope Clement X*

The next medal is of CLEMENT X, born at Rome in 1590 as Emilio Altieri – Figure 10. Like most of the Popes of that era, he came from a noble family. This handsome medal is by Giovanni Hamerani, whose family continued as medallists to the Popes for over 100 years. The medal dates from 1676, by which time the Pope was nearly 86 years of age. There is a very detailed view of the side of St. Peter's. The inscription *Fluent ad eum omnes gentes* (All nations shall flow unto it) comes from Isaiah 2 verse 2. We also see Fame with a trumpet, holding a scroll

inscribed IN SPLENDORE' STELLARIM (In the splendour of the stars). Below are the twin founders of Rome, Romulus and Remus and the she-wolf who reared them.

Dia. 41mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Giovanni Hamerani



**Figure 11** – *Medal of Pope INNOCENT XI*

Next we have INNOCENT XI, born at Como as Benedetto Odescalchi – Figure 11. He was elected in 1676 and soon quarrelled with Louis XIV of France over the government of the French Church. It was for this reason that Innocent XI favoured the Protestant William of Orange against Louis XIV's friend, the Catholic James II. But the Pope died in 1689, so did not live to hear of William's victory at the Boyne. This medal, also by Giovanni Hamerani, has the inscription *Dextera tua Domine percussit inimicum* and the date 1683. This inscription (Thy right hand O Lord has smitten the enemy) refers to the defeat of the Turks at the gates of Vienna by the Polish King Jan Sobieski .

Dia. 41mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Giovanni Hamerani



**Figure 12** – *Medal of Pope INNOCENT XII*

The medal in Figure 12 of INNOCENT XII, born Antonio Pignatelli, of a noble Neapolitan family, I regard with particular affection. Partly because it was the first papal medal I ever acquired. I bought it for 17/6d from Seaby in 1960. Secondly, I admire it for the beautifully detailed delineation by Giovanni Hamerani of the Roman Dogana or Customhouse, most especially its windows. The medal dates from 1696 and has the inscription *Quaestus magnus pietas cum sufficientia*. This quote comes from first Timothy, chapter 6, verse 6 and the Reims translation renders it as: *Piety with sufficiency is great gain*. Incidentally, Innocent XII is the Pope who figures in Robert Browning's lengthy poem, *The Ring & the Book*.

Dia. 35mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Giovanni Hamerani



**Figure 13** – *Medal of Pope Clement XI*

The 18th century brought a new Pope, CLEMENT XI, elected on 23 November 1700. Giovanni Francesco Albani was a native of Urbino. This handsome medal – Figure 13 - by Giovanni Hamerani refers to the fact that he pleaded for three days with the Cardinals to allow him to decline the Papacy. The reverse shows Christ staggering beneath the weight of the cross and the words *Factus est Principatus super humerum eius* (The government is upon his shoulder). He proved to be a very fair-minded Pope. By his bull *Unigenitus* he condemned the Jansenists who held beliefs similar to those of the Calvinists. But by another pronouncement he condemned idolatrous practices which the Jesuits were tolerating among Chinese converts. He lived most frugally and it was said that a few pence per day covered the expenses of his table. He showed great kindness to James II's son, the Old Pretender, during the latter's lengthy residence in Rome.

Dia. 52mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Giovanni Hamerani



**Figure 14** – *Medal of Pope Innocent XIII*

Clement XI was succeeded by INNOCENT XIII, born Michelangelo dei Conti, son of the Roman Duke of Poli. This medal, showing St Michael the Archangel with sword and shield, is a play on the Pope's former name of Michelangelo – Figure 14. The legend states *Renovabis faciem terrae* (Thou wilt renew the face of the earth). But when he became Pope he was in weak health and achieved little. He only reigned for three years, 1721-24.

Dia. 52mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Unknown.



**Figure 15** – *Medal of Pope Benedict XIII*

The next Pope was BENEDICT XIII, born at Naples as Pietro Francesco Orsini – Figure 15. When elected in 1724, he was 75 years of age. He was a Dominican friar. He lived frugally and it was reckoned that his expenditure on food amounted to 6d per day. He showed great kindness to the poor and sick. But unfortunately he left the government of the Church in the hands of an unpopular and unworthy Cardinal called Nicholas Coscia. This medal, also by

Giovanni Hamerani, shows Jacob's altar and Jacob's ladder and the date 1726. This part of the story of Jacob is related in Genesis chapter 28, as is indicated on the side of the altar.

This Pope canonised many saints, including St. John of the Cross and St. Aloysius Gonzaga.

Dia. 34mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Giovanni Hamerani



**Figure 16** – *Medal of Pope Benedict XIV*

BENEDICT XIV, one of the greatest of the 18th century Popes, was born at Bologna in 1675 as Prospero Lorenzo Lambertini. He was a most learned man and loved the society of scholars. Voltaire was so impressed with him that he dedicated to this Pope his play Mahomet. Benedict's own literary works were published in 12 quarto volumes. He was greatly devoted to the Stuarts and particularly to Clementina, the wife of the Old Pretender, whose monument in St. Peter's he completed. He also had a medal struck to commemorate her. The medal of Benedict – Figure 16 - shows his visit to Civitavecchia in the Papal States, whose Latin name is Centum Cellae - 100 Rooms; this name comes from a villa built there by the Emperor Trajan. The medal is by Ottone Hamerani, son of Giovanni. Benedict XIV had a long reign, from 1740 'till 1758. This Pope approved the establishment of two important religious congregations, the Passionists and the Redemptorists.

Dia. 40mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Ottone Hamerani



**Figure 17** – *Sede Vacante Medal, 1758*

The medal in Figure 17 is also by Ottone Hamerani. It is for the Sede Vacante or Vacancy of the See between Benedict XIV and Clement XIII. The obverse shows Saints Peter and Paul with the words SEDE VACANTE 1758. The reverse has the Holy Spirit as a dove and words from Psalm 33 verse 6 Spiritu oris eius (by the breath of his mouth).

Dia. 31mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Ottone Hamerani



**Figure 18** – *Medal of Pope Clement XIV*

Figure 18 is my last exhibit from the 18th century and shows POPE CLEMENT XIV, born at Rimini in 1705 as Lorenzo Antonio Ganganelli. He loved music and literature but was a weak ruler. Bowing to pressure from the Catholic powers of Austria and France, he issued the famous bull Dominus ac Redemptor Noster which abolished the Jesuit Order. That abolition is the event commemorated by this medal. The medal was made by a Belgian medallist, Theodore Victor van Berckel.

Dia. 39mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Theodore Victor van Berckel



**Figure 19** – *Medal of Pope PIUS VII*

The first of the 19th century Popes was PIUS VII, born at Cesena as Luigi Barnabo Chiaramonti – Figure 19. He had been elected at Venice in November 1799, Rome being at that time in the hands of Napoleon, who had invaded it in 1798 and set up the Roman Republic. We need not go into the complicated troubles and difficulties between this Pope and Napoleon. This medal commemorates the extraordinary occasion when, on 2 December 1804 the Pope was induced to attend the coronation in Notre Dame of Napoleon and Josephine. Though it was Napoleon himself who did the actual crowning. The obverse describes the Pope as *Hospes Neapolionis Imperatoris* (Guest of the Emperor Napoleon). The reverse interestingly shows the date in the ordinary way 2 December 1804 and also according to the French revolutionary calendar 11 Frimaire year 13. The month of Frimaire began on 22 November. The year is reckoned from 1791. The monogram AM signifies *annus mirabilis* (marvellous year). The words *Den Dir Jalet Fec* require some explanation. They mean: *Denon directed Jalet made*. Dominique Vivant Denon was the Master of the Paris Mint 1804-1815. Jalet was the official of the Mint who made the reverse design. Jean Paul Droz had designed the obverse. The date on the obverse, 13 is of course from the Republican calendar.

Dia. 40mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Droz & Jalet



Next comes GREGORY XVI, a Camaldolese monk, born in Venice as Bartolomeo Alberto Capellari. This medal – Figure 21 - commemorates a work of engineering carried out at his behest. The River Anio frequently overflowed and caused great damage to the town of Tivoli, in the Papal States. The Pope had a tunnel pierced through Monte Catillo to prevent the flooding. The reverse inscription says. The inhabitants of Tivoli preserved by the perforation of Catillo and the bringing through of the Anio. The medal is by the German Carl Heinrich Lorenz. This medal is unusual for the way that the water has been painted white.

Dia. 76mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Carl Heinrich Lorenz

Just a small selection now from the numerous medals of PIUS IX, called by the Italians Pio Nono, the longest-reigning Pope, whose dates were 1846-78. He was a native of Sinigaglia called Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti. His reign was eventful. Two years after his election, a revolution broke out in Rome, as in many other parts of Europe in that year of 1848. He had to flee to Gaeta in the Kingdom of Naples. He promulgated the Dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and the Infallibility and suffered the loss of his temporal power in 1870.



**Figure 22** – *Medal of Pope Pius IX*

This first medal dated 1850 commemorates his return to Rome from Gaeta – Figure 22. The medal is by Giuseppe Cerbara, whose dates were 1770-1856.

Dia. 44mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Giuseppe Cerbara



**Figure 23** – *Medal of Pope Pius IX*

Next a mysterious medal – Figure 23 - made by Ignazio Bianchi, commemorating Pius IX's visit to the Provinces of the Papa.l states in 1857. The mystery is the inscription on the edge. Sent to Sir W.M. Coghlan KCB by His Holiness 1857 for services rendered. Coghlan had entered the Bombay Artillery as a 2nd Lieutenant in 1820. In 1877 he became a full General. But what services he rendered to the Pope we shall never know.

Dia. 52mm.

Struck.

Metal: Silver.

Artist/engraver: Ignazio Bianchi



**Figure 24** – *Medal of Pope Pius IX*

Finally, as regards the Catholic section, Figure 24 shows a medal with an impressive three-dimensional effect. It is dated 1873 and commemorates the refurbishment of the Roman Church of San Lorenzo. This is also by Ignazio Bianchi; he had a particular genius for producing on a medal the illusion of depth.

Dia. 43.5mm.

Struck.

Metal: Silver.

Artist/engraver: Ignazio Bianchi



**Figure 25** – *Seven Bishops medal*

Proceeding now to the PROTESTANT SECTION. My oldest exhibit dated 1688 portrays the SEVEN BISHOPS – Figure 25. In that year the Catholic King James II ordered that the Declaration of Indulgence, which effectively suspended the penal laws against Catholics and Nonconformists, must be read in all churches in England and Wales. William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury summoned a meeting at which a protest was signed by himself and six other Bishops. Lloyd of St Asaph, Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester, Ken of Bath and Wells, White of Peterborough and Trelawney of Bristol. These seven Bishops were imprisoned in the Tower of London and tried for seditious libel. Their acquittal helped to precipitate the fall and exile of James. These were conscientious men. Five of them, including Sancroft, when William III became King, refused to swear the required oath of allegiance to him, on the grounds that they had already sworn allegiance to James II and his heirs; these Nonjurors, as they were termed, were deprived of their office. This medal by George Bower shows on the obverse Archbishop Sancroft, and on the reverse seven Bishops, being the six I have mentioned plus Compton of London, who, though not put on trial, was suspended from office because of having preached anti-Catholic sermons.

Dia. 45mm.

Cast.

Metal: White metal? (Medallic Illustrations states silver).

Artist/engraver: George Bower



**Figure 26** – *William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury*

My next oldest depicts WILLIAM WAKE, Archbishop of Canterbury 1716-37. He came from Blandford in Dorset and may have been descended from Hereward the Wake, the 11th century Saxon chieftain. From 1717-20 he negotiated with the French Bishops in a failed attempt to unite the Churches of England and France. The medal in Figure 26 is by Jean Dassier, the engraver at the Mint of Geneva. He was probably the greatest of the 18th century medallists. This is from his series of medals of great men, ranging from Shakespeare to Louis XV of France. The reverse inscription signifies: These most truthful portraits of illustrious men who have laboured for the revival and restoration of the true Christian religion and polite literature in Europe, Jean Dassier of Geneva offers, presents and dedicates to the Most Reverend Father in Christ William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan.

Dia. 42mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: Jean Dassier



**Figure 27** – *Benjamin Hoadley*

BENJAMIN HOADLEY (1676-1761) was successively Bishop of Bangor, Hereford, Salisbury and Winchester – Figure 27. His brother John was Archbishop of Armagh. While he was Bishop of Bangor, Benjamin, at the suggestion of George I, preached a sermon on 31 March 1717 on the text My kingdom is not of this world (John 18 verse 36) and sought to prove thereby that the gospels give no warrant for any visible Church authority. A vast controversy called the Bangorian controversy followed. But despite strong opposition to his views, Hoadley's career continued to flourish. This medal, by John Kirk of London, after a wax model by Matthew Gosset, commemorates Hoadley's death. On the obverse the Bishop is wearing the prelate's badge of the Order of the Garter; the Bishop of Winchester was ex officio Prelate of that Order. On the reverse we see an oak tree and the inscription *Viget ad extremum* (It flourishes to the end). The Bishop's coat of arms and the motto of the Order of the Garter, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*; mitre and crozier. In view of Bishop Hoadley's genius for surviving the vicissitudes of controversy, the motto 'It flourishes to the end' is highly appropriate.

Dia. 37mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: John Kirk



**Figure 28** – *Richard Robinson, Archbishop of Armagh*

RICHARD ROBINSON was Archbishop of Armagh 1765-94. Like all the 18th century Archbishops of Armagh, he was an Englishman. He was born at Rokeby in Yorkshire, and when in due course he was elevated to the peerage he took the title of Baron Rokeby. He enjoyed the rents of 100,000 acres and spent enormous sums in beautifying the City of Armagh. He repaired the Cathedral, and built the infirmary, the palace and its chapel, the vicars' houses, the military barracks, the jail, the observatory and the library. The medal in Figure 28, from 1789, is by the Dublin medallist, William Mossop. It commemorates the building of the observatory. I derive a little bit of quiet amusement from the fact that the obverse inscription describes him, not as Richard Robinson, but Rich Robinson. The quotation comes from what in that Authorised version is Psalm 19.

Dia. 53mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: William Mossop



**Figure 29** – *Henry Richard Dawson, Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin*

My very last exhibit – Figure 29 - commemorates the death of HENRY RICHARD DAWSON, who was Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin 1820-40 and also Rector of Castlecomer in Co. Kilkenny. Born in Dublin, he had been educated at Harrow and Christ Church, Oxford. He was a notable numismatist. After his death in 1840, the Royal Irish Academy, of which he had been a member, purchased for over £1,000 his collection of coins and medals. He had been the author of *A MEMOIR OF IRISH MEDALLISTS* (in the Transactions of the RIA). This medal by the Dublin medallist William Woodhouse, shows the Dean wearing the badge of Registrar of the Order of St. Patrick, an office which belonged to the Deans of St. Patrick's.

Dia. 40mm.

Struck.

Metal: Æ.

Artist/engraver: William Woodhouse

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## DUBLIN MARKET TOKENS

Martin Ruigrok

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to speak to you tonight about a little known series of tokens which appeared in Dublin between 1925 and 1966. They were issued by various traders and salespeople operating out of the Dublin Corporation Fruit, Flower, Vegetable and Fish Market. Their purpose was to facilitate and control the distribution and return of empty boxes and containers.

The market was then and still is today to be found on the north side of the Liffey, roughly between Capel Street, the Bridewell Garda station and The Four Courts.



Built in 1892 it was an indoor market designed to house 45 traders to sell a mixture of flowers, fruit, vegetables and fish. It covers 1½ acres and inside is laid out in a grid system to allow passage of horse-drawn vehicles. For hygiene reasons the fish were moved out in 1897 to a new purpose built building immediately adjoining.

The site chosen for the new market was no accident. Recorded as one of Dublin's most congested areas, it has since the 1500s held a market in narrow lanes named for what they sold – Boot Lane, Fish Lane, Bull Lane (this was the meat market). A map of 1846 shows a fish market in Fish Lane, a vegetable market in Mary's Lane, potato & vegetable in Little Green Street, and fruit in Petticoat Lane.

Hygiene was non-existent. Cattle were slaughtered in situ on the streets and mountains of offal abandoned to the scavengers. I give you two recorded descriptions.

*“The vegetable market in Mary's Lane is the most wretched and inconvenient that can be conceived. It is kept in a filthy state and a size so very inconvenient that few housewives tend to go there”.*

And again

*“The fruit market on Coal Quay is the most dirty and uncomfortable place for buyer and seller that can be anywhere seen”.*

It was against such a background that this area was cleared and the new market built and opened. Initially there was resistance by the street traders to take a place. Not only had they to pay market tolls and rent but they now came under the standards imposed by the Corporation. However, the market was successful and by 1925 had become seriously overcrowded and chaotic. There was talk of extensions and even a newer and bigger market, but this never happened.

And there ends the written record. All that I have told you can be found in various small journals and publications. There has never been a follow up article on the workings of the market and there has not been anything published on the issue and use of these tokens. What follows are my own experiences and observations during a lifetime of association with the Corporation market.

I was born in Rush in north County Dublin. Rush for many years has been the centre of horticulture in Ireland and has supplied Dublin market with fresh flowers, vegetables, potatoes and tomatoes for generations. I was born into a family that for three generations did nothing else but supply the market with flowers (tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, irises and gladioli) and tomatoes. I was raised on an endless diet of tomatoes – boiled, raw, fried, stuffed and stewed – and on the stories, legends, troubles, problems, and shortcomings of the market.

I also saw these tokens in operation and for you to understand why these tokens became necessary, it is first important to understand how the market functioned from the grower's and the salesperson's perspectives.

One of the enduring stories of my childhood is of the men who 'went the road' to market. Everything was done by horse. From working the land with horse and spade to taking the produce to Dublin market by horse and cart. The cart was loaded in the evening and you set off for market before midnight walking with your horse to Dublin. It took 4½ hours to Dublin – a horse could pull 1 ton and a pony could pull ½ ton. When crops were in season you might repeat this three times a week, the limit for man and horse. Upon arrival at the market you queued and waited for opening at 7:00am.



There were often convoys of carts arriving together and fierce competition for a place in the queue as there were distinct advantages to being early and your produce ‘first up’. Convoys came from Malahide, Rush and Balbriggan (fish) taking different routes all hoping to be first in the queue. Many of the vegetables were bunched in dozens and multiples of 12 and could be placed loose in the cart. But many softer vegetables like lettuce had to be packed into boxes or containers to prevent crushing or damage. This was a huge problem. There was no plastic (it had not been invented yet); cardboard boxes could not even be conceived. Boxes were made of wood and expensive, so you looked to the docks and fruit importers for their empty boxes. These were re-consigned to new uses that were specific and well understood as follows:

<b>Original imported box or sack</b>	<b>Material</b>	<b>Material</b>
Orange box (Spain)	Light timber	Lettuce and soft vegetables
Onion box (France & Spain)	Heavy timber	Potatoes
Butter box (New Zealand)	Heavy timber	Potatoes
Tea chest (London)	Plywood	10 doz. lettuce
Kegs grapes (Spain)		6 stone potatoes
Apple barrels (G.B)		1½ cwt. potatoes
Tomato ‘boats’ (Canary)	Heavy timber	
Jute sugar sack		2 cwt. potatoes
Chips (Holland)	Light basket wood	Small vegetables and herbs
Hampers	Local made wicker baskets	10/12 doz. lettuce 30 doz. lettuce
Banana box	King of them all (the best, strongest and almost indestructible)	

## *Dublin Market Tokens*

Once you got inside you went to the 'bank' of your choice, unloaded your cart and stood there until you sold all your produce. You paid the stall or 'bank' holder a fee of 2/- for the space or a percent commission. The containers and empties were always a problem because the grower desperately needed to take them home to re-fill them and the buyer wanted to take them away. Once you had sold your vegetables you scoured the market to buy empty fruit boxes from importers. Alternatively, you searched around some street markets to buy boxes from other dealers or even try to retrieve your own empties.

There are many stories of the horse knowing his way home while the grower slept in the cart. Certainly there are many stories about every horse in north County Dublin knew to stop at a pub called the Big Tree in Swords.

If you had no horse or your horse was sick, there were early but primitive trucks that would collect your produce for a fee and bring it in for you. I have clear memory of bunched and hampered vegetables stacked at nominated places awaiting collection. Mind you, you still had to get yourself to market to oversee and sell your produce. So, this meant an early bus, or walk with the other men.



Some produce, particularly cabbage and cauliflower were auctioned by the cart load. A cart held 60 doz. cabbage. When you were successfully auctioned at an acceptable price, you now had to deliver it to the buyer's shop and this could be anywhere between Rathmines and Howth. A fee between 4/- and 10/- was negotiated. If the auctioneer failed to sell your load, you went around again to re-join a queue and if you still could not be sold you stripped your load onto the bank and tried to sell by the doz.

So, back to the tokens.

The earliest documented account of the issue and use of Dublin Corporation market tokens is around 1925 and this by the flower salespeople. The oldest and longest established of these being Fletcher & Co. The company was founded in 1893, (that's 115 years of continuous business at the same place). One token of Fletcher & Co. is known to survive. It is round, white, 1/- value and made of ivory or bone.

The flower growers and salespeople had no use for the type of imported boxes I have described. Their flowers needed to be packed and displayed in large stackable boxes. So, boxes about 4 ft. long by 2 ft. wide by 1 ft. deep were designed and manufactured by O'Keefe Boxmakers of Cabinteely. The larger growers had their own boxes with their name and deposit value – normally 5/- and later rising to 10/-. However, many of the growers refused point blank to allow their boxes to leave the market, so, flowers had to be repacked into the salesman's boxes which were in turn stencilled with their name and deposit value. Other smaller growers brought their flowers to market loose of any packaging or box and these had to be put into a salesman's box for display, sale and transport. It was a very simple system. You paid a deposit, got a brass token as a receipt and you took the box away. When you returned the box plus the token you got your money back.

The main flower salesmen were:

Fletcher	F.M. Reilly	J. Duffy
Only one survives in family.	Different values for various containers.	Brass – none survive Plastic – all gone Cardboard Entire system collapsed.

Others followed this example. The chaos described earlier could not continue. The vegetable salesmen had their own particular boxes made, or they put their names on others, especially banana boxes and imposed a sort of standard and uniformity on proceedings. Many salespeople loaned their boxes to smaller growers to be filled directly and brought back.



And so slow change came about. Fewer and fewer men ‘went the road’. More trucks and tractors appeared. The salespeople became stronger and the empty box deposit/return system, whilst beset with problems, sort of resolved the main problems.

In addition to the tokens I have shown you others are known to have existed. These include:

Lightfoot & Son	Known.	No known surviving specimens.
H. Lawlor & Sons	Known.	No known surviving specimens.
Jackie Leonard	Known.	No known surviving specimens.
Fletcher	Known.	One known surviving specimen.

Other salesmen have come and gone with no record of whether they ever issued tokens. And now it’s getting late. The men who could tell you about them are gone and the younger people have no knowledge of them.

The token/deposit/return system lumbered along for 40 years maximum.

Arguments, rows, lost tokens, lost boxes, broken boxes, boxes stacked up in street markets to make sales tables, minor business built up by scavengers who scoured the many streets for broken or abandoned boxes, repair them to sell them back to their owner. There were also rows before, during and after an auction if the price was “all in”; meaning that no deposit was to be paid on the containers, yet a refund would be claimed on return of the empties.

They even became a local currency in the pubs surrounding the market. These pubs opened at 7:00am and many a point was paid for using them. The publican new he would have no difficulty redeeming them from the issuer.

I witnessed many of these arguments and rows. As a small boy I was sent to market with the flowers and I’d be left there to ‘watch the auction’ I would stand on a wooden box well in view of proceedings and record for my father and my two uncles the prices achieved and note if any of our boxes left the market.

Success brought its own problems. The market prospered. Dublin’s population increased and demand increased and demand for flowers and vegetables increased. Vans, trucks and even tractors replaced the horse and cart and by 1965 the market was choked and in chaos again. Space was at a premium for both the produce and the wooden empties. I can recall many a phone call pleading with us to come in and collect the empties because the bank and all available space were full.

And then suddenly in the late 1960s it was over. It was as if a fresh wind blew through the market. The non-refundable cardboard box had arrived. There was no slow introductory period, no experiments, and no regrets. Just instant universal acceptance.

A standard corrugated cardboard flower box was designed measuring 4 ft by 1½ ft by 6 inches deep and manufactured I believe by Kileen. However, old habits die hard and for a while we experimented by putting a stiff insert in the floor of a returned cardboard box in an attempt to use it twice. However, it failed and with that the days of the wooden box were

gone. Other traders changed quickly including the vegetable traders and with them went the tokens. They were simply gone! It is barely 40 years since they ceased to be used and yet they are a very rare token. The few that I have shown you tonight have taken 30 years to collect and that only by asking, cajoling, and persuading the older traders to search through the offices, cashboxes, safes and the like. It's hard to believe that something so fundamental to the operation of the Dublin Corporation Market could simply vanish, so completely and so quickly.

The fish market was built literally across the road in 1897 and demolished for hygiene reasons in 2005. I know very little about it except that their tokens which were exactly the same as the brass ones we have seen tonight are extremely rare. I have only ever seen one from Hanlon Ltd. and one from Clayton Love & Sons (both well known Dublin names long associated with the fish trade). I have only one myself – Garton Fish Salesman, Liverpool & Dublin. Perhaps there is scope for someone to research this area.

I can show you tonight one token from the market in Belfast. It is a 1/- token of D. Devine & Sons. It has no address and no detail other than being of the same appearance as the brass tokens we have already seen. Between 1958 and 1980 we exported flowers to Belfast and dealt exclusively with Torney Bros. in the market in Oxford Street. This is exactly where the Belfast Waterfront Centre is located today. This token is unknown and unrecorded, but I know it is from the market in Belfast. D. Devine & Sons had the next stand to Torney Bros. and I saw their sign board for many, many years.

Today, the Dublin Corporation Market is only busy on some days and is scheduled to close in about 2 years time. It is too small to accommodate articulated trucks and is surrounded by a maze of narrow streets. Dublin Corporation is anxious to move the market and its trucks out to the suburbs so that it can redevelop the building and surrounding area into an upmarket shopping area. Although a rearguard action is being fought, one by one the traders are moving to other locations. Only this very week I learnt that Flecher & Co. the last remaining original trader who could boast a continuous trading on the same spot has called time.

## The Tokens

### Dublin Market

DFM  
CONNOLLY 1



Connolly, Kelly & Co. Ltd. CORPORATION MARKET EMPTY VOUCHER 5/-, rev, blank, (tea stained), round, 50mm dia, 2.19 grams, cardboard.

DFM  
CONNOLLY 2



CONNOLLY, KELLY & CO FRUIT MARKET DUBLIN 5/-, rev, blank, round, 32mm dia, 5.21 grams, aluminium.

DFM  
DUFFY 1



JOS. M. DUFFY CORPN FRUIT MARKET DEPOSIT BOX 10/-, two circles, rev, as obverse, round, 37mm dia., 2.74 grams, white plastic.

DFM  
GARTON 1



P.D. GARTON LIVERPOOL AND DUBLIN, device, eight string harp TRADE MARK, rev, P.D. GARTON FISH SALESMAN 1/-, round, 29mm dia., 6.17 grams, brass.

*Dublin Market Tokens*

DFM  
JENKINSON 1



P.J. JENKINSON L<sup>TD</sup> FRUIT MARKET DUBLIN, *rev*, 5/-, round, 38mm dia., 14.35 grams, brass. Holed centrally for stacking on a vertical wire.

DFM  
KING 1



N.J. KING. FRUIT MARKET DUBLIN, *rev*, 1/-, round, 30mm dia., 7.75 grams, brass. Holed centrally for stacking on a vertical wire.

KING 2



N.J. KING L<sup>TD</sup> FRUIT MARKET DUBLIN, *rev*, 1/-, triangular, 31mm side, 5.67 grams, brass. Holed centrally for stacking on a vertical wire.

DFM  
McGUINNESS  
1



H.S. McGUINNESS FRUIT MARKET DUBLIN, *rev*, 5/-, round, 32mm dia., 7.0 grams, brass. Holed centrally for stacking on a vertical wire.

DFM  
REILLY 1



REILLY FRUIT MERCHANT DUBLIN, *rev*, 1<sup>S</sup>/-, round, 24mm dia., 4.76 to 4.83 grams, brass.

*Dublin Market Tokens*

DFM  
REILLY 2



REILLY FRUIT MERCHANT DUBLIN, rev, 2<sup>S</sup>/-, square, 22mm, 5.71 grams, brass.

DFM  
REILLY 3



F.J. REILLY CORPORATION FRUIT MARKET DUBLIN, rev, 2/6, round, 37mm dia., 14.7 grams, brass.

DFM  
REILLY 4



REILLY FRUIT MERCHANT DUBLIN, rev, 3<sup>S</sup>/-, octagon, 24mm wide, 5.0 grams, brass.

**Belfast Market**

BM  
DEVINE 1



D. DEVINE & SONS 1/, rev, blank, 27mm dia., 6.37 grams, brass.

This paper was presented by Martin Ruigrok at the Society meeting of Friday 21 November 2008.

Dublin City Council had planned to convert this market complex to a Covent Garden style market area. However, this was resisted by the stallholders and with the arrival of the recession the whole project has been shelved due to lack of funding.



## Occasional Papers Guidance for Submissions

The Society actively engages in the publication of scholarly papers and reports which are published as Occasional Papers and welcomes submissions for publication. Simple guidelines apply:

1. Papers may address coins, tokens, medals, banknotes or currency.
2. Submissions should be original and should not have been published previously.
3. Papers should be approximately 20 A4 single-spaced typed pages (including illustrations and references).
4. Referencing style should be: Author surname, Initial(s). (Year of publication in brackets), Article or paper title if appropriate, Publication (Journal title, Conference title, book), Publisher, City, Country, Volume, Issue and, Page numbers if appropriate. We can assist with that if necessary.
5. Authors are responsible for copyright permissions where these are necessary.
6. Submissions are welcome from all members including branch members. Authors who are not members of the Society but whose bone fides and expertise are known to the committee are also welcome to submit papers.
7. The committee will retain discretion to determine if the standard of a submission is acceptable and suitable for publication.
8. Submission deadline is **31 July**.

While the guidelines suggest a limit on the maximum number of pages in a paper, there is no limit on how short a submission may be. In previous editions, short reports on medal topics have been combined and a substantial 'paper' on these has been included as a 'Miscellanea'. So, no matter what your interest – coins, tokens, medals, banknotes or currency, all members are encouraged to make submissions.

**Papers may be emailed to:** [rfitzp@gmail.com](mailto:rfitzp@gmail.com)

**Or posted to:** Publications Editor, The Numismatic Society of Ireland, 8 Ely Place, Dublin 2, Ireland.



The Numismatic Society of Ireland



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