



# Irish Provisionals.

"Dollard" Printing.

RIALCAP  
SEALADAO  
NA  
hÉireann  
1922

SUPPLEMENT No. 21

EIRE PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION

June, 1965

## DOLLARD OVERPRINTS ON LOW VALUES

by Hans G. Zervas, E.P.A.

On re-reading the article under the above title by Leslie Fletcher in the Revealer of July-August 1963, which was very interesting and well illustrated, it occurs to me that I can add some further information on this short lived but very interesting issue. It only ran for about five months.

From time to time I shall refer to an article by Capt. S.P.C. Vesey appearing in the London Philatelist of March 1924, which was a paper he read before the Royal Philatelic Society of London on May 31, 1923. Capt. Vesey was a very keen student of the Irish overprints, and his articles on the Dollard as well as the Thom overprints are still, after over forty years, the basis of studies made of these issues. It should also be mentioned that Vesey had personal contact with the Manager of the Dollard outfit, B. J. Brennan, so that his information came from original sources. It should also be noted that Vesey had a close connection with the Mint Stamp Company, a leading stamp dealer of Dublin, of which more later.

Again I quote from the Vesey article, "about January 28 [1922] the General Post Office verbally invited the firm [Dollard] to submit bids for overprinting the values 1/2d, 1d, 2 1/2d, 3d, 4d, 5d, 9d, and 10d. and also the high values", which we are not discussing in this article, although they could be the subject of a further article later on. On Feb. 2 [1922] Dollard submitted their bid with a sample of the overprint they proposed to apply to the stamps [which were the stamps of Great Britain]. The sample submitted with the bid showed a hyphen between the "h" and "E" of "hEireann". The hyphen does not appear in the overprints, and if still in existence should be considered as an essay of the Dollard overprints. [Perhaps our President could check this out with the P.O.D.]. On the same date [Feb 2] Dollard's bid was accepted verbally and an official confirmation was sent. Delivery of stamps began on Feb. 11 [1922], and on Feb. 17, they were available at all Post Offices in the Irish Free State.

Three settings of this overprint are recognized, and while they differ one from the other they were all produced by the same method namely-by a Monotype Machine, which sets one letter at a time, in a 3 x 5 arrangement, five horizontal rows of three subjects, from which a matrix was taken and from which in turn the necessary stereotypes were cast to make up the number of plates needed for overprinting. Vesey tells us that at first four presses were used for overprinting but that later only two or one were used. Unfortunately he did not give us any clues as to how these various plates could be recognized, perhaps he found no earmarks for so doing, and at this late date it would be idle to attempt this as the material no longer exists in sufficient quantities to make a serious attempt to do so.

The eight values assigned to Dollard for overprinting are found with black overprints but not in all settings, and only the 2 1/2d, 4d, and 9d values are found with red overprints in all three settings.

Let us first consider the black overprints:

The First Setting was very accurately set up and produced no recordable setting varieties, and is easily recognized by noting the "l" of "Sealadac" which is vertically over the "n" of "na", and the "l" of "1922" is directly under the "i" of "Eireann", also it should be noted that the "e" of "Sealadac" is directly under the "R" of "Rialtas" in the first line. While one or the other of these features may be found in Settings 2 and 3 they will not, in these settings, be found together as in the First Setting.

Vesey states that "the Second and Third settings were made with a view to reducing the width of the lines a little so that the register of printing would be more easily got on the stamps, and also hasten the work of stereotyping." This does not seem too clear to the writer as it is his opinion that no matter how the settings were altered the overprinting itself defeated any attempt to improve the centering of the overprint by the inaccurate application of the sheets of stamps to the plate. In the First Setting the repeat of the overprint horizontally was practically the same as that of the stamps. True the vertical repeat of the overprint was a little short of that of the stamps but this did not seem to be in question. The Second and Third Settings show a slight reduction of the horizontal repeat of the overprint and a slight lengthening of the vertical repeat as may be noted in the illustration of the three settings:

#### SETTINGS OF THE DOLLARD OVERPRINT

| First Setting                                 |                                               |                                               | Second Setting                                |                                               |                                               | Third Setting                                 |                                               |                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 |
| RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 |
| RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 |
| RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 |
| RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadac<br>na<br>hÓireann<br>1922 |

The result of this attempted correction gave us Settings Two and Three, which gave us fifteen variations from the First Setting which was very accurately set up, and gives the student no particular problems, but from now on the problem became more complicated. The inaccurate insertion of the sheets of stamps in the press did not improve the centering of the overprint from plates using the Second or Third Settings, so what was accomplished? The settings show many shifted lines and were not nearly as accurately set up as were the subjects of Setting One. Note illustration showing the shifted line varieties:

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

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RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

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RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

SECOND

SETTING

|              |             |                                |
|--------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
|              | l/na<br>i/l | r/A<br>l/na<br>i/l<br>raised c |
|              | r/A<br>l/na | i/l                            |
| l/na<br>in/l | l/na<br>i/l | r/A<br>l/na                    |
| i/l          | r/A<br>i/l  | r/A<br>l/na                    |
|              |             | r/A<br>l/na<br>i/l             |

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

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RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

RIALCAP SEALADAC NA h6ipeann 1922

THIRD

SETTING

|               |                    |                                |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| r/A<br>l /na  | r/A<br>l/na<br>i/l | r/A<br>l/na<br>i/l<br>Raised c |
|               | r/A<br>l/na        |                                |
| l/na<br>in/na | i/l                | i/l                            |
| i/l           | r/A<br>i/l         | r/A<br>l/na                    |
| r/A<br>l/na   |                    | r/A<br>l/na<br>i/l             |

Let us examine the diagrams of the two settings. It will be noticed that many of the shifted lines in the two settings are similar, in fact are alike. In row 1, the third subject shows the same shifting of lines and a raised "c", but the third setting shows the "c" raised a little more than in the second setting; row 2 shows the second subject the same in both settings; row 3 shows the first subject the same in both settings; row 4 shows all three subjects with the same line shifts; row 5 shows the third subject in both setting the

same. Although it has not been previously noted the first subject in row 1 of both settings shows the "n" of "na" with a beveled down stroke in the left stroke. This is a constant variety of both settings. This can be noted in the illustrations of the settings on page 90 [E-10]. This gives us eight positions in both settings that are alike. The remaining subjects not mentioned above also show the shifted lines but do not pair up. As mentioned before all settings were set up by the Monotype method which sets loose type one at a time. Similarities between the two settings cannot be ascribed to coincidence. It is the writer's opinion that but one setting was made, but to "hasten the work of stereotyping", as Vesey put it, a second matrix was taken from the same setting but between the taking of the two matrices the setting shifted in what we now call the Third Setting.

As was stated before all the values assigned to Dollard for overprinting are found with black overprints but all are not found with the three settings. There follows a list of the various values and the settings in which they are found. Meredith's listing of Controls in his Fourth Edition is used plus a rather extensive control collection of the writer:

- 1/2d. Settings 1, 2, 3
- 1d. Settings 1, 2, 3
- 2 1/2 d. Setting 1
- 3d. Settings 1, 2, 3
- 4d. Setting 1
- 5d. Settings 1, 2
- 9d. Settings 1, 2\* [\* This is the rarest Irish Control.]
- 10d. Settings 1, 2

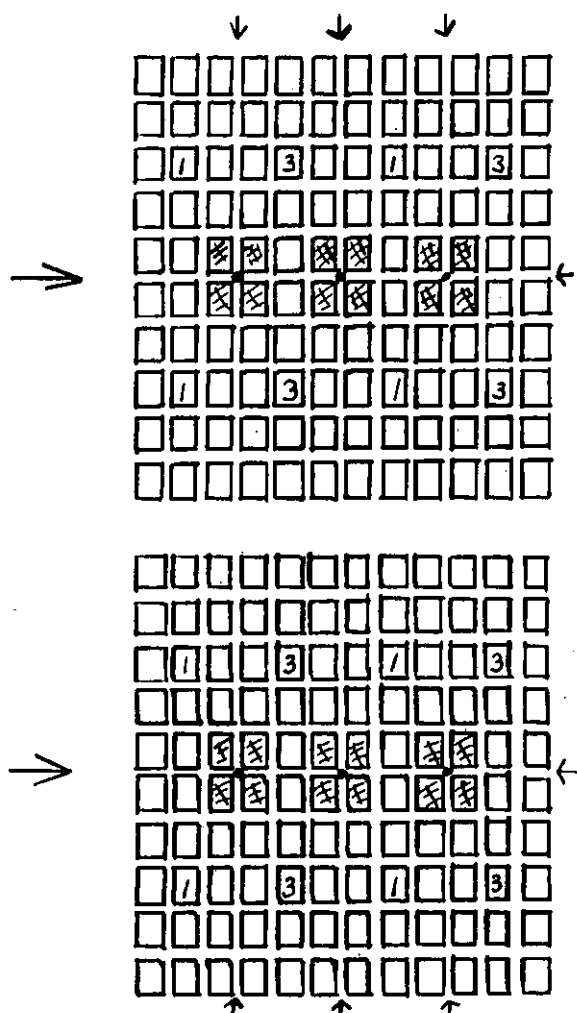
It will be noted that of the three values subsequently overprinted in red only the 9d value was overprinted from other than a plate of the First Setting. The control of the 9d in Setting 2 was valued by Meredith in 1927 at B 20 indicating that it was a very rare control, consequently any 9d. stamp showing other than the accurate setting of the First Setting can be considered a rather scarce stamp, and in a specialized catalogue should be listed separately, and although not as rare, so should the 5d. and 10d. values. They are not too often encountered.

#### RED OVERPRINTS

Now, let us consider the red overprints which have a rather interesting history. Shortly after the values 2 1/2d, 4d, and 9d were issued with the black overprint it was felt that the overprint did not show up distinctly and another color was suggested. The printers suggested that a red ink be used for these values and submitted a color proof on the 1/2d. value to show how this color would look. The suggestion was accepted and the printing of red overprints began on the 2 1/2, 4, and 9d. the red overprints were put on sale at the post offices on April 1st 1922. According to Freeman & Stubbs in their Handbook "Provisional Issues Irish Free State Stamps" issued April 1922, incidently the first handbook on the Irish stamps, they had a letter from the Aldborough House Depot of the P.O.D. dated March 30, 1922 stating that as of that date 1000 sheets each of the 2 1/2d and 4d. values had been overprinted in red and 1600 sheets of the 9d. value had been overprinted in red, confirming the April 1st date. A sheet of the low values contained 240 stamps.

The 1/2d red proof was printed from a plate of the Second Setting, and this would show that a plate or plates of this setting must have been in existence sometime in March, indicating that black overprints from a plate or plates of this setting were also being produced.

FIGURE 1.



### "COMPOSITE"

set of blocks 6 x 2 showing the juncture of four stereos of the lower pane right hand side in the three values 2 1/2, 4, and 9d. These blocks show the 1-3 arrangement. I also have a block of the 2 1/2d. from the middle of the sheet showing the 3 - 1 arrangement. As proofs were taken from this Composite Plate it is possible that similar blocks of proofs exist. It would be interesting to hear of them if they exist.

The author speaks of out of alignment stereos. From these have arisen the out of alignment pairs or larger in the trade. A pair out of alignment stamps shows a horizontal pair across a seam or join between two stereos in which one of the other overprint is either higher or lower than its neighbor. It should be pointed out that in such a pair there can be quite a variation in the separation of the overprints owing to the inaccurate spacing of the stereos on the plate. What seems to have escaped many students is the fact that the same varieties can be found in the vertical arrangement of the stereos creating what I have chosen to call raised or dropped settings. These varieties are just as interesting as the out of alignment multiples and are not as easy to come by. For example there are three vertical seams in each pane ten stamps high so that a maximum number of out of alignment pairs would be 30 per pane. There is only one horizontal seam across the pane 12 stamps wide so that a maximum number of raised or dropped settings would be 12 per pane, hence are much scarcer.

Although the red overprints are found in all three settings, they actually are the product of but two overprinting plates. One plate was made up of all setting Two stereos, and the other plate was made up of stereos of both Setting Three and Setting One arranged as shown in the diagram [Figure 1]. This plate is known as the "Composite" plate and produced some very interesting varieties not too frequently come by. Observing the diagram of the Composite Plate it will be seen that the arrangement of the Setting One and Setting Three stereos has a fixed pattern. Note that the first vertical row of stereos is made up of Setting One stereos, the next vertical row is made up of Setting Three stereos and again in the third and fourth rows this arrangement is repeated. Now note the heavy dots in the diagram: three in the upper pane and three in the lower pane. These indicate the juncture of four stereos, and are very desirable items if they can be come by. Leslie Fletcher states "A block of 2 1/2d. with red overprint with mixed settings 1 and 3, showing the misplaced junction of four cliches is known to exist". These blocks are not that scarce, although admittedly not easy to come by. There can be two varieties of these juncture blocks. First there are the blocks showing the juncture of Settings 1 and 3 in that order, which are the outside blocks in the sheet, and second there are the middle blocks which show the arrangement of stereos 3 and 1. These later occur twice in the sheet and the former occur four times in the sheet, so that the middle blocks must be the scarcer. There is in my collection a

Under the sub-title "Proofs without and with rubber stamp abd initials." the author states that "It is very doubtful whether these are true proofs taken before overprinting the stamps, they are rather considered to be philatelic proofs produced for a Dublin dealer with the connivance of Dollards." With much of this statement the writer is in agreement, but the writer of the opinion that proofs before printing were made, but it is doubtful that such proofs came on the market, and if so, cannot be distinguished from the philatelic proofs which flood the market. A possible exception could be the block of proofs illustrated on page 48 with a stamp indicating that it came from the Stores Dept. G.P.O. Aldborough House, Dublin. This is a block of eight of proofs of Setting One and shows a very good example of out of alignment stereotypes:

|                                               |                                               |                                               |                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| RIALCAP<br>Sealadao<br>na<br>h6ipeann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadao<br>na<br>h6ipeann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadao<br>na<br>h6ipeann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadao<br>na<br>h6ipeann<br>1922 |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|

|                                               |                                               |                                               |                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| RIALCAP<br>Sealadao<br>na<br>h6ipeann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadao<br>na<br>h6ipeann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadao<br>na<br>h6ipeann<br>1922 | RIALCAP<br>Sealadao<br>na<br>h6ipeann<br>1922 |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|

STORES DEPT., G. P. O.  
ALDBOROUGH HOUSE, DUBLIN

The question now arises how did it get out of the Post Office archives? There is another example of this which comes under the sub-title of Leslie Fletcher's article, "Proof in dark blue of the First Setting. This block of 24, 12 x 2, the top two rows of the First Setting, was offered in the Bute Sale of May 1959 as follows: "Lot No. 440. The top two rows, two creased, with "Approved W. N. Jeffries 10/2/22" in manuscript and handstamped "Stores Dept., G/P/O/ Aldborough House, Dublin". A note states that the rest of the sheet was retained by Messrs. Dollard. This is undoubtedly the same block that Leslie Fletcher mentions. Question - how did this block get out of the Postal Archives?, and why a blue overprint that was never used for the overprinted stamps? It would seem that both the printers and the Controller of the Postal Stores became philatelically sophisticated, and that their mentor was a prominent Dublin dealer in the Irish stamps: hence the "connivance" mentioned by the author. However it must be conceded that the Dollard proofs came from the Dollard Printing Plant, but that very few indeed were actually submitted to the Postal Stores for approval. Those bearing the purple hand stamp with the initials B.J.B. are philatelic, and would seem to be the product of B. J. B.'s efforts to protect his interests against the plain proofs getting into the market without his knowledge and his pecuniary benefit. Later on even this stamp was misused as some proofs having the stamp on back are not signed.

Now we come to another problem in proofs. Under the sub-title "Second Setting the author states" a half sheet of proofs has been seen signed "Genuine Proofs / For Dollard, Printinghouse, Dublin, Ltd. / B.J. Brennan / Manager/ June 14, 1922." Leslie Fletcher seems to think that this date dates the Second Setting. This is a posthumous item and has nothing to do with the dating of the Second Setting. Note the date June 14, 1922. Vesey states that "Messrs. Dollard & Co. ceased overprinting the stamps on June 12th, 1922. I am informed by the printers that no reason was given by the G.P.O. for discontinuing the contract. The delivery of the stamps to the printers merely ceased. From this time on Messrs Alex Thom took over the overprinting of the values originally assigned to Messrs. Dollard." Thus ended the Dollard overprints. They were of course

used up but no further supplies were printed. As all this happened by June 12, 1922, B ennan's dating of a half sheet of proofs must have been for philatelic purposes. As for dating the Second Setting, as was mentioned before the Second Setting was in use about the middle of March 1922.

Under the sub-title "Trial" overprint in red on 1/2d." the author states that "these are now thought to be in the nature of proofs, possibly in the same category as previous proofs with and without rubber stamps and initials." As stated earlier the red overprints on the 1/2d. were proofs submitted by Dollard to show a color that would be more apparent on the 2 1/2, 4, 9d. than the black overprint which the P.O.D. had criticized as not being satisfactory. As with the proofs on plain paper stamps with the rubber stamp on the back which are philatelic, and those without the rubber stamp on the back must be equally suspect, as only one sheet of stamps would have been necessary to demonstrate the proposed color change to the P.O.D. There seems to be the contents of more than one sheet of these stamps in the market. Whether any of these stamps came out of the Postal Stores Archives can be questioned; rather they can be ascribed to the combination of Dollard and the Dublin dealer, as thus would be a very profitable transaction. Consider that one sheet of the 1/2d. which was worth 10 shillings; add to this another shilling for printing and you have an 11 shilling item which was sold for 55 shillings, per copy by Meredith in 1927, and is priced in S.G. 1962 at 75 shillings. It will be seen that it was quite a temptation to let some of these items out through the back door. However, these proofs were produced from plates in actual use so that they are useful for study no matter how they came on the market.

Under the sub-title "Fake Overprints". These faked overprints involve the inverts. These were amply described in the January-March 1964 issue of the Revealer. The Dollard inverts of the 1/2d. and 1d. are well covered. The author mentions inverts of the 2d. [bogus], 4d. 9d. and 1sh. The 2d. and 1 sh. were never overprinted by Dollard and should not be included in this study. I have never heard of the 4d and 9d inverts by Dollard but this does not prove that they do not exist, but I would like to see some proof of them, for example -photos. It should be also remembered that a rubber hand stamp was supplied to Fiscal and Customs Depts. similar to the Dollard overprint. ~~As a rubber stamp~~ is not a rigid medium and impressions from it will vary with the pressure applied, and if applied on unoverprinted in their possession in inverted position we might find the source for some of the fakes, bogus, or forged overprints. A study along these lines might prove fruitful.

Early in his study Leslie Fletcher states "a printing cliché [stereo] of 15, 3 x 5 is known to exist. This is probably the same stereo known to the writer, but seems to have been in the possession of either Capt. Vesey or the Mint Stamp Company of Dublin earlier. In the paper read before the London Philatelic Society Vesey gave the following information:

"I show: - Three original plates of the low values and prints from them before defaced.

"One original plate of the high values and print from it.

"A single section of the first setting [stereo]."

Vesey also showed complete sheets of stamps with the First and Second Settings. Die-proofs [sic] in red and black of the low values, and in black of the high value overprint. "Die-proofs" of typographed overprints is new to

the writer and he can only explain it as being a 3 x 5 setting from which the matrix was taken for production of stereos. This would be in the nature of a galley proof printers take before putting the set material to further use. This would seem logical, as any good printer would do this to preclude a possible mis-setting getting too far along in the sequence of operations when correction would prove more expensive.

As will be seen from the following Vesey may have borrowed these items for his talk from the Mint Stamp Company. Note the following taken from the catalogue of the International Stamp Exhibition held in London in June 1923. An item in the catalogue describing the exhibits states: "Mint Stamp Co. [Special frames] - The original plates used by Messrs. Dollard for overprinting Great Britain stamps with a five line overprint of Irish Provisional Government in February 1922; also includes proofs from same and plate made by Messrs. Dollard when submitting trial specimens for permanent designs and proofs therefrom." Much of Vesey's material shown in May 1923 shows up in the Mint Stamp exhibit a short time later. Who borrowed from whom? Another question can be raised, how did this property of the P.O.D. get into private hands, and was even transported out of the country? It would seem that here will be found the reason for the short life of the Dollard overprints. The P. O. D. finally became irked by what was being done without their consent and simply stopped sending further work to Dollard, as right from the start Dollard was very lax with what was actually the property of the Government whereas Thom was much more correct in handling the Government's work.

Thus it will be seen that the Dollard overprints were a short-lived but very interesting issue, but in the writer's opinion the last word has still not been said.

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#### IRISH POSTAGE STAMPS - COMMEMORATIVE ISSUES FOR 1965

Special postage stamps will be issued in 1965 on the following four themes:-

The centenary of the establishment of the International Telecommunications Union;

The centenary of the birth of the Irish poet, William Butler Yeats;

The Conference of European Postal and Telecommunications Administrations (Europa stamp);

International Co-Operation Year, 1965, which is sponsored by the United Nations on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of its foundation.

Further details concerning the stamps will be announced later.