

THE DUBLIN CENSOR OFFICE 1939-1945

IRISH CIVIL CENSORSHIP: 1939-1945 "THE EMERGENCY"

SYNOPSIS

The aim of preserving neutrality during World War II, 1939-1945, known in Ireland as **The Emergency** manifests itself in the Irish mail system through the workings of the Dublin Censor Office.

While the focus is to display a specific censor topic, it is part of a thirty five-year plus study and collection of all aspects of Ireland's civil postal censorship. No other exhibit is as detailed as this one: **it is the most comprehensive showcase** of the work done by the Dublin Censor Office. Incoming and outgoing civil mail was dealt with by the staff who, at most, numbered around 160.

This is one of the most interesting subjects of twentieth-century Irish postal history. With both recent and older **discovery items** these have **added substantially to the knowledge and study of Irish censorship**. The exhibit, shown in its infancy at Stampa '90 and at other national and international shows in the interim, was awarded a **Large Gold medal and David Feldman Trophy for Best-in-Show** at Stampa 2023 in Dublin.

The distrust between Winston Churchill and Eamon de Valera, President of Dáil Éireann, goes back to the 1921 Irish Treaty negotiations as a major reason for British sweeping censorship of neutral Irish mail as seen on many covers.

Except for a few recent journal articles, some written by me, little new has been published in the philatelic press during the last two decades other than a few specialist articles with a narrow focus, such as Hans Moxter's AGZ article on a "fly-speck type" study of the S.P.1. censor labels. **The general censorship concepts are my primary interest:** the who and why, rather than small differences likely the result printers day-to-day work.

Several **one-of-a-kind items** are shown, in part due to the acquisition of some of F.E. Dixon's material and a tenacity to search out new items. Perhaps one might find more, or better, examples but they have not yet been found to improve this collection's minor gaps. I expect other memoranda to exist between the highest official documented slip, S.P.7., and the unique S.P.16 & S.P.18 shown. Other than my 1983 discovery of the S.P.10., I **aspire to eventually also find some of those items**, if they exist.

Some blemishes are to be expected with this type of mail but **covers are the highest quality available** and few might be improved on.

Discovery and notable items are distinguished by a green keyline around the item and/or its associated text box.

Sources: Journals

Some Irish Censor Discoveries, **Irish Philately**, Winkelmann, Vol 2023, No. 1, April 2023 p 24-27
Irish "PASSED BY CENSOR" handstamps, **CCSG Bulletin**, Winkelmann, Vol 46 No. 3 (July 2019) p 118-120
Irish Censorship of Civil Mail, **The Revealer**, ÉPA, Moxter, Vol 52 No. 3 #229, (Winter 2002) p 42 & 51
Censorship on Irish Mail in World War II, **Postal History Journal**, Wittreich, June 1990 #85 p 33
'SP10' enclosure memo, **CCSG Bulletin**, Winkelmann, Vol 12 No. 3 (February 1985) p 37
Irish Airphags, **O.E.78**, Irish Airmail Society, Vol 5 #4, April 2001, p 80-81

Sources: Books

Censorship of Mail in Ireland, Moxter, 2003 p 43-74
The Irish S.P.1. Censor Labels 1939-1945, Verge, 1989
Censorship in Ireland 1939-1945, Ó Drisceoil, 1996, p 61-89
That Neutral Island, Willis, 2007 p 163-166, p 239-240

The journal sources can be downloaded directly with this link: <https://bit.ly/DCOSources> & most can be downloaded from the Irish Philatelic Circle website: <http://www.irishphil.com>

Selected key items are:

• the oval Árd-Scrúdóir na bPost, the Chief Postal Censor handstamp on an undercover address item is the **only known postal use** of his mark. It took me 18 years to acquire this singular item.

• oval PASSED BY CENSOR mark in English text only, is the lone non-Irish-language mark used by Irish censorship: discovered in 1998 with four more reported to date.

• covers mailed pre and post censorship start: (Sept 2 & 4).

• proof is shown that censor labels were produced in sheets and not as individual labels.

• the S.P.12., S.P.16., and S.P.18. insert memoranda are mostly **one-of-a-kind** and extend the numbers well past those mentioned officially recorded.

Virtually all the different items recorded by Irish censor experts, together with several unrecorded items, are shown; military and internee mail, from this collector, are excluded: that took place elsewhere under different authority.



For Judges

Recent revisions:

- 1: Title page rewritten and rearranged.
- 2: Purpose, scope and importance reorganised.

3: Synopsis revised with details of the Irish censor system.

4: QR code of exhibit added for viewing convenience.

5: Colour code for sources: **ARPL**, **RPSL**, **IPC**