

Ireland's Portrait Gallery

by Tom Polick

My good friend Tom Burns was a small child when one of his older sisters passed away. She had been fifteen years older than Tom and he had several faint recollections of her but was disturbed that he couldn't clearly remember her face.

This information was shared with me when a relative found an old photograph showing Tom's older sisters in a group. When he saw the old picture, he immediately recognized the 'missing' face which triggered a flood of memories and emotion. Bits and pieces of remembrance came together with the stories told of her in the family. In her face he could see the features and expression which showed the wonderful qualities she had possessed.

It's a shame when old photographs get lost or when nobody can remember who the person was standing between Grandpa and his brother Joe. We have that human need to know who we are and where we come from.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "A man finds room in the few square inches of his face for the traits of all his ancestors, the expression of all his history, and all of his wants."

While we have nothing to do with the looks we're born with, our character and conduct do shape our facial expressions. And, we all subconsciously look for that imprint of personality and a confirmation of our understanding when we look into the faces of people.



Ireland's portrait gallery of postage stamps does a fine job of featuring the faces of people who have made significant contributions to Irish life. I think the artists have captured their distinctive individuality, strength and dedication in the poses and facial expressions.

Look at the current STATESMEN OF IRELAND series. From all the material available, the most representative examples of the statesmen's expressions have been accurately produced in a pencil drawn format. I think they're extremely well done.

Another outstanding and beautifully captivating set used the posthumous portraits of the leaders of the 1916 Rising. The artist, Sean O'Sullivan had a remarkable ability to give a sense of personality to all of his drawings. They were used in the 1966 commemoratives to mark the fiftieth anniversary of that Easter Rising. And the work of this gifted artist was used in several other postal commemoratives.

The photographs which have been reproduced on stamps also provide us with this quality of intimate knowledge of the depth and character to let us know how these people truly were.

For instance, look at the 1980 Sean O'Casey commemorative. With some knowledge, a sensitive observer could make dozens of observations. The 1976 James Larkin commemorative shows "Big Jim" was as big and tough as they said he was but you'll see he was a deeply committed and emotionally warm individual. The 1966 issues depicting Roger Casement are another story. I don't know but would guess that this picture of a deeply saddened man with a far away look in his eyes, was taken sometime during his trial for treason against the British Crown. The eyes have been referred to as the windows of the soul and you can see where his feelings were with the thoughts of what he believed at that time...Ireland's struggle for freedom had suffered another setback.

Yes, thumbing through your album take a moment to study the faces. And with some understanding of what occurred, you'll find a new familiarity and enjoyment.



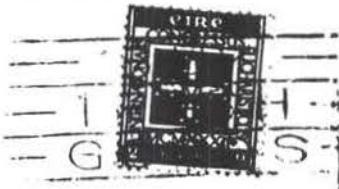
Mr. Hooper's Eucharistic Congress Philatelic Order

by Charles J. G. Verge

The illustrations of form T.S.8a, and the cover in which it was enclosed show the Department of Posts and Telegraph's Philatelic Section in action. Mr. A. Hooper of Walkerville, Ontario, had ordered some Eucharistic Congress stamps (DF: C6-7) issued on May 12, 1932. The clerk prepared an invoice, dated August 27, 1932, for eight 2d. and four 3d. stamps for a total cost of 2/6.

The purchase was mailed with the 2d. (DF: C6) of the issue to pay the surface rate postage to Canada (The clerk who prepared the envelope wanted to make sure it reached the addressee. He/she wrote the word Canada twice). There is no corner card, return address or indication of the cover's origin or of its contents.

Note the initials NS on the left hand side of the invoice. Are these an indication of quality control on the part of the Controller or are they the initial of J. Robinson's supervisor or is NS the clerk and J. Robinson the supervisor?



Philatelic Section,
Dublin Postal District,
DUBLIN.

...27... August 1932.

.....Sir.....

In compliance with your order I beg to enclose stamps as requested:-

Number	Denomination	£	s	d
6	2d		1	✓
4	3d		1	•
Postage				
	TOTAL		2	6

A. Hooper, Eng

for Controller.

GETTING YOUR IRISH UP

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		Europa-Modern Art Archite	690
		Medical Missionaries of M	688
		Shorthorn bull	694
44	multi	The Institution of Engine	648
46	green	Building	643
	orange	Ireland-Australia 1788-19	710
	multi	Aer Lingus 1936-1986	661
		Astragalus Danicus	722
		Balinasloe Horse Fair	698
		Bliain idirnaisiunta na s	673
		Foynes-New York 1938	719
		Galway horse tram	684
		Kilarney fern	657
		Nollaig 1988	733
		Spanish Armada 1588	728
		Women in Society	702
50	multi	Barry Fitzgerald 1888-198	715
£ 1	blue	Building	644
	brown	Building	644x



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