

NAAS LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



POST BOXES IN NAAS

If one walks along the Tipper Road, South Main Street or Poplar Square an alert observer might notice some green Post Boxes. One is a pillar box and the other two are wall boxes, still in all their former glory with one notable exception – they used to be red. On closer examination they tell another story of a time now past and of a much different political/historical era.

These are the original post boxes used during British rule in Ireland. The wall boxes bear the initials EVII which represents King Edward 7th, the English Monarch at the time 1901- 1910. After independence the boxes were all painted green to reflect a more Irish identity. Interestingly enough, the English post boxes were painted green but this was changed in 1874 to red for better visibility. Another interesting observation is that on some boxes the letter identifying the particular monarch was removed by those of a more nationalist persuasion who felt it was an unwelcome relic of British rule. Since it was in the time of Edward VII the Naas post boxes can be dated to between 1901- and 1910. King Edward had made previous visits to the area having arrived at the new Naas railway station as prince Regent in 1885 and again as King in 1904.

About one fifth of the 4,675 post boxes in use today date back to the pre 1922 period.

The novelist Antony Trollope is credited with the design of the first post box in Britain and he acted as the postal surveyor in Ireland in the 1800's.

History tells us that the first know post box was in Paris as far back as 1653. Britain has its first one in 1853, Russia in 1848 in St. Petersburg and the USA started installing them in the 1850's. It is fortunate that these unique post boxes still remain in use and stand testimony to a part of our history now gone but not forgotten.