

# RATHMICHAEL HISTORICAL RECORD

2000



**The Journal of the Rathmichael Historical Society**

The Journal of the Rathmichael Historical Society

Published by Rathmichael Historical Society, 2003.

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## Secretary's Report

This year was another busy year for the Society's members and committee. There were five monthly lectures, an evening course, four outings, a Spring weekend away and four committee meetings.

The winter season resumed following the AGM with a lecture in February by Dr Bernadette Williams on *Alice Kytler, an extra ordinary woman*. This was followed in March by Dr Margarita Cappock on the royal visits to Dublin and concluded in April with James Howley who spoke on *The Follies of Ireland*.

In mid-April members of the society journeyed to Wexford for a weekend away in the historic Hook Head peninsula.

The summer season began in May with several members joining a guided An Óige tour of some of the Early Christian sites in Co Westmeath.

In June, Aida Whelan organised a trip to Carriglass Manor in County Longford. In July, members joined Rob Goodbody on a tour of some churches of Old Rathdown including Old Connaught, Rathmichael and Tully churches.

The theme of the evening course in August was *the Archaeology of Old Rathdown* with contributions from Chris Corlett, John Ó Néill, Dr Elizabeth O'Brien, Leo Swan and Peter Pearson.

The Autumn/Winter season began again in September when, to celebrate Heritage Week, members visited St Werburgh's Church and the Chester Beatty Library at Dublin Castle. In October Margaret Gormley of Dúchas, spoke to us about The Gardens of St Stephen's Green and Iveagh House. This was followed in November by a talk from Jim Scannell on the subject *History is all around you*. The year concluded in early December with an illustrated lecture by Tom Moran on Pompeii revisited.

The incoming committee will soon be planning the remainder of the year's programme and will circulate details in due course.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my fellow committee members for all their help during the year. On behalf of the society I would like to thank Rathmichael Parish and in particular Pat Booth and finally on behalf of the committee, I would like to thank our outgoing president June Burry for her hospitality to us over the last two years.

Muirin Ó Briain, Hon. Sec, 10th January 2001

## Wednesday 5th January 2000 Annual General Meeting

The twenty-fourth annual general meeting of Rathmichael Historical Society was held in the Burton Hall, Rathmichael School, on 5th January 2000. In the absence of the current president, the chair was taken by Rob Goodbody, a distinguished former president. Apologies were received from Jean Morton, John and Alison Riseley, Del Sherriff, Bruce and Diana Weidon. The minutes of the twenty-third annual general meeting were read. There being no matters arising from these minutes, they were signed by Rob Goodbody. The secretary summarised the society's activities for the preceding year. In her report the treasurer detailed the Society's current financial position and indicated that although cost-cutting measures had improved the situation, the non-payment of subscriptions and falling membership remained a cause for concern. She concluded by proposing a vote of thanks to John Riseley both for auditing the accounts and proposing their Adoption. This was seconded by Rosemary Beckett. In June Burry's absence, a short address was delivered on her behalf by the chairman. The meeting then proceeded to the nomination of officers and members for the incoming committee:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Nominated</b>	<b>Seconded</b>
President	June Burry	R. Goodbody	Joan McCaughey
Secretary	Muirin Ó Briain	K. Merry	R. Beckett
Treasurer	Kay Merry	M. Ó Briain	Ciarán Byrne
Editor	Del Sherrif	R. Goodbody	Kay Merry
Committee	Aida Whelan	M. Ó Briain	Joan McCaughey
	J McCaughey	R. Beckett	Ciaran Byrne
	Jim Scannell	R Goodbody	James Byrne
	Tom Moran	R Goodbody	Kay Merry

As there were no other nominations, the above were declared elected.

### **Any other business:**

The motion that "The quorum for the AGM be reduced from 20 paid up members to 15 paid up members," proposed and seconded by the chairman and secretary respectively, was put to the meeting. As those present were less than a quorum, a lively discussion ensued following which Rob Goodbody proposed that a quorum "should be 10% of paid up members dating from the previous year". This was seconded by Rosemary Beckett.

There being no further business to discuss, the chairman brought the AGM to a close following which those present enjoyed a cup of tea and a pleasant perusal of books of interest brought to the meeting by Jim Scannell.

**Wednesday 2nd February 2000**  
**Alice Kytler - an Extraordinary Woman**  
**Dr Bernadette Williams**

Gratian, the great canon lawyer of 12th century Bologna, wrote “Woman should be subject to her husband’s rule and she possesses no authority, either to teach, to bear witness, to give surety, or to judge”. The medieval proverb says it all - a woman should either have a husband or a wall - the convent wall.

Taking all these points into consideration it is all the more delightful when by a quirk of fate we find information about a woman of wealth exercising great power living in Ireland in the early 14th century; Alice Kytler the business woman of Kilkenny who was accused of witchcraft in 1324. She was not submissive, humble or quiet.

An inquiry into the life of Alice Kytler, the witch, reveals Alice Kytler, the wealthy and influential business woman. Sadly, the accusation of witchcraft brought about the demise of Alice Kytler the business woman. Yet, without the accusation of witchcraft, and subsequent trial, it is doubtful that Alice Kytler would have been known to historians at all.

Investigating the life of a woman in the medieval period centres around identifying her surname. In the narrative Alice is called Alice Kytler, the mother of William Outlaw, she is not called Alice Le Poer, the surname of her husband in 1324. Surnames among men were fairly stable by the late 13th century but not among women. In the case of Alice it is assumed that she reverted to her maiden name after the death of her husbands.

The Kytlers were a family of Flemish merchants who had settled in Kilkenny, probably in the Flemingstown, sometime during the 13th century. As a daughter of a wealthy merchant, Alice was probably both literate and numerate and may have helped her father in his business and we know that Alice helped her son William in his business. She would be expected to marry and as she could inherit property from her father that would have made her an attractive matrimonial prize. Her first marriage was into the Outlaw or Utlaw family a well-known and prosperous Kilkenny merchant and moneylender by whom she had a son also called William who was to become her chief business partner. After her marriage Alice would probably have participated in her husband’s business dealings and may have begun her life as an independent business woman, by closing some deals after her father’s or husband’s death.

Sometime before 1316 Alice would have been aged about 52, her wealth consisted of a third of her first husband, William Outlaw’s estate, a third of Adam le Blund’s estate and she was now suing for her third of Richard de Valle’s estate, in addition to this she may have amassed wealth from her financial activities.

By 1324 Alice had acquired a fourth husband, the knight Sir John le Poer. The description of Sir John le Poer in 1324 gives rise to some suspicion that there may have been some valid accusation against Alice. He is described as emaciated with his nails torn out and all hair removed from his body. I contacted the poisons information centre at Beaumont Hospital and they informed me that powdered gold, arsenic and thallium poisoning are among several poisons, available in the middle ages, which would account for this description.

The main source of information concerning this accusation of witchcraft levelled against Alice Kytler in 1324 can be found in a 14th century manuscript in the British Library. The

account appears to have been written soon after the event by either the inquisitor Richard Ledrede, Bishop of Ossory, or one of his associates and strives to stress the legality of his actions. The account opens with the statement that, during a visitation to his diocese, Richard Ledrede, bishop of Ossory, held a solemn inquest and discovered that in Kilkenny were sorceresses who practiced sorceries and were well versed in all kinds of heresies. Bishop Ledrede was obsessed with witchcraft. He had been living in Avignon where his patron was Pope John XXII who had a lively fear of sorcery and it was he who officially listed it his bull of 1316 *Super illius specula*.

It was to this bishop that in 1324 an accusation of witchcraft was brought against Alice Kytler. Bishop Ledrede was delighted to investigate the accusation which he quickly interpreted as heresy. He now declared that his diocese was a hot-bed of devil worshippers and instituted proceedings against Alice Kytler and her accomplices on seven counts.

The first five accusations were: of denying Christ; making sacrifices to demons with living animals; seeking advice from the demons; stealing the keys of the church where they held their nocturnal rituals; and using the skull of a decapitated robber to brew up potions which they then used for various purposes including inciting people to love, hate and to kill faithful Christians.

The sixth charge is the most relevant to the history of Alice Kytler. We are told that “the sons and daughters of the said lady’s four husbands were publicly appealing to the bishop, seeking remedy and assistance against the lady. Openly and in front of the people, they alleged that she had used sorceries of this kind to murder the fathers of some of them and to infatuate others reducing their senses to such stupidity that they gave all of their possessions to her and her own son, thus impoverishing forever their sons and heirs. Moreover, the lady’s present husband, the knight Sir John Le Poer, had reached such a state through powders and sorceries that his whole body was emaciated, his nails fallen out and all hair removed from his body”

The seventh charge was that Alice Kytler had a demon as incubus, of whom she had carnal knowledge, who sometimes appeared as a cat, a dog or a black man with two larger companions and it was to this demon that Alice owed all her wealth.

The real motivation for the celebrated witchcraft trial of 1324 was the sixth accusation, the accumulation of wealth by Alice, for and on behalf of her son William.

Initially, relying on the papal law, Bishop Ledrede wrote to the king’s chancellor in Ireland, second only to the justiciar in importance, seeking a writ under which the sheriff could imprison the accused. The chancellor Roger Outlaw, prior of the hospital of St. John of Jerusalem at Kilmainham, just happened to be related to William Outlaw who had already written to him to ensure his support. William had the strong friendship of another important local figure in this case, the seneschal of Kilkenny, Arnold Le Paor. Le Paor and Roger Outlaw now both wrote to the bishop telling him to abandon the case or to adjourn it indefinitely. Ledrede refused point blank and summoned Alice to appear before him, but she left Kilkenny before the summons could reach her and went to Dublin where she personally enlisted the help of Roger Outlaw who sent advocates to Kilkenny to speak on her behalf.

Thwarted in his attempt to arrest Alice, Ledrede excommunicated her and now charged her son William with heresy and harbouring and protecting heretics. Arnold Le Paor and William went to the bishop and pleaded for the case to be dropped, to no avail.

The next step was the arrest of the bishop by Le Paor's men. The story goes that the bishop was shown the legal warrant for his arrest and informed that if he resisted they had orders to raise a hue and cry against him using the horns hanging around their necks for this very purpose. Being very astute, he read the warrant publicly and showed the seal on the warrant to the people around him and asked them if they recognised the seal of Arnold Le Poer, when they agreed he put the warrant in his pocket saying he would use it as evidence of his obedience, he subsequently used it in court in Dublin against Arnold le Poer. The purpose of arresting Ledrede was to keep him in prison until the day had passed when William Outlaw was to appear before the bishop in his ecclesiastical court.

When Ledrede was in prison he had the host brought to him in a big procession that paraded through Kilkenny to the prison thus emphasising the shocking fact that the body of Christ was imprisoned. He proceeded to hold court in the prison and the clergy and the laity flocked to visit him. He also placed his diocese under interdict, this was a very serious action which meant that no baptisms, marriages or burials could take place until it had been lifted. When the day came for his release, Ledrede would not leave quietly, he sent for his vestments and left the prison in full regalia accompanied in procession by clergy and laity.

The next confrontation occurred in Kilkenny when the seneschal's court was sitting and the bishop requested permission to address the court to plead for the arrest of the heretics. When he was refused permission Ledrede's response was to arrive in ecclesiastical procession dressed in full pontificals and carrying a copy of the decretals concerning heretics. Arnold's response was to order his ejection and call the bishop "an ignorant low born vagabond from England" and declare that he would enter the seneschal's court at his own peril. He also ordered him to stand in the dock but Ledrede holding up the host said "Woe, woe, woe that Christ should be sent to stand at the bar, a thing unheard of since he stood trial before Pontius Pilate". He then held up a copy of the papal decretal and said that even though Arnold Le Poer, as a knight could read a bit he nevertheless would read out the decretal so that he could not at a later date, plead ignorance of the matter. Arnold was not intimidated and showed his contempt for the bishop and the papal bull by saying "Take your decretals to church and preach your sermons there". Le Poer attempted to have Ledrede forcibly removed but the bishop was carrying the host at the time so the assault was now not only upon him but also on the body of Christ.

The next dramatic response came from Dublin where Alice Kytler through her lawyers, now retaliated and accused Ledrede of defamation of character claiming that without a summons, or conviction, she had been excommunicated and she appealed on these legal grounds to the Dublin court as one who had suffered a grave injustice and the bishop was summonsed to appear before the court.

When Ledrede finally appeared in Dublin he found that the entire court had been influenced against him, Alice had used her influential friends to good purpose.

It was agreed that four bishops would hear the case. Ledrede and his opponent Arnold le Poer, both argued their case. Le Poer said, "as you well know, heretics have never been found in Ireland, which had always been called the "Island of saints". Now this foreigner comes from England and says we are all heretics and excommunicates. Defamation of this country affects everyone of us, so we must all unite against this man",

Despite le Peer's plea, the case swung in Ledrede's favour. The imprisonment of the bishop had been a big mistake, insults and attacks on the church and its bishops could not be embarked upon lightly.

Ledrede was now allowed to seek the arrest of Alice but she had fled from Dublin. Deprived of Alice, Ledrede was determined to pursue his case against her accomplices and against William Outlaw.

The authorities now allowed Ledrede to continue his case in Kilkenny and the Dublin officials went there to follow the case. To Ledrede's chagrin, the Dublin officials enjoyed the hospitality of William Outlaw's house, where they held banquets, to which one assumes Ledrede was not invited.

While Alice might have eluded capture her accomplices were now tried and all but one released on payment of securities. Only Alice's maidservant, Petronilla de Midia remained charged and was ordered to be whipped six times. Perhaps as a result of this punishment, Petronilla confessed to a variety of actions and we are told that having been found out to be a heretic she was sentenced to be burnt at the stake on the morning of All Souls day 1324.

Ledrede now pursued William Outlaw who had to submit on bended knee to the bishop and was imprisoned in Kilkenny castle. Through the influence of his friends his punishment was remitted to a penance, so he had to hear three masses a day for one year, give food to the poor and undertake to cover the roof of the chancel of St. Canice's cathedral with lead. There is no further record of Alice in contemporary documents. Where did she go after Kilkenny? It is possible she set her sights on Flanders as the Kytlers were originally Flemish and as merchants the Kytlers probably still maintained some degree of mercantile connections there.

**Wednesday 1st March 2000**  
**The Royal Visits to Dublin**  
**Dr Margarita Cappoek**

Queen Victoria visited Ireland on four occasions - in 1849, 1853, 1861 and 1900. Her children also visited Ireland, the Prince of Wales being the most frequent visitor. Popular destinations for the royal visitors were Dublin, Belfast and the south of Ireland.

Queen Victoria had little time for Ireland and only came on visits out of a sense of duty. There were rumours of assassination plots, unrest and rebellion. There was no royal residence, prime minister William Gladstone tried to change her attitude with no success.

The first visit in 1849 took place at the end of the famine. The lord lieutenant in Ireland had indicated that the country and the people were now calm and that a visit by the queen would be propitious. The last royal visit had been in 1821 by George IV.

The queen, Prince Albert and their four children arrived in Cork and travelled onwards to Dublin and Belfast. The visit was viewed as an event of national importance. *The Illustrated London News* replaced the masthead with an Irish harp and shamrocks. The queen wore simple attire, which was seen as sensitive following the famine. Each illustration in *The London Illustrated News* was accompanied by an article. The article noted that the queen was anxious that no expensive arrangements should be made for her reception in Cork. The triumphal arches in Cork were decorated with Blackpool gingham which would subsequently be donated to the Ladies Clothing Society for the benefit of the poor. The Royal Party travelled on to Dublin where the total transformation of the city with the erection of triumphal arches, the encrustation of buildings with lights was less frugal. Hotel prices shot up, English, Scots and Welsh people came over on the mail boats. A less savoury element arrived in the form of pickpockets. Less well-off people camped on Killiney Hill to catch a glimpse of the arrival of the queen's vessel. The illumination of buildings was also an important feature of the pageantry. People thought it a waste of tallow and gas. One of the illustrations in *The London Illustrated News* was of the GPO, illuminated by two beams of light shining from the top of Nelson's Pillar; this interesting use of light was due to the efforts of Professor Gluckman of Trinity College.

The visit generated employment to architects, builders, gas-fitters, carpenters, painters and decorators. Shopkeepers also saw this as a good opportunity to sell Irish lace and other souvenirs. Temporary triumphal arches were erected at Nassau Street, Eccles Street and the arch at Baggot Street was larger than the one in Cork and was paid for by a committee. The Eccles Street arch was paid for by Messrs Williams of Talbot Street. The arch at Turners' Hammersmith Iron-Works of Ballsbridge was by Thomas Turner, the architect of the palm houses at Kew Gardens in London.

The arches in Belfast were larger than Dublin, sturdier structures with temporary viewing galleries. The royal endorsement of Irish industry and manufacturing also extended to Irish products. The queen and the female members of her party wore Irish-made materials such as poplin and lace and they also bought Irish-made furniture. The queen visited William Dargan the Irish railway entrepreneur who was responsible for the Great Exhibition, but when she arrived at his house Mount Anville he and his family were out looking at the preparations for the royal visit. Another visit was organised. It is hard to ascertain the degree of ill-feeling in Ireland during the visits reading reports from *The London Illustrated News*. There was a

concerted attempt through reportage to demystify the queen and endear her to her subjects. The populace came out to see the celebrity anyway so it is impossible to judge. The queen and Prince Albert visited the Curragh where the Prince of Wales had been sent for infantry training. There was great pomp and ceremony when the royal couple reviewed the troops. The impression was created of a successful sojourn of the prince, The reality was different, the prince had been given a bad report prior to the arrival of his parents due to a liaison he had with a young actress named Nellie Clifden.

There were expressions of dissension in some quarters. One illustration in *The London Illustrated News* shows the Duke of Edinburgh inspecting the Prince Consort Memorial on Leinster Lawn in June 1872. The statue was nearing completion so a plaster model of the statue featured instead. A large crowd is shown surrounding the statue which consisted of the principle figure of the prince with four smaller figures representing Art, Industry, Commerce and Agriculture. Unfortunately someone blew it up but this was glossed over in the report. There were visits by other members of the royal family. The queen's visit to the lakes of Killarney in 1861 played a large part in inducing large numbers of wealthy British tourists to visit Ireland.. The coverage of the queen's final visit in 1900 is quite detached in tone and *The Illustrated London News* is less fervent in its promotion of this visit. The illustrations show the queen, bespectacled and dressed in black, travelling around in a carriage as she meets her subjects. An eyewitness said she was propped up in a rocking chair in the carriage. She was 81.

**Wednesday 5th April 2000**

**The Follies of Ireland**

**James Howley**

Mr Howley explained how he became interested in follies through the influence of Peter Pearson, while he was working and living in Paris. Peter suggested he should visit him in Dublin, so he hitched from Belfast, took a bus to Celbridge and asked for Castletown. Peter had omitted to tell him that he and his brother Charles were caretakers of Castletown House! Since then he has been hooked on 18th century architecture! In the 18th century every young nobleman or wealthy gentleman went to Italy on the grand tour. They spent a few years and visited all the grand ruins this is where they got the inspiration for paintings and copies of sculptures. Vanborough in Castle Howard was the first designer to put in temples After the 18th century and the Williamite accession people had the freedom to build great houses. Portumna castle may have had a 17th century-style garden, full of geometrical patterns, a very controlled style. Bantry House had naturalistic terraces with some arches and grottos, this idea spread through Lovatt Pearce. Ireland's designed landscapes used a varied topography [and] were man-made with spectacular natural landscapes - this was unique in European art. The Irish style of respecting and using nature rather than controlling it took hold and spread all over Europe. Find the spirit of the place and then adorn it with objects to enhance the landscape. There were Greek and Roman ruins, romantic fragments of real remains of monasteries or fortified houses. Ireland in the 18th century was almost completely deforested, broadleaf trees were planted to enhance the landscape and it was felt that ruins should be admired for their aesthetics.

If there was no convenient ruin you built one!

Obelisks from Egypt were highly prized. Conolly's folly is a cascade of arches on a great scale, 140 feet tall and 2 miles from the house. There is a wonderful prospect from the folly of all Kildare.

There are many columns in Ireland. The Brown Carton Memorial has a staircase inside; it was struck by lightning and has not been repaired. Ballyfin is a parody of the porticos of the house in rustic stone.

There is a grotto in Powerscourt and an ice house in Hillsborough.

Shell houses were very popular. The one in Larch Hill has indigenous shells stuck on the walls; exotic shells were used in other places.

There is a huge range of small towers, such as the watch tower in Ardglass and large ones like the spectacular Scrabo tower in the Scottish baronial style. Ballyfin is five stories high and even has a drawbridge and an observatory at the top.

Gates were erected by Smith in a classical design in Delvin Co Meath. The locals nicknamed him Smith with the gate. Some other follies were in the style of Templar lodges and a Greek revival in Lough Crew.

Child scale forts were popular like the one in Tyrella House Co Down, the canon are still there. Larch Hill in Kilcock where the fort is on an island. The gazebo in North Dublin. The finest is in Dromoland.

There is a temple in Hillsborough at the end of a lime avenue. Temple of the winds at Mount Stewart. Follies were put there to make landscape more beautiful and of course the Casino at Marino.

### Bridges

Tullamore

### Eccentrics

The ice house in Castle Blunden.

Conolly's folly or Wonderful Barn

The list format of this report is an attempt to catch the flavour of the slides Mr Howley showed us and the lecture finished with a slide of the Killiney Obelisk.

## **April 15-16 2000**

### **Spring Weekend to Hook Peninsula, Wexford**

Eighteen members of the society enjoyed a most interesting and informative visit to this area of south Wexford under the leadership of Billy Colfer.

On Saturday morning we had an informal visit to Dunbrody Abbey and Castle. The abbey sitting "in naked solitude on the edge of the whispering waves" is one of the most imposing Cistercian monuments in the country. We were overawed by its majestic setting and despite the Tudor chimneys of its later occupants got some idea of the impact it must have had when built in the early twelfth century.

Across the road stand the ruins of Dunbrody Castle built by the Etchingham family in the early seventeenth century. The castle described as “a good house of lime and stone” is in fact a fortified house. An Etchingham heiress married second Earl of Donegall and the family still retains an interest in the abbey lands and castle. It is not unknown for Lord Templemore to sit in a deck chair and collect 50p each from visitors to the abbey, for the privilege of crossing his land!

Our guided tour started with a visit to Baginbun earthworks, site of the Norman landing in 1170. Traces of Celtic and Norman earthworks remain.

We then visited Hook Church. This was the parish church of Hook from the tenth to fourteenth centuries. It is the site of St. Dubhan’s early monastery where in the thirteenth century, the monks were paid to tend the Hook lighthouse which we visited next. This is a rare and unique purpose-built tower lighthouse built in the 13th century by Earl William Marshall Lord of Leinster, to safeguard his shipping into Waterford Harbour. A new heritage centre will soon open there and we recommend a visit.

Our next stop was Slade Castle, a fine 15th century tower with attached 16/17 century defended house, built by the Laffan family. The concept of incorporating the tower with a more comfortable house is believed to have emanated at Slade and so it is regarded as an important transitional building. An interesting salthouse also survives on the quay. The castle was divided into six apartments and inhabited into the 20th century. Some of the rooms are still referred to by the names of their last occupants i.e. Hannah’s room which contained an interesting mural chamber,

There was a short stop at Loftus Hall to hear the famous ghost story.

At Templetown we visited the church and tower house built by the Knights Templar who were granted extensive lands by Henry II in 1170. A nearby mound may represent their early earthwork fortification. The fortified church tower at Templetown was probably built by the Hospitallers in the early 14th century after the suppression of Templars. We were fascinated by a 13th century grave slab with incised cross and Agnus Dei, the seal of the Templars which suggests a Templar origin for the slab.

Our last visit of the day was to Fethard Castle, church and motte. The pre-Norman church, dedicated to St. Mogue, is still in use. It contains valuable silver from the Hospitallers church at Templetown. There is an early Norman/French graveslab in the graveyard. The castle is a late 15th century tower with a more comfortable defended house, a further development of Slade, built by the Sutton family, tenants of the bishop who relocated there from Ferns. A much-shrunken motte is located behind the castle. As cash allows there is excellent restoration work being carried out on the castle.

It was now time for hot whiskeys to restore the circulation, followed by a most enjoyable dinner.

Our Sunday excursion called for boots and raingear but undaunted we headed for Tintern Abbey or *Tintern de voto*, to distinguish it from its Welsh counterpart. William Marshall vowed to build a monastery if spared shipwreck in 1200. It was established by monks from St Mary’s Abbey near Bannow Bay, the Welsh monks having turned it down. The abbey was

occupied until 1960 by the Colclough family who were granted it after the suppression of the monasteries in 1536. It was particularly interested to see the foundations of a special bay in the north cloister for a collation lectern with a stone seat for the abbot opposite. The only other Irish example is at Jerpoint.

We went next to Rathumney Hall (pronounced Rathimney) a 13th century hall built on a grange of Tintern Abbey,, The two-storey hall had living rooms and fireplaces on both storeys and had a SE corner tower.

Then to Kilmokea monastic site on Great Island (no longer an island) where traces of banks and ditches of the early Christian enclosure can be seen. There is a small high cross in the graveyard. The island is also the site of an Anglo/Norman borough and port, It was once called Hervey's Island after Hervey de Montmorency, uncle of Strongbow, who made his headquarters on the island. A rectangular earthwork survives, probably his defended earthwork castle.

Ballyhack castle is in a marvellous setting overlooking the ferry crossing to Waterford. For more than 200 years it was thought to be a Templar castle but it is now recognised as a Cistercian castle built to control shipping and protect the valuable fisheries. We were particularly taken with the remains of a small third floor chapel with red sandstone altar and small alcoves. On the second floor there was another fine mural chamber. Ongoing restoration work at this castle will turn into a fine tourist attraction in a lovely area which deserves to be better known.

Time was running out so we repaired to the Templars Inn for a very welcome lunch of soup and sandwiches before our return to Dublin. We were all filled with wonder that one small area could hold so many monuments to its rich and varied history. In the case of Billy Golfer, we wondered, "that one small head could carry all he knew". Local history in the area is in good and safe hands, we thank him for a wonderfully stimulating weekend.

It just remains for me, on behalf of the committee, to say a very big thank you to all who supported the trip. It gives us great encouragement to continue the good work. Thank you.

June Burry

### **Sunday 7th May 2000**

#### **Outing to Some Early Christian Sites In Co. Westmeath**

We once again joined with An Óige for this full day trip, organised by Pauline McCulloch and led by Seosamh Ó Scolaí. We made our first stop at Cloncurry, site of early monastery. Remains include a later Franciscan church and an Anglo/Norman motte built next to the monastic site.

We next passed Clonard, site of St. Finian's a very important and influential monastery in the fifth and sixth centuries. Unfortunately there are no remains but as at Cloncurry Hugh de Lacy had built an imposing motte next to the monastic site.

A short stop at Kinnegad was followed by a visit to Lynn to visit the monastery of Lann Colamain, situated on the shores of Lough Ennell. It dates from the 600s and was known for its fine metal work.

In warm sunshine we enjoyed a picnic lunch in the grounds of Lilliput House, a former hunting lodge, associated with Jonathan Swift. Westmeath County Council is to be congratulated for the fine recreational facilities it has provided there.

One of the highlights of the day was a visit to the Hill of Ushnagh. We climbed to the "Catstone" said to mark the spot where the five provinces of Ireland converged. It was a great disappointment that due to the intransigence of the local landowner we could only look across the hill to the remains of the burial mounds and fort that are said to mark the seat of King Tuathal Techtmar, who crossed the Shannon from Connacht in the second century AD.

Visits to Killare, Kilbixy, Templecross and Portlomain followed, but the site of the small monastery at Portlomain, on the shores of Loch Owe! impressed us most; the almost tangible peace and quiet disturbed only by the evening birdsong and the lapping of the waters of the lake, created an atmosphere that gave us a hint of what life may have been like in an Early Christian monastery.

We thank Pauline and Seosamh for a most enjoyable day full of interest.

### **Sunday 11th June 2000**

#### **Outing to Carriglass Manor, Co Longford**

On Sunday 11th June about fifteen people visited Carriglass Manor.

We entered the grounds under an archway and through a magnificent courtyard with outhouses, designed by James Gandon for an earlier building. In one of these buildings is a Jane Austen museum, where we browsed for some time admiring the old costumes, dresses and beautiful lace of times past.

We then made our way towards the house, up a driveway and passing by a picturesque water-lily pond and old mill-wheel, set in pretty flower gardens, rockeries and trees. As it was a dull afternoon the house did not look its best at first sight but seemed rather gloomy and gothic. However it is really an imposing turreted and castellated neo-gothic building and quite romantic looking.

It was built by Tom Lefroy in 1837. He had been a youthful admirer of the young Jane Austen, unfortunately their love affair was not to be! Jane had no fortune and he, under pressure, contracted a loveless marriage to an heiress. Jane was heart-broken and never married, devoting herself to her writing.

The house has been owned and occupied by the direct descendants of Tom, since his death. The present owner Jeffrey Lefroy, a great-great-grandson of Tom, sent his apologies from London for his absence.

The interior of the house is elegant yet intimate, as the rooms are not too large. The three main reception-rooms interconnect and all have ceilings adorned with plaster ribs and elaborate cornices of flowers and foliage. The drawing room which was the main target of a recent burglary, has been refurnished with some fine recently-designed Irish pieces, replacing the magnificent collection of 18th century continental furniture stolen in 1995. One of the highlights is the beautiful stained glass window on the landing and overlooking the hall. Our tour did not include the upper floors, our chatty guide gave us vivid descriptions of the various ancestors whose portraits we saw. One miniature was of Tom as a smiling dashing young man, so different to the portrait of him some fifty years later, as the solemn Lord Chief Justice of Ireland!

There is of course, the inevitable ghost, a lady in white and also a dog which brushes against ones legs. Sometimes a door in one room has been locked from the outside, while someone was inside. Luckily there is another exit from that room!

We finished our tour with tea and scones in the “Tea Room” a cosy Gandon-designed mews with a barrel-vaulted ceiling. Everybody took the time to make us feel welcome despite the fact that they had foiled a burglary the night before.

A few people wished to visit Ardagh and a kind staff member in his car took the time to direct them.

This completed a most enjoyable visit

## **Saturday 22nd July 2000**

### **Outing to Some Churches of Old Rathdown**

Ireland is covered with ancient churchyards, near roofless buildings. So many ruined due to a complex history, starting with the Reformation, the country ruled by Britain at the time didn't all reform. The Church of Ireland became the established church. Most churches stayed in use until the early 17th century so there was no sudden overturn of the old order.

#### Old Connaught Church.

In 1615 there were only 14 poor labourers in the parish, and by 1630 it was in ruins. The church is north of Bray and south of Rathmichael, was a small church but still larger than most of their time. There are records from 1615 when it was in poor condition. It does not seem to have existed before 12th century when the parish system was introduced. Old Connaught village is medieval.

#### Rathmichael Church

This is the oldest church within a circular enclosure in the district. In the east of Ireland raths were built of clay with a palisade though Rathmichael has a dry stone wall which is unusual. The church is longer than Old Connaught and was built in three phases. The first building was in timber possibly in 6th century, then built in stone in 10th century. The oldest part of the church is the south wall, and the building originally had a semi-circular arch which fell in 1852. This was an important and wealthy site with Rathdown grave slabs not found anywhere else, carved with recurring themes of circular depressions, cup marks, some concentric circles, herringbone patterns and a few with crosses. Rathmichael has the largest collection of

Rathdown slabs, originally eleven and there are others at Killegar, Tully, Dalkey and Whitechurch. The slabs are attached to the church wall for preservation but would originally have been on the ground. There is the base of a round tower beside the church, the only one in the county of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and there is no record of when it fell. There was a souterrain on the site which is not visible now, the last record of it is in 19th century.

#### Tully na nEaspaig

This is an early site, possibly 6th century, St Bridget is meant to have visited here. The church was built within a rath. Some 9th century walls remain and the church was extended in 12th century at the time of the Normans and an increase in population of the area. The chancel arch is Romanesque as are both windows. Some of the finest Rathdown slabs were found here.

There are crosses on the path leading up to Tully church. The one on the path is of the same style as the high crosses but not so well carved and is made of granite. The cap is in the shape of a 10th century building with a steep roof in the head of the cross and it is said baby clothes were passed through the holes for good luck.

The cross in the field opposite the cross on the path has a figure carved on it which is hard to make out but it may be St Laurence O'Toole.

#### Kilgobbin Church

The site is old and looks as if it was built on a Norman motte, but it is on rising ground which has been quarried away which gives that impression. The church is dedicated to St Gobbin. The ruins date from 1700 and are reputed to be the first built after the Reformation, which is unlikely. It was in use until the early 19th century but the population was growing and the church was in a poor state of repair and hard to extend on account of the mound. An act of parliament was passed to amalgamate Kiltiernan and Kilgobbin and the new church was built in Kiltiernan near the boundary between the two parishes.

In 1980's repairs were done to the ruins including repointing etc. A saltire cross was found on a Rathdown slab in the rebuilding of the porch and other fragments of Rathdown slabs and a cross were found.

The last vestige of a rath ditch is visible in the graveyard to the east.

**Monday 21st—Friday 25th August 2000**  
**26th Summer School**  
**Evening Lectures in Archaeology.**

**Monday 21st August 2000**  
**Introduction to the Archaeology of Old Rathdown**  
**Chris Corlett**

When writing his book *The Antiquities of Old Rathdown*, Chris Corlett realised that there was so much on his own back door. The whole of south Dublin is changing so rapidly with so much archaeology being discovered with the development of new roads and the expansion of Dublin.

The Barony of Rathdown covers an area of south Dublin and north Wicklow and its history [begins in 4,000 BC. A small quantity of Bann flakes have been found in Dalkey Island and Louglinstown. This was an era of hunting and fishing and on Dalkey Island and on the cobble beaches of the area there were many flints.

The Neolithic age was the start of farming and great change in Ireland, land was cleared and tree and scrub-covered ground became fields. The best evidence of farmers are the dolmens and portal tombs of which there are many in Rathdown, the nearest being in Ballybrack. There is a larger one in Kilternan with a capstone of approximately 25 tonnes. Brennanstown has a large capstone, on which there is a v-shaped groove which is not a modern cut but it is not known when it was done. The stone known as the Druid's Chair near Marlay Park has been investigated and is a portal tomb. Polished stone axes have been found in Blackrock and Dún Laoghaire.

A passage tomb crowns the Two Rock Mountain, it is visible from the north, and it is thought it was designed to be seen from the plains.

Early field walls have been found on Kilmashogue and beaker pottery found in Dalkey Island.

There is a wedge tomb in Ballyedmonduff and art on this tomb is believed to be contemporary with Newgrange. This was excavated in the 1950s by Kilbride Jones. It seems to have been disturbed in antiquity and small stone coffins were built into the tomb.

Cist burials are common, usually containing cremated remains. Some inhumations have been found and some urns. There are two cairns on the northern shoulder of the Great Sugar Loaf and earth mounds are known in the area.

There are many standing stones whose precise meaning is difficult to work out. Some were intended to mark routeways, one has been found with cremated bones around it. There are two at Kilmashogue and two on Ravens Rock dating from about 700BC. Most are made of granite though there is one particularly dramatic one in quartz. Some were erected later but by and large they are reckoned to date from 1,000 BC

There does not seem to be any evidence for Celts and Iron age settlement in Rathdown. Are Celts a myth created by those seeking nationalist identifies? There is more evidence for

Romans demonstrated by a map of Ireland by Ptolemy, Roman-type burial in Lambay Island and a burial found in Bray.

The coming of Christianity is marked with a cross with what may be a bullán stone beside it found on the top of Three Rock Mountain occurring on a natural outcrop of rock. These particular rocks were thought to have been built by ancestors and were a place of pilgrimage, maybe Christianising an ancient habit. There are other crosses carved in outcrops of rock including two on Dalkey Island. A much later cross base was found at Old Court with Daniel in the lions' den carved on it, it is similar in shape to the high cross at Moone. There is a 12th century high cross at Kiigobbin with a bullán depression in it. There is an earlier cross at Tully with a shrine-like cap in the shape of a rooftop of church top. The cross in the field near Tully may have marked the edge of the ecclesiastical enclosure. The carving on this cross may represent St Laurence O'Toole as the land the cross stands on was granted to Christchurch Cathedral.

There are many early Christian churches in the Rathdown area, Dalkey Island, St Begnet's in Dalkey, Kill of the Grange, Killiney, Tully and many more.

Rathdown slabs are grave slabs with carvings and are thought to be grave slabs of Viking settlers who had become Christian. The carvings are very like the carvings on bone combs found in Dublin city excavations.

The Anglo-Normans conquered Dublin and were granted land in the Rathdown area. With the Normans came the building of castles, Shankill and Dundrum to name two. There are many other castles of a later date in this area, Bulloch built to defend the harbour, the Dalkey ones to defend the merchants and merchandise, Monkstown and then in the 17th century Rathfarnham castle.

**Tuesday 22nd August 2000**  
**Excavations at Cherrywood**  
**John Ó Néill**

With building and development in the area near the N11 and close to some significant sites such as Lehaunstown and Tully, Dúchas designated the area as an important site so that before much more development took place an excavation was necessary. The site of this excavation was bounded by the N11 on the east and Loughlinstown River on the south.

This area is covered by a series of shallow glens, running perpendicular to the river. The glens are about 15 metres high with slopes on either side. There were farms and rural settlements in these glens. Evidence of Bronze Age burials was found with a preference for cremation. Burials were used as markers for family land. It was usual to put burials at the top of hills and the people lived in the shadow of the glens underneath. The end of a bone pin was found with a burial and an amber bead from the burials on the eastern side of the site. The western side there were charred seeds, some raspberry and strawberry seeds, found. There was a ring barrow with an iron age burial within, beads were found in association with this burial which may have been from a necklace or decoration.

A bathtub-like depression with a bowl at one end turned out to be a corn-drying kiln. The kilns and the granary were not put in the enclosures because of the risk of fire to the houses.

They were put near the burial areas as they were not used for crops. Charred oats were found in the fill used to backfill some of the graves.

Beaker pottery was found in association with a fulacht fiadh. The basic engineering to make a fulacht fiadh shows sophistication. The site would have been kept clean for cooking.

This lecture was centred around the finds from the excavation and everyone was given the opportunity to have a close look at the artefacts.

Flint javelin heads were found and must have been struck from a large nodule of flint. One javelin head was found with a broken tip and some cortex at the other end. A hammer stone was found showing an area of abrasion,

There is a suggestion that the site was abandoned due maybe to a plague or some change. Evidence of structures were found on site, enough to identify a 19/4 metre long Viking longhouse, the first in found in this area, no cobbling or hearth was found here. The longhouse was destroyed and two houses built in the type 1 Dublin house style on top, with one for the animals. There were lots of post holes from refurbishment and rebuilding. A whalebone plaque was found. Carved to resemble a horse's head, women used them to smooth linen on their thighs. If you wanted to become engaged young men carved this for the girl. They are found more commonly in Scotland and are supposedly from above the Arctic circle. This may be an indication of Norse women joining their men.

A ring pin was found which is typical of Irish sites. The ring part was made of an alloy only found in Norse Dublin, A 9th or 10th century sword hilt was found.

A 6th century D-shaped belt buckle suggests that burials must have been clothed. The burials were male, female and children, one with the femur cut right through!

The charcoal from the site was identified as oat ash, elm, honeysuckle, ivy, holly, cherry, crab apple and elder.

Another kiln was found with a round paved area for a flue. Associated with this were a millstone and a square stone with a depression in it which may have been the pivot stone for the mill. It is not known where the mill was located before its reuse in the kiln but may have been down at the river.

Contact with Dublin city is shown by the 12th and 13th century pottery shards similar to those found in Dublin.

Traces of the military camp from the 18th century showed up in the form of a sentry area and military button.

**Wednesday 23rd August 2000**  
**The Excavations at Ballyman by Rathmichael Historical Society**  
**Dr E. O'Brien**

Dr O'Brien dedicated her lecture to Joan Delany for her foresight and enthusiasm in setting up the summer schools to teach so many people about archaeology and give them the

opportunity to work on excavations. Dr O'Brien also expressed her thanks to the Leeson family, Leo Swan, Dickie Pilkington, Paddy Healy and for all the volunteers too numerous to mention and last but not least the Heritage Council for their financial help to finish the analysis of artefacts and samples and to complete the report.

In 1978 the field around the church in Ballyman was ploughed for the first time in living memory. Paddy Healy walked the field and saw a spread of burnt stone and thought this might be a suitable site for an excavation. John Leeson of Ballyman House gave permission for his field to be excavated and a licence was obtained from the Office of Public Works.

The first season was from 20<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> August 1979 during a summer school run by Joan Delany and the Rathmichael Historical Society and directed by Betty O'Brien with Leo Swan keeping a watching brief. The excavation ran each August from then until 1986 with reports being submitted each season to the OPW.

Ballyman was originally Glen Munire. In 1198 it was known as Glenmunare and in 1542 Ballymannny also Glenmonder. In 1837 the name is recorded as Ballyman (Baile na Manach). Two possible interpretations of this name are "ridge" and "enclosure". Sillan is the saint associated with the area.

The site is almost on the county border between Dublin and Wicklow, on a south-facing slope, with an early medieval church on the west side of the site. Field walking in the area around the excavation site, the remains of a pit containing two inverted Bronze Age type urns were seen and recognised in a newly-cut bank bordering the driveway to a house near the northern lip of the valley. One contained the cremated remains of a young adult male, and the other an adult and child. The burials were placed in the 2nd millennium BC. Another stray find was a stone adze fashioned from a green schist water-rolled cobble, one end being ground and polished to produce a blade.

There may have been a pre-9th century church on the site, though the existing church is mainly thirteenth century in character and was probably rebuilt by the Knights Templar during their time on the site. There are Rathdown slabs associated with the church.

The excavation site was divided into 5 metre squares. The slope was made steeper by the hill wash of soil down from above. The surface layer was plough soil, then 25 cms below that fen-like peaty material, then below that a stony layer.

Drains:- There were many drains traced through the excavation area, Large cap stones were uncovered at 50 cm depth which turned out to be part of a stone-lined or coffin drain. When they were removed a dark red iron rich soil was found, which may have been crushed for iron work. A French drain yielded some 18th and 19th century pottery, another drain was a natural gully. A feature that looked like a pathway was found and a decorated shoe buckle from the late 17th century. When this layer was broken through it turned out to be another coffin drain. The pathway was made by the up-cast boulder clay from making the drain.

A corn-drying kiln was found, first showing up as a red line 25 cms from the surface and was keyhole-shaped with a bowl at one end and flat at the other. There was compacted grey clay with patches of burning inside. Eight centimetres of soft black clay with hazel twigs and grains were excavated from the kiln, the dominant species being barley. The date turned out

to be AD 425. This kiln would have had a platform of hazel twigs to dry barley which may have gone on fire and soil was shovelled over it to quench it.

Much burnt stone was found and flint, the flint was everywhere on site and dated to the bronze age, the source of the flint was from the coast, which was easy to get at by walking down the brook. Thousands of pieces were found, some nicely worked, and some chert. Amongst the flint finds were an unfinished arrowhead, a tiny boring tool and some very good blades. The stony layer contained animal bone dated 780 AD and some other dated 986 AD, the bones were of cattle, pig, sheep, goat, dog and horse.

Part of a penannular zoomorphic brooch was found with the pin-head loop still in position. This brooch has been dated to the late 6th or 7th century with millafiori setting of sunburst design, similar to finds in Sutton Hoo.

Part of a clay mould for casting with a rope ornament from the 8th century was found, the pins may have been reused in metal work. About 130 iron slag and furnace bottoms were found which showed that there was lots of smelting and smithing. A large fine-grained granite stone was uncovered, set within a semicircle of stones. The large stone was deliberately set with packing stones in the socket, its surface was worn, pockmarked and abraded, some hammer scale was retrieved suggesting that the stone may have been a smithing anvil. Small iron objects were manufactured on the site, such as spikes for heavy woodwork, iron stick pins, nails and small iron knives. A copper alloy stick pin from 13th and 14th century with dot decoration was found and also a Jaws harp. The iron working seemed to have started in the 10th or 11th century and finished in the 13th. The materials may have been limonite, an iron-bearing stone which was crushed to make iron. There as a local outcrop and some was found on site.

Ballyman is a very attractive spot located in a secluded sheltered valley with a supply of fresh water. The corn-drying kiln and the presence of barley and fresh water, suggests that brewing was taking place on the site. This area of south Dublin and north Wicklow was known for its ale. The iron ore, the anvil stone together with the maul or hammer stone, plus the finds uncovered suggest that there was a small iron working industry.

Dr O'Brien finished her lecture with some slides of the volunteers working on the site over the years which was a bit of nostalgia for those present who had taken part.

**Thursday 24th August 2000**  
**Archaeology of Dalkey and its Environs**  
**Leo Swan**

From 7,000 to 3,500 BC there is extensive evidence for human habitation in north and south Dublin Bay also well inland.

The first impact of Neolithic settlers arriving in Ireland on the natural mesoliths was to transform the Mesolithic people into Neolithic. These people were the first hunter gatherers and changed into the crop growers and animal minders.

Dalton talks of a dolmen in Dalkey in 1835 but the tomb was removed at the time of the Martello tower construction. South of Bulloch Harbour the rocking stone may have been a wedge tomb and it is said that off Castle Street there was a pillar stone. Arrow heads from the

Bronze Age and a lance head have been found on Dalkey Island also beaker pottery and burial urns and stone moulds for casting objects.

There is evidence for the Iron Age in Howth but not in Dalkey. There is a very small promontory fort on Dalkey Island in whose ditch sub-roman pottery was found (this would date from the last days of imperial Rome). Another type of sub-roman pottery was found in a levelled part of the promontory fort, this was the first site dated by the E-ware pottery. The E-ware came from south west France with Christianity. It may have been used as containers for the oil and wine for use in rituals.

Leo told us that he was in Bordeaux with nine fragments of pottery found in a field in Westmeath and was brought to a warehouse the size of an aircraft hangar that was FULL of virtually the same material, it has been found in every post-Roman context in France.

Rathdown grave slabs can be seen in the ruin of St Begnet's Church in Castle Street in Dalkey there is also a Tau-headed cross. There is also a cross inscribed in the upper part of the undercroft in Archbold's castle which is across the street from the old church.

Leo's lecture was illustrated with some of his aerial photos of Dalkey and its environs, showing so many of the features around Dalkey and on the island.

**Friday 25th August 2000**  
**Life in South Dublin Victorian Houses**  
**Peter Pearson**

This lecture started with a slide of Nelson's Pillar in Sackville Street, which showed the GPO and ships on the Liffey moored up to Carlisle Bridge.

The heyday of Dublin was in the 18th century and after the Act of Union decline set in and the gentry moved out. The building of the railways also encouraged people to move to Shankill and Foxrock.

The reign of Victoria (1837-1901) has been looked back on as a sombre period, as it included the Famine and a time of moral strictures, but it was a time of great industrial innovation and building.

A statue of Queen Victoria sat on the front lawn of Leinster House. It was later in storage in Kilmainham for many years, until it was given to Australia.

There wasn't a quick change between the Georgian and the Victoria era just a slow change in the air. Some of the changes were small like terraces being built to overlook the sea, some of the Georgian styles of house remained, but windows were of the new sheet glass and metalwork railings were added.

The middle classes were keen to get out of Dublin city because it was becoming crowded, full of industry and tanneries. If they could afford it they moved out to Rathmines, Sandymount and Clontarf. Rathmines town hall is a grandiose building and shows pride in the area as does Dún Laoghaire's town hall. Refuse collections began and the Vartry water

system carried clean water to the townships. The councillors tended to have property interests.

A style of building evolved, single-storey houses with large windows and doors, and two storeys at the rear. Terraces were built like Idrone Terrace in Blackcock in 1830 with a cement render. Sorrento Terrace was built about 1840-50, There was a building boom, a lot of people said they were poorly-built but they were elegantly finished to a high degree with coloured glass and good plaster work and have withstood the test of time. They cost about £400-£500 in 1850. Ceiling roses in plaster turned up for the first time for a central gas light. Fireplaces were attractive with an arched opening and an inset of cast iron and flowery tiles on either side. A large mantle shelf was necessary for the nick-nacks so beloved by the Victorians. They also loved coloured glass in internal fanlights. Design also changed away from the great stairs and heavy banisters, elaborate overmantles were popular and heavily-flowered and flocked wallpapers.

With the industrial revolution it was now possible to churn out decorative chimney pots, urns and tiles for the roof Beautifully-coloured heavy tiles were made for conservatories and porches.

The designer William Morris went in for naturalistic designs and he and Ruskin had a huge effect on Victorian taste.

Railway stations were new as were Turkish baths. The Turkish bath in Bray was very exotic with a Moorish look. The railway stations, like the Broadstone, Kingsbridge (Heuston) and Amiens Street (Connolly) were built as show buildings to make the railway look good.

One of the most important inventions of the time was cast iron which was used in buildings such as the Fruit Market, the National Museum, for covering railway stations and for the ornamental curvilinear glass houses in the Botanic Garden, The Great Exhibition held on the lawn of Leinster House in 1853 was all in a temporary structure of glass, ironwork and wood.

Hotels were a big new idea, there had been inns which were generally small but now with the advent of rail and people travelling more, accommodation was needed. Hotels became a style of building, the Shelbourne Hotel was a noted one, when William Thackeray stayed and thought it good. The Salthill Hotel near Kingstown was developed to cater for the people coming out on the Dublin to Kingstown Railway.

Because of the invention of photography we have good pictures of shops and shopping in Dublin and the streetscapes of the time. Brown Thomas was one of the first well-appointed department stores. It was built basically as a [shell] with columns and plasterwork. Brown Thomas sold a lot of Irish linen and employed local people to make goods to sell.

Most money for the grand houses was made in the city. Joshua Bewley of Bewley's Tea and Coffee was one of the new type of entrepreneur as was Findlater who was selling groceries and wines and spirits. Findlater's shops were known for their large public clocks on their premises.

The Guinness family paid for restoration of St Patrick's Cathedral and the distiller Henry Roe for the restoration of Christ Church Cathedral.

The grand houses usually had large kitchens in the basement and wine cellars. Later on they built on billiard rooms as fashion dictated. Those with wealth added viewing towers or gate lodges. Houses had castellation added and mock Tudor mansions were built.

Later on in the Victorian era 1860-1870 styles became more heavy and grand.

The lecture came to a close with many slides of local Victorian houses with comments and questions from the audience.

### **Sunday 10th September 2000**

#### **Outing to St Werburgh's Church and Chester Beatty Library.**

St Werburgh's Church stands in Werburgh Street, a few yards from Christ Church Cathedral, and within the walls of the old city. In early times the church bore the name of St Martin of Tours. This church stood nearer the south end of the street, close to the Pole gate leading from St Werburgh Street to Bride Street. In 1219, when the parish was assigned to support the Chancellor of St. Patrick's Cathedral, it was officially called by the old name, though the first English church of St Werburgh had been erected for some forty years. Henry II, in his charter of 1172, assigned Dublin to the colonists from Bristol and seven years later they built the first church, dedicated to St. Werburgh. Werburgh was an Abbess of Ely and daughter of Wulfhere, King of Mercia. When the church was erected the colonists from Cheshire and Bristol soon regarded it as a mother church. An old document, dated 1671, mentions that when a Cheshire bootmaker in Fishamble Street, Sir John Totty, became Lord Mayor, a large gathering of Cheshire men congregated in St Werburgh's church. Very little is known about the first church and it is said that it was destroyed by fire on St. Column's Eve in 1301. When rebuilt, the church had three chapels, dedicated to St Martin, Our Lady and St Catherine. Repairs were carried out to the building in 1621 and the following year the church was enlarged at a cost of £220, by widening and lengthening the south aisle.

Even after the enlargements, the church was smaller than the present building. The old church had a chancel, a square tower with a gilt weathercock, galleries, the royal arms and commandment boards in the chancel. The font was purchased in 1661 from Ambrose Searle. A bell was purchased from Messrs. William Perdue and Tobias Covey in 1670, at a cost of £87, and in 1671 a pulpit was purchased from John Haslehurst the cushion of which cost £9 at the firm of Alderman Reader and Alderman Quelch. An organ was purchased from John Hawkshaw, organist of Christ Church Cathedral at a cost of £50. It is interesting to note that vestry meetings at this period were held in local taverns and names mentioned include "Ye Castle Tavern", "Ye London Tavern". At the beginning of the 18th century the church was in poor repair and too small the city was growing and new government buildings and custom house were being built in Essex Street. About one third of the parish was occupied by the state and was free from rates, it seemed reasonable to apply to King George I for a grant to erect a new church. In 1711 the council chamber and other offices were destroyed by fire and the king handed over the site of these offices to vestry, which then sold the site for £2000. By 1719, the new church was sufficiently built to permit services to be held but the tower and spire were left unfinished. The architect of the new church was Captain Thomas Burgh, MP for Naas, Surveyor-General for Public buildings. Craftsmen employed included Francis Quin, mason William Wall, plasterer, and the altar, pews, galleries and pulpit were made by William Ord from Danzig oak.

The total cost of building and furnishing the church was in excess of £8000. In 1728, James Southwell left the parish a bequest for a clock and six bells on condition that the tower was completed three years after his death. The tower was completed but the bequest was only paid following a lawsuit in 1748.

On November 9th 1754 a fire broke out in the church, badly damaging the roof, tower, pews, galleries and organ. King George II was petitioned for funds, as the church was used as the chapel royal for the castle. The king granted £2,000 towards the costs. The new furnishings were made by Andrew Goodwin and the stucco work in the chancel was executed by Michael Maguire. The tower and spire were restored in 1768 and the royal arms were carved on the west gallery, under the vice-regal pew in 1767. The present organ was purchased in from Henry Miller of College Green at a cost of £400. The tower and spire were considered unstable in 1810 and the spire was removed. In 1836 the tower was dismantled and the bells removed then in 1855 five of the six bells were sold to Mr Hodges in Abbey Street, one to St Mary's Church, one to St Mary's chapel of ease, one to Clonsilla parish and one to Castleknock parish.

The present interior dates from this restoration, the original galleries are still in place and the pews are original though remodelled, the original doors were removed in 1877. The pulpit was carved by Richard Stewart and designed by Francis Johnston for the Chapel Royal in the castle, but Lord Carlisle had it removed and replaced by a Portland stone. The old pulpit was then moved to St Andrew's Church in 1862, then to St John's Church, Fishamble Street, and when that church closed in 1878 it was moved to St Werburgh's, it is a very fine pulpit but rumours of it being carved by Grinling Gibbons are untrue. The font may not originate from 1661 but one acquired in 1815 of Kilkenny marble.

Those baptised in the church include Jonathan Swift, Nahum Tate of psalms fame and John Field the composer.

In the church vaults Lord Edward Fitzgerald is buried. In the porch there are two old city fire fighting appliances dating from 1706. In 1673 the churchwardens were sued in the King's Bench for not having buckets to quench fire and three years later an Order in Council prescribed for each Dublin church 36 buckets, two ladders and three hooks. St Werburgh's Church is part of the Christ Church Cathedral group of parishes and is loving cared for by a small but loyal congregation.

### **Chester Beatty Library.**

The library has recently moved from Shrewsbury Road to Dublin Castle where new purpose-built exhibition galleries have been linked by a glass-roofed entrance hall to an existing 18th century building. The first floor gallery has a display dedicated to the life of Chester Beatty and his collection. There is an audio-visual presentation on the life of Sir Alfred Chester Beatty telling of his life as a mining engineer in Colorado and his mining consultancy in New York and later in London. He collected minerals, Chinese snuff bottles and stamps since he was a child and as an adult, he began to collect more widely, buying European and Persian manuscripts. In 1914 he and his wife visited Egypt and bought some decorated copies of the Qur'an in the bazaars. In 1917 he travelled to Asia and added Japanese and Chinese painting to his interests. He moved to Ireland and built a library for his art collection on Shrewsbury Road and in 1957 he was made an honorary citizen of Ireland. Upon his death the collection was bequeathed to a trust for the benefit of the public.

The library contains exhibits range from great illuminated copies of the Qur'an dating from the 9th to the 19th century, ancient papyri, including the famous Egyptian love poems of around 1100 BC; and some of the very earliest gospel and other New Testament texts, dating to c.200 AD. Also on display are fine scrolls and other religious artworks from China, Japan, Tibet and south and southeast Asia.

The galleries over two floors are fascinating and take some time to absorb all the wonderful artefacts.

There is a lecture theatre, a restaurant, shop and a roof garden also in the building.

### **Wednesday 4th October 2000**

#### **The Gardens of St Stephen's Green and Iveagh House**

**Margaret Gormley**

Ms Gormley explained that she is the superintendent of St Stephen's Green and an employee of Dúchas who also has the "perk" of living in the beautiful lodge in the park.

St. Stephen's Green is an enclosed park covering 22 acres with tree-lined walks, areas of grass and lakes. There are beds full of beautiful planting and attractive recreational buildings and fountains. It is a favourite haunt of Dubliners, to take the sun and eat lunch in the summer.

The history of the green goes back to the time when it was one of the ancient commons just outside the city. It was named after a church of Saint Stephen which was the chapel of a leper hospital, and can be traced back to medieval times. It was then an unenclosed and marshy common used by the citizens of Dublin to graze their livestock. It was first enclosed in 1663/4 when the Corporation of Dublin marked out 27 acres. The remainder was marked out in building plots and the people who bought these around the green were obliged to build a four and a half foot high wall on the green side of their property, though this turned out to be a bit of a mish-mash of styles and quality, and to plant six sycamore trees. The interior of the park was then levelled and a gravel walk 35 feet wide lined with elms and limes, within which was a drainage ditch with another walk bordered by hawthorn hedges. The green remained like this for about 150 years. During the 18th century this was a fashionable place to walk, particularly the gravelled walk along the north side known as Beaux's Walk, The French Walk was near the Huguenot cemetery The main entrance was opposite Cuffe Street and the interior was used for grazing cattle and horses, a parade-ground for the local military and occasionally as a place of assembly. In 1758 an equestrian statue of King George II, cast by Van Nost was erected in the centre and remained until 1937 when it was blown up. The drainage of the centre proved to be inadequate, so the green was swampy in winter and attractive to snipe and corncrake. By the beginning of the 19th century the condition of the green had deteriorated. The perimeter wall was broken, many of the trees were old and decaying, and the drainage ditch was full of stagnant water and rubbish. By act of parliament in 1814 the maintenance of Saint Stephen's Green was handed over to Commissioners representing the local householders. They put in new drains, filled the ditch, felled decaying trees and laid out new walks in the interior in place of the perimeter walks. They also removed the wall and replaced it with cast-iron railings. A broad walk outside the railings was separated from the road by granite bollards linked by chains. The bollards and railings

remain to-day. The entrance at this time was opposite York Street and it became a private park accessible only to those who had keys. This was widely resented. Sir Arthur Guinness, later Lord Ardilaun, took an interest and offered to convert the green to a public park at his own expense.

In 1877 an act of parliament was passed entrusting the maintenance of the green to the Commissioners of Public Works. The major features of the green as it is now were created then including the artificial lake and waterfall, with rockwork by Puttiam and Sons, the bridge, the formal flower beds and fountains, and the superintendent's lodge was designed by J F Fuller. On 27th July 1880 it was opened to the public The Wellington Testimonial was at one time to be built in the green.

On Easter Monday 1916, the green was occupied by soldiers of the Irish Citizen Army and Irish Volunteers led by Michael Mallin and Countess Markiewicz. Later in the week they withdrew to the College of Surgeons, but fighting continued around the green throughout the week. The Park Superintendent, in his official report described the dramatic events was also mindful of his normal duties. Having mentioned deaths and injuries from military action on both sides, he added "I am sorry to say 6 of our waterfowl were killed or shot, 7 of the garden seats broken and about 300 shrubs destroyed". He was duly complimented by his superiors for having "fed the birds in the green daily under considerable risk of being shot". The landscape of the green to-day is mostly the result of work commissioned by Lord Ardilaun in the nineteenth century.

At the centre is a formal area with a symmetrical pattern of paths and lawns, providing the setting for fountains and many formal flower beds. The most impressive part of the park landscape is the ornamental lake with its associated cliffs, waterfall, island and other features. With the passage of time and the growth of trees around them these featured have matured and mellowed and there is little to indicate now that they are entirely man-made. The two lakes are linked by a narrow channel over which is an arched stone bridge. The water supply for the lake is brought in a special pipe from the Grand Canal at Portobello Harbour to the top of the rock-cliff, down which it cascades into the western end of the lake, it is then piped back to the Grand Canal near Mount Street Bridge. Silt from the canal settles in the lakes so it is drained and cleaned out every two years. The silt was originally spread on the land. The lakes provide a home for a variety of waterfowl, including ducks, geese and moorhens.

#### Iveagh Gardens.

The land was bought from Lord Clonmel. Clonmel Street was to be built through the gardens. There has been extensive restoration, a maze, sundial and fountain. The paths in Iveagh gardens were wide to allow two ladies in hooped skirts to pass. The garden was an exhibition area and the statues and fountains were removed after the exhibition It has recently had extensive restoration and is now a very popular place to walk and take the sun.

### **Wednesday 1st November 2000 Your History Is All Around You by James Scannell**

The focus of this lecture was that our local history is all around us in our buildings, roads and infrastructure from which we can learn about our local history and the development of Shankill in recent times. This talk took the form of walk from the Silver Tassie to St

Columcille's Hospital and from there to St Anne's Church and down along the Corbawn Lank wending where the lane meets the sea from where the body of Mrs. Ball was thrown into the sea in February 1936. The talk began with a look at the massive railway viaduct spanning Cherrywood Road and James revealed a unique feature that is still visible - the demolition holes bored in the bridge during the Emergency by the army to destroy it, should an invasion have occurred. The history of St Columcille's Hospital was covered from its opening in 1841 as Rathdown Union Workhouse, the arrival of the Poor Servants of the Mother of God to administer it in 1899, its renaming in 1921/22 and reconstruction and development in the late 1940s and reopening as a general hospital in 1952 and its development to the present time. James then covered the history of the railway of the area, which began with the opening of Shankill railway station which is now Shankill Office Park in 1854 and the course of the railway through the district until 1958 when the Bray to Harcourt Street route was closed. James reminded the audience that the current DART station did not open until 1977 and is located on what is known as the Bray-Pearse route. James concluded his talk looking at the role of the Rathdown No 1 Rural District Council which administered Shankill from 1899 to 1925, finishing with mention of the two murders associated with Shankill, the disposal of Mrs Ball's body from the end of Corbawn Lane in 1936 and that of Hazel Mullen of Crinken, in Dublin in the 1960s. James's final point was that it is important that we preserve as much of our past for the benefit of future generations.

**Wednesday 6th December 2000**

**Pompeii Revisited**

**Tom Moran**

Tom showed us many slides he took on a return visit to Pompeii and Herculaneum, his last visit was forty five years ago with the army.

Pompeii in the Bay of Naples was a favourite resort of the wealthy Romans. It was built on a prehistoric lava flow and had suffered an earthquake in AD 63 which caused a lot of damage. The city was partially restored before the disaster of 24th August AD 79. When Vesuvius erupted and a pyroclastic flow, covered the area, drowning it in a burning ash. All timber was burnt and only stones left.

The Pompeian streets are all heavily paved with lava slabs, some of them deeply scored by the wheels of carts. The streets were narrow and very deep to allow the water to drain away, there were stepping stones to enable the citizens to cross the street dry-shod. The roads are mostly laid out in a grid system akin to modern American cities.

Some buildings were two storeys high and plastered, rendered or faced with marble.

Pompeii was a port city, trading with the Greeks and Egyptians. The volcanic soil was very good for growing crops.

There were public baths beautifully finished with decorated walls and mosaic floors. Some houses had a system for collecting water on the roofs for household use. There were gardens with stone ornaments.

Herculaneum is still not fully excavated, though it has some two-storey buildings remaining. It was a very wealthy area and the remains give a great insight into Roman life of the time.



### **Paddy Healy 1916 - 2000**

In December of this year Paddy Healy died after a long life dedicated to Ireland's past. He was an archaeologist, local historian, photographer, artist, gardener and draughtsman who gave years of devoted service to this society.

He worked on many high profile and historic excavations including the controversial Wood Quay site. He came each year to work on the society's summer school excavations and quietly taught so many of us the techniques of excavation and recording. His hard work, sense of humour and fund of knowledge made him a wonderful companion on any excavation.

A festschrift in his honour was published by this society in association with Wordwell, when 29 colleagues and friends contributed to *Dublin and Beyond the Pale*, edited by Con Manning.

Paddy was laid to rest on December 11th 2000 in the cemetery at Mount Venus in the Dublin Mountains, close to historical and archaeological sites that he had investigated and overlooking the city which he had loved so much.