

## Proceedings, 1968

The weather throughout the year was exceptionally fine and this was reflected in the large attendances at all the functions held by the Society. There was a satisfactory increase in membership, though not enough to enable the Society to continue without raising the annual subscription (see below).

The year's activities began on February the 22nd, with the Annual General Meeting. Almost a hundred attended, well illustrating the fact that the Society is very much alive and healthy. At the close of the meeting, Dr. Robert Cussen gave a short address on "The FitzGibbon Family in Co. Limerick".

As the time had been too short after the Annual General Meeting to adequately deal with the FitzGibbon family, Dr. Cussen delivered a second talk on March the 21st. This time his subject was "John FitzGibbon, Lord Clare", a man about whom feeling in Ireland still runs high.

On April the 5th, Ciarán MacMathúna, of Radio Éireann, lectured to the Society on "The Traditional Music of County Clare". Illustrations from gramophone records, many of them not commercially produced but from the Radio Éireann archives, provided a spectacular addition to a most exciting lecture.

The first outing of the Society was held on Sunday, the 5th of May, when Mr. Alma Fitt conducted members on a tour of Limerick City, ranging from the sites of early monasteries to the beautiful Georgian houses of The Crescent and Pery Square.

On Thursday, June the 13th, there was an evening outing to visit Rockbarton House, Co. Limerick, now in ruins. Madame O'Grady traced for us its rise and fall. From Rockbarton the members travelled to Hospital, where a visit was paid to the ruins of the 'Hospital Church' of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem. Father Noonan there spoke to the members on the Knights Hospitallers and on the foundation (before 1215) of the 'Church' by Geoffrey de Marisco, whose effigial tomb is still to be seen there. By the kind invitation of Colonel and Mrs. Rhea, the Society visited Kenmare House, nearby. From this townland the Brownes acquired their title, Earls of Kenmare.

The major outing of the Society was held on Sunday, the 23rd of June, and consisted of a visit to Newgrange, Co. Meath, probably the finest and best-known megalithic tomb in the world. The party travelled by train to Dublin and from there by bus to Newgrange. Professor M. J. O'Kelly, of University College, Cork, who was excavating at the site, guided the members around and into the tomb, and afterwards generously provided refreshments.

Professor O'Kelly was again the speaker when the Society paid another visit to Lough Gur, on Sunday, October the 20th. Unlike the previous visit of the Society (1967), the weather conditions were ideal, and the outing was easily the best-attended of the year.



The winter season of lectures commenced on October the 18th, when Mr. Eoin O'Mahoney gave one of his racy discourses, on " The Principal Families of Thomond", to a packed house.

On Friday, the 29th of November, an enthralling lecture was given to the Society by Mr. Breandán Ó Ríordáin, of the National Museum, whose subject was the important " Excavations at High Street, Dublin ".

The last activity of the Society during the year was the Annual General Meeting of the following year, held on December the 12th. Normally the Society's Annual General Meetings are held at the beginning of each year, but in this case it was brought forward as the proposal to raise the annual subscription had to be discussed and decided upon before the 1st of January — see last year's *Journal* (page 2) for the amounts agreed upon. It was, furthermore, decided to hold all future Annual General Meetings at the year's end rather than at its beginning. Following on the meeting, a talk on " Waterway Travellers in Ireland, 1785-1850 " was given by Mr. N. W. English, Honorary Secretary of The Old Athlone Society.

T. PIERCE (*Hon. Secretary*)