Reviews


The first guide to our National Monuments produced some years ago by Bord Fáilte Éireann has been out of print for some time. Its successor, this fine book by Dr. Peter Harbison, Archaeology Officer in Bord Fáilte, and a member of our Society, is a vast improvement on the earlier work and contains many changes, both in format and content. This *Guide* provides details of access to sites, clear photographs and line-drawings, and lists the sites by county, not, as in the earlier publication, by its National Monument number, thus making for greater ease of use.

The *Guide* opens with some notes on how best to use the book. The Introduction, which follows, is intended to give a general background to the various types of field monuments found in Ireland. The major portion of the book, however, consists of a description of the various monuments, with some historical notes and references for further information. These consist of all the National Monuments in State Care and also a selection of about a hundred other important monuments which are not in State Care—monuments in the six counties of Northern Ireland are excluded. A useful Glossary, a Bibliography (where the *County Louth Archaeological Journal* is listed twice, once inaccurately, and where the predecessor of our own journal is incorrectly listed as that of the North Munster Antiquarian Society), a list of museums, an index, and a series of maps (covering all but the extreme north-east of the country), complete the work.

As a guide-book this publication is extremely flexible. Sites can be located by reference to the index, to the relevant map, or to the relevant county where they are listed alphabetically. The latter two methods are very useful to the traveller who finds himself at some site of interest the name of which is unknown to him. Details of access to the sites, while useful, sometimes leave much to be desired, especially in the cases of those sites which are not singposted. Some sites are not visible from the roadway, e.g. Oughtmama and Moghan, both in Co. Clare. Indeed, finding the lane to go “up” in order to reach the standing-stones of Timoney Hills, Co. Tipperary, may well pose quite a problem to the non-local user of this book. Distances from particular towns might advantageously have been given, as well as some indication as to which side of the roadway, north or south, east or west, the site in question is to be found.

There are eighty-four archaeological diagrams and photographs in this *Guide*. Of the eighteen used with the Introduction, eleven are repeated at their particular entry in the annotated list; those in the Introduction are the smaller and of the less value. These repeated illustrations, together with the twenty-six “delightfully witty sketches” by George Campbell, only serve to increase the cost of the publication and to use up space which might have been put to better use in illustrating other monuments such as ringforts or Romanesque architecture.

The background information contained in the Introduction can be sometimes misleading in what is stated and, in places, perhaps more so in what is omitted. For instance, we learn that the large capstones of the Portal Dolmens were “placed in position by being hauled up the side of an earthen mound which was built around the standing stones.” Such a method is more fanciful than practical, and the capstones are much more likely to have been raised by leverage, little by little on a platform built up alongside the already standing stones. We learn, furthermore, that these “Dolmens are largely found along the east coast.” The main focus of the Portal Dolmen distribution, however, lies within the Court Grave province of mid-Ulster (outside the scope of this book?) and extends southwards along the western as well as the eastern coast. The ground-plan given for a Portal Dolmen is that of one of the Carrowmore, Co. Sligo, tombs (Wood-Martin’s no. 37 or 52?) which is similar to tomb no. 53 from which a sherd of Carrowkeel Ware came. This potsherd, together with other finds from the Carrowmore cemetery, indicate that these tombs belong to the Passage Grave series and are not dolmens—a plan of the tomb at Brenanstown, Co. Dublin, or of that at Poulnabrone, Co. Clare, would have been much more suitable.

The arrival of the Celts (page 6) seems to cause some confusion for the author. On philological grounds, mainly, some scholars tend to equate the arrival of the Celts with the arrival of the Beaker Folk around 2,000 B.C. but, archaeologically speaking, the belief that the arrival of the La Tène culture and the use of iron indicate the arrival of the Celts is more acceptable. On present dating, this would appear to have occurred in the late 3rd or 2nd centuries B.C. in the West, and some one or two hundred years later in the North-East.

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The gazetteer is not without minor faults either, though in any work such as this such faults are almost unavoidable. Some of those which might be mentioned here include the extraordinary omission of the very well known and touristically attractive Tau-Cross at Killinaboy, Co. Clare, even though the rather uninteresting base of the round tower and the medieval church there are mentioned—is the author thus 'condoning' its recent removal? Also in Co. Clare, one might here mention that the slab placed outside the doorway at Dysert O'Dea is Medieval and not 'an Early Christian grave slab, that there are two stone tomb-reliquaries, not just one, at Temple Cronan, near Carran, and that to state that 'The Catholic Bishop of Killenora is—the Pope!' is not strictly accurate. It is also worth while recording here that the famous Ardagh, Co. Limerick, find consisted of two chalices and four brooches, not just one of each. One could mention other minor errors of fact to be found in this part of the Guide, but that would only serve to give the wrong impression. Despite all such faults, this new publication is of real value to student, tourist and amateur antiquarian alike, and Dr. Harbison is to be congratulated on its production. It is to be hoped that many more editions of it (revised as time goes on) will appear.

MARTIN A. TIMONEY


The Aran Islands are 'part of County Galway for administrative purposes, but geographically and geologically (archaeologically and botanically might have been added too) they are closer to County Clare,' as Gordon Clark states in his introduction to this guidebook. Aran might be said to hang somewhere between North Munster and Connacht. Indeed, not so long ago the shortest run to Aran was by way of a regular boat service from Ballyvaughan, a service which it is hoped will resume soon. Moreover, Westropp (footnotes on page 90) tells us that as recently as the time of Elizabeth the natives of Aran were entirely of Clare origin.

The main portion of this publication consists of a reprint of thirty-six out of thirty-eight pages dealing with Aran which T. J. Westropp, that noted Clare antiquarian of the late 18th and early 19th century, first published in 1895 (this reprinted section is taken from a 1906 reprinting of that account). Westropp's valuable text has not been altered in any way, though the photographs which accompanied it have all been replaced with similar but more up-to-date ones—due to an oversight, however, the caption to one of them, that on page 73, no longer fits the illustration. Westropp's text seems to have been reprinted quite independently of the rest of the booklet with the result that the two parts combine exceedingly awkwardly together. Due, apparently, to the fact that the book is stapled together, not bound, the reprinted portion (with its different pagination) has been lumped right into the middle of the more recent printing, thus interrupting the whole flow of the work. This, furthermore, probably accounts for the omission of two important illustrations which Westropp included (both mentioned in Westropp's account and one mentioned in Ó Riordáin's and Hartnett's notes). Other peculiar anomalies result from this rather eccentric arrangement, including the fact that the footnotes to Ó Riordáin's and Hartnett's work which begins on page v are to be found on pages xi and xii, over forty pages distant—the thirty-six intervening pages of Westropp's work are, moreover, independently footnoted.

More careful editing ought to have avoided most of the oddities noted above (and ought also to have provided a publication date on the title page), but despite them this little handbook is useful. It not only makes Westropp's important account of the monuments on the islands readily accessible to everyone but it also provides additional comments on them, some fine illustrations of the non-archaeological sides of Aran life, and also a short article on Galway by the late Walter Macken followed by a brief guide to the principal sites of interest in that City by Breandán Ó Riordáin. For generations visitors have craved for a reliable, handy-sized, cheap and easily available guide to the Aran Islands, and it is little short of amazing that one has had to wait for so long to find one to hand. This handbook is not the perfect answer to the visitor's dreams, but "'twill do to be going on with," as one might say of any temporary remedy.

ETIENNE RYNNE

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We tend to think of the Celts today as a people speaking different Celtic languages, and living in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Man and Brittany. We forget all too often that these areas were among the westernmost limits of their expansion, and that although their ultimate origins may have lain very much farther to the east, they first came into our historical ken in a large area in Central Europe stretching from Bohemia to the Marne. It was from there that they came to our shores, that they reached Spain, invaded Rome and Delphi and even set up their own Galatian kingdom in Turkey. For the Greeks, Etruscans and Romans, the Celts were among the most powerful of their northern neighbours, and from our schooldays, we all know of Caesar's successful attempt at conquering the Celtic Gaels. They were a people whose art was far greater and more imaginative than that of their Roman conquerors, and it is their art above all which raises them above the common level of Iron Age barbarity. But there are other features which set them apart from their prehistoric forbears; it is their ideals, their religion and appearance, their laws and their particular way of life which make them stand apart as one of the most interesting peoples of prehistoric Europe. Their tradition still clings on in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Brittany, and we should be proud that our own country has preserved so much of the traditions of the Celts in our early written literature. This literature provides a considerable part of the basic material of Ann Ross's book under review here. She uses the great saga the Táin Bó Cuáilnge to illustrate a number of characteristics of the Celtic way of life. Having carefully sifted the ancient sources both Celtic and classical, and trying to eliminate much of the later accretions in the Celtic tradition, she starts by giving us a brief history of the Celtic peoples, and then goes on to describe their social structure, their appearance, their art of warfare, their dwellings, their entertainment and their laws, learning and literature. She is at her best when reveling in her own speciality, the religion of the pagan Celts, and she concludes with a summary of Celtic art.

This book belongs to a popular series describing the everyday life of early peoples. Its aim is to reach the popular reader and to tell him in plain and simple language of the manners and customs of the Celts, and in this the book is eminently successful. It avoids the complicated trappings of technical archaeological or philological jargon, and tells its tale in a pleasant and very readable style. This is not to say that the book is in any way unscientific. The author is very well acquainted with her sources, and is cautious to use none but the most reliable evidence. It is useful for both the historian and the archaeologist; for the historian because it sums up the main historical evidence we have about the Celts, and for the archaeologist because it acts as a very useful náda-méane. With the exception of the chapters on religion and art, the evidence is briefly dealt with, and one senses a sigh of regret in the epilogue that the limits imposed on the author by the publisher do not permit her to expand in greater detail on themes which are obviously very close to her heart.

The approach is essentially that of the historian and the person interested in Celtic literature and religion. The excavational endeavours of archaeologists in the last 100 years are perhaps not given sufficient rein, but this is at least partially made good by some of the beautifully stippled drawings of Celtic objects by the author's archaeologist husband, R. W. Peacham.

Dr. Ross tells us a lot about ancient Ireland in her book, though I would not necessarily agree with everything she says—particularly on the question of the Celtic invasion of the country—but this is, as she admits herself, a very contentious subject, and there are probably more views on it than there are archaeologists and historians interested in it. What evidence have we that the 'south-west Scottish colonisers of Ulster' spoke Brittonic (p. 27)? Are the Connacht Celts the result of a direct La Tène 'invasion' from the Continent (pp. 27-28)? My own work on La Tène chevreaux-de-frise found in Mayo, Galway and Clare, probably deriving directly from Scotland and datable to the last few centuries B.C., could lead to an alternative explanation of the La Tène culture in Connacht. Could it be that the West of Ireland was populated by people of Continental Hallstatt origin who came to Ireland by way of Scotland and who may have been partially already 'Latinized' by the time they reached the west of Ireland? There they could conceivably be identified with the semi-mythical Fir Bolg who are also said by an 11th century source to have come from Scotland and who occupied precisely the area covered by stone chevreaux-de-frise? If that were the case, these people could be seen to be the ancestors of the Úi Néill who are now thought by some to have moved from the West of Ireland eastwards and northwards, there at a later stage to defeat the Ulaid and finally to build a stronghold like the Gráimn of Aileach which is rather reminiscent of their own great fortresses on the Aran Islands. But this is little more than speculation.
There are one or two other points which might bear mentioning. One could get the impression from page 20 that four-wheeled chariot-burials were the norm in the Hallstatt period, and from page 24 that the two-wheeled chariot-burial was the norm in the ensuing La Tène period. This is not the case; they form only a very small portion of the total number of graves from these periods. A stèle from Padua shows the reconstruction of the two-wheeled chariot in Fig. 4 to be incorrect. On page 67 there is a quotation from Diodorus Siculus who says, in Tierney’s translation, that ‘some have breast-plates of chain-mail.’ A breastplate of chain-mail seems to be a contradiction in terms, and I doubt if many before the Normans had chain-mail anyway. The Broughton boat, recently said to have been modelled on a curragh, might have been mentioned on p. 82. The discussion on Vieh-gehöfte and their existence in England (pp. 137f.) should cause us to take a look at a number of square enclosures in Ireland to see if some of them might be representatives of this class of monument, and not mediaeval moated house-sites. The suggestion that the ‘Banqueting Hall’ at Tara could be a ritual enclosure like that at Libenice (p. 139) is interesting and might bear further investigation. Ever since I first opened Jacobsthal’s Early Celtic Art I have always thought that the animal head and neck illustrated here as Fig. 57, 2 is one of the most exquisitely stylised animal representations I know, but it should be said that there was a doubt in Jacobsthal’s mind that it was, in fact, Celtic—though it is difficult to know what else it could be. The horse in Fig. 67, 4 comes from Freien but Freien is it is unfortunate that a number of items are not illustrated in the chapter on art, and particularly so in the case of the unpublished head said to be from Co. Tipperary (pp. 186-188), as doubts have been expressed about its Irish origin.

These comments are not meant to detract in any way from the value of this book which must help both expert and layman to have a better and deeper understanding of the Celtic psyche. Its subject is lively, and is likely to remain interesting in the years to come. As an instance of this interest, it is worthy of note that even in the small period that has elapsed since the appearance of the book, a number of articles appeared dealing with subjects discussed in the book, e.g. Pigott on firedogs (Hawkes Festschrift), Sterckx on Celtic board-games (Annales de Bretagne, 1970) and Deyts on the wooden figures from the Seine (Scientific American, July 1971).

PETER HARBISON


This is a reprint by the Irish University Press of a book which first appeared in 1910, which was itself an enlargement of a series of articles which Champneys had written some years previously for the Architectural Review. At the time, the book was hailed as a new departure in the study of the subject. Champneys’ approach, unlike that of Petrie and others who had preceded him, is one of critical analysis allied to a comparative treatment which was based on his knowledge of the English and European background. Since then, although a great deal has been written on Irish ecclesiastical buildings, only one work—the three volumes of Leask’s Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings—can compare with Champneys’ book. Their respective merits, and that of Petrie’s Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland, are treated of in a fine, but all too short, introduction especially written for this reprint by Liam de Paor. One would have welcomed a longer offering from a scholar who ranks among the few present-day authorities on this subject.

Champneys divides his book into thirteen chapters. The first deals with primitive architecture in Ireland and emphasises the conservatism of Irish architecture in general. In the following chapters he treats of the earliest Christian churches and buildings, including Round Towers—his comments on the latter are little more than a restatement of Petrie’s thesis, with some observations on the late examples. Chapter V, on Early Irish Ornament and High Crosses, where he stresses the ornamental aspects of his subject, would hardly merit such attention in a similar work to-day, yet it should be borne in mind that Irish masons were sometimes diverted from purely architectural features by their fondness for ornament and their ability to transfer to stone, patterns and motifs designed for other media such as wood or metal. Champneys was probably aware of this but failed to realize its full significance, particularly in regard to the development of Irish Romanesque. He does, however, stress the general 12th century and Norman character of this style in Chapter VII, a view which was contrary to accepted opinion at the time but has since been fully vindicated by Liam de Paor in an article dealing with Cormac’s Chapel published in North Munster Studies.

From his discussion on Irish Romanesque, Champneys goes on to treat of Transitional Architec-
ture and of the increase of foreign influence in Ireland. He notes the advent of English churches such as Christ Church, and the obvious employment of English craftsmen and English (Somersetshire) stone. This phenomenon, consequent on the consolidation of the Anglo-Norman conquest, is reflected in the mainly eastern distribution of such buildings. It is in these pages that Champneys' knowledge of contemporary English architecture is seen to best advantage. In subsequent chapters he traces the development of a composite native style which, he argues, was based on the adoption and blending of elements taken from English Gothic, both 'Decorated' and Perpendicular work. This phase, which gave rise to a series of restorations and new buildings in the 15th century, is best witnessed in the friary architecture of the period, and was in some measure a product of the relatively settled conditions prevailing throughout that century. The patronage and rivalry of the Irish and Anglo-Norman lordships favoured such a renaissance.

In his concluding chapters Champneys treats of Late Irish Gothic and some of the more perishable ornaments of Irish churches, such as tiles and frescoes. The all too ready assumption that ecclesiastical building came to an abrupt end with the Dissolution is avoided, though his notes on this particular aspect could have benefited from more extensive fieldwork in the west of Ireland.

The book has a valuable supplement in the form of a considerable number of appendices dealing with such matters as the dating of foundations, etc. There is a fine bibliography and index, but a total absence of plans and maps only partially compensated for by the very numerous photographs. Many of these lacked definition in the original and all have suffered somewhat from the method of reprinting. The price £12.60 is rather high, even by current standards, and must surely daunt many a bona fide student and scholar. Apart from this criticism, and some displeasure at the rather unappealing cover design, the Irish University Press are to be congratulated on the quality and high standard of this reprint, worthy of a work which is still the most comprehensive study of its subject.

THOMAS FANNING


These three volumes are similarly produced in format and arrangement, but each can stand on its own, quite independently. Together they provide what is undoubtedly the handsomest reliable history of Ireland available. Although the text is presented in a simple, straightforward manner aimed at junior school children, it is just the sort of ready-to-hand account which the non-academic, hardly-even-interested reader will find useful. With these three volumes on one's shelves no-one need ever be at a loss to check on the main outlines of Irish history from the earliest times to the present day, nor, indeed, to discover a lot of interesting and unsuspected detail too—how many of us, for instance, realise that the total put to death after Robert Emmet's abortive rising in 1803 was twenty-two? Almost every aspect of the social, political and military history of the country is covered and is often illumined by such items of interest.

Each of these three books is copiously and attractively illustrated with photographs and maps which not only complement but also supplement the text. A minor regret concerning these is, however, that we are nowhere informed as to the sources of the individual illustrations, many of which will be new to even the most professional reader. Reproduction is excellent, though one might quibble about the excessively tight cutting of some of them, e.g. those on pages 74, 81, 82, 87 (the worst example) and 106 of volume I. This fault seems to have been noted by the publishers and corrected for the succeeding volumes, only one illustration in each so suffering. The first volume is the only one which has illustrations inadvertently placed upside-down, i.e. on pages 8, 35, 36 and 37. One might also point to the quite unnecessary duplication in volume I of photographs on pages 14 and 15 and, to some extent, also on pages 105 and 131. The carved head shown on page 69 is not from a Viking ship but from the cart shown on page 68; this cart was one of the many fine objects found on the Viking ship excavated at Oseberg, in Norway, which is itself illustrated on page 63—where it is wrongly stated to be the ship from Gokstad (illustrated on page 65).

But these are only minor faults, mentioned here in the hope that they may be rectified in all future editions. There are other minor causes for annoyance upon which one might comment
(e.g. why "Charles the Great" instead of the more acceptable "Charlemagne", on page 47, volume I? Why the almost continuous reference to P.H. Pearse in volume III? — he may have signed his name in this manner but it is surely doubtful, to say the least, if he was ever so called . . . why not T. J. Clarke, J. M. Plunkett, or T. W. Tone?), but to continue on would be to take unduly from a really commendable and first-class production.

With these three volumes Irish history text-books for junior schools can be said to have reached a new high, to have, in fact, moved into the second half of the twentieth century and also to compare favourably with similar school-books being produced anywhere else in the world. Although no longer a schoolchild, this reviewer will welcome these books to his shelves, not only for the illustrations but also for the fine text. Attractive, easy to handle, extraordinarily cheap at the price, they present Irish history without tears to the non-expert.

ETIENNE RYNNE


It is safe to predict that by early 1972 the city of Dublin will have allowed an important anniversary to pass unnoticed. There will be no official reminder that in the winter of 1171-72 King Henry II, during his Irish visit, made Dublin his headquarters and granted it its first charter. But the anniversary will not be unique in its neglect. In 1960 another 800th anniversary—that of the first coming of the Normans to Ireland—was similarly ignored. It was as a conscious effort to counteract this neglect that Richard Roche wrote The Norman Invasion of Ireland. The author's interest in the Normans is basically ancestral—a Richard FitzGodebért 'de la roche' was among the first invaders. FitzGodebért and his descendants settled in what was to become one of the most Normanised areas of the country, the south-east. Indeed, it still bears Norman characteristics.

As a Wexfordman, Mr. Roche is well placed geographically to follow the surprising amount of detail which survives on the movements of the earliest Norman invaders. The detail is not mere inanimate fact. These invaders have the distinction of being the only generation of Normans in Ireland about whom a considerable amount of contemporary personal information survives. By exploiting the personal detail available to him, the author chose the correct popular approach to his subject. He gives the general reader a useful outline of the nature of his sources (in two separate sections, which is a minor inconvenience), and he quotes liberally from them throughout. But it is a pity that he relied so heavily on quotations from modern commentators—and some, indeed, not so modern. This deference often obscures his own point of view.

Obviously the writings of Goddard H. Orpen have made a considerable impact on Mr. Roche. Orpen considered himself to be a 'spiritual successor' to the Normans, and admired the peace and prosperity which they temporarily achieved by the imposition of centralised government, law and order. In his own day, Orpen had an able adversary in Eoin MacNeill, whose Phases of Irish History (not mentioned in Mr. Roche's bibliography) has much to say on centralised government, law and order, and which has a familiar ring today. Ironically, the weakness inherent in these very concepts found fresh illustration in the politics of 1916, on the 800th anniversary of the first coming of the Normans. As Richard Roche says, Ireland is still grappling with the problems that stemmed from their coming. For this reason, his paperback will appeal to more than students of history, even though the invasion itself may not commend itself to popular celebrations or happy anniversaries.

JOHN A. CLAFFEY


As a sequel to part III of volume II of this series, The Church in Gaelic Ireland is the least satisfactory chapter available to date of the proposed comprehensive History of Irish Catholicism. Although, in view of a lifetime's devotion to research on medieval ecclesiastical institutions, the late Canice Mooney O.F.M., was an obvious choice to deal with the theme in question, in this case
he appears to have been the victim of a failure to co-ordinate the contributions of various historians to a large-scale enterprise. Certain it is that many pages of the present monograph are wasted on a reiteration of facts already treating in greater depth, and in a more satisfactory chronological order, by Geoffrey Hand and Aubrey Gwynn.

On the credit side, however, it must be said that the sections concerned with the interior life of the Gaelic Church are packed with useful information. Here readers will find a helpful synthesis of much recent scholarly research on such subjects as the impact of Celtic mythology on devotional literature, the extent of the provision made for nursing the sick poor, the work of *studia particularia* established to instruct students deprived of a university education in their own country, and the concepts and customs that moulded the spiritual life of priests and people in medieval Ireland.

In regard to the last mentioned, the author is careful to remind us of the difficulty of distinguishing between purely indigenous concepts and customs and those imported from abroad. Yet, whatever their origins, it is of interest to note that at least some of the concepts cherished by our ancestors have persisted in the Irish mind down to the present day. Then, as now, fasting (carried to extremes was highly esteemed, not alone as a physical exercise, but also as a weapon hunger-strike) to extract justice from an enemy by exposing him to public obloquy. One also suspects that the guilt complex attributed to Irish Catholics may have its roots in an ancestral obsession with the wrath rather than the mercy of God. How Irishmen came to believe that St. John the Baptist was slain by a member of their race may never be fully explained, but that they did so believe is an incontrovertible fact. And, as a result, for centuries the people of this country lived in fear of the three days' plague, the *Scath a Fíonaíd*, with which God intended to punish their collective guilt. Such a far-fetched notion is difficult for the modern mind to grasp. Yet, at a time when every Jew was held personally responsible for the crucifixion, it was logical to accept that every Irishman was equally answerable for his fellow countryman's supposed crime against the forerunner of Christ.

Indeed, in the year 1098, so convinced were the men of Ireland that the *scath* was about to strike that clergy and people undertook a fast for three days in every week to the end of the year that God might withhold His hand.

There is always a danger that our fascination with Celtic fantasies may blind us to the fact that Ireland shared the same fundamental patterns of thought and behaviour with the rest of the Christian world. For instance, having read this publication, no intelligent person could continue to give credence to the popular picture of an Irish Church unsullied by the evil practices responsible for the great religious revolt of the sixteenth century. In this context, Canice Mooney appears to have been as shocked by his own findings as many of his readers are likely to be. But at least he makes no effort to soften the shock and, as a result, we can look forward to the disappearance from our text-books of one more piece of the pious wishful thinking that passed for Irish history in our young days.

It is true of course that such revisions when half digested by untrained minds can produce aberrations as bad, if not worse, than the errors they are intended to correct. Enthusiasm for change as a symbol of erudition frequently manifests itself in examination scripts written in 'up-to-date' schools today. It is now not unusual for examiners to encounter such statements as 'there was no real famine in Ireland in the eighteen forties—people just died of fever' or 'Roman Catholics suffered very little hardship under the penal laws, since these laws were seldom enforced.' So there is every danger that as this paper-back filters through to the schools, the former picture of an unspotted Irish Church will be replaced by a sink-hole of unadulterated iniquity. Historical perspective is not our forte. Even Father Mooney himself appears in certain passages to be applying Victorian standards of acceptable behaviour to a very different age. In Ireland, he would have us know, no social stigma was attached to concubinage or illegitimacy. But was that a peculiarly Irish phenomenon? The truth is that the amusing list of erring prelates compiled by him could be paralleled from the archives of any other country in western Europe. No sense of shame would prevent men like Wolsey from demanding, and obtaining, a multiplicity of benefices for an illegitimate son; nor would the enjoyment of a bevy of mistresses prove a serious impediment to ambitious Churchmen like Cardinal de Retz. Yet an age that bred such licentious prelates also give birth to a Vincent de Paul and a John Fisher. No doubt Ireland also had its due share of both saints and sinners.

There is no doubt that this publication is excellent value for money. What is doubtful is the wisdom of printing it in its present form in the final draft of the proposed History of Irish Catholicism. Rightly or wrongly one gets the impression that it was written in ignorance of the content of the chapter that precedes it. It is not just a matter of duplication. The unfortunate effect of attempting to cover too much of the same ground in too few pages is to leave readers with the impression of a static isolated Gaelic Church, the very picture they were previously taught to
rejct. Perhaps the wisest thing that could be done at this stage would be to confine this contribute to the excellent sections on Gaelic modes of thought and behaviour and to replace the pages so spared with a subsection dealing with the impact of foreign invasion on the life of the Religious Orders in Gaelic territory, a theme hardly touched upon by Hand and Gwynt.

SÍLE NÍ CHINNÉIDE


Ireland has not been fortunate in her tourists. Those who left accounts of their visits were comparatively few and the majority came from Britain. Most of them were of mediocre talents and already full of preconceived notions when they arrived. They found self-assurance in noting the things which corroborated their prejudices and satisfaction in reporting them for the benefit of a home public which shared those prejudices. Their genuine or assumed feeling of moral and social superiority prompted them to record any scrap of evidence about native manners and customs which enhanced that feeling but left them utterly incurious about anything which seemed morally or socially neutral. Nothing is mentioned unless there is a sermon in it. They were diligent perusers of each other's books, even to the extent of conscious or unconscious plagiarism, but listless and myopic in reading and interpreting the Irish scene. A country which suffers from a gapped and unbalanced written documentation and a desperately exiguous pictorial one can ill afford to have had such a blinkered tribe of visitors.

Exceptions there are and towering above them all, in virtue of sheer mass of information dispassionately recorded, stands Arthur Young. Nothing comparable to the account of his tour, undertaken 1776-1779, exists in previous Irish documentation and if more systematic coverage of certain aspects of Irish life is provided by some later compilations, none is there such a wealth of data on so many subjects. Although primarily interested in agriculture, his appetite for information was omnivorous and insatiable. A tireless questioner and a keen observer, he noted everything he heard or saw. His thirst for statistics was unquenchable and he chronicled every numerical evaluation he could discover: the rents of cabins and farms, the yield of crops per acre, the prices of goods and services of every kind, the caprices of local weights and measures, the fee of a dancing master, the amount of wool a woman could spin in a day, the time taken for individual tasks, the total of wheeled carriages in use in a town, the widths of the cloths woven in different districts, the number of horses pulling a plough and everything which could be measured or estimated. The informants whom he met in the fifty-one localities which he visited throughout the country must have found themselves subjected to a formidable interrogation. His consuming curiosity about so many things and his amazing industry in recording the fruits of his enquiries have made his work a prime source of information on almost any conceivable facet of life in Ireland at the time. Whether it be the rotation of crops, the growth of tea-drinking among the peasantry, migratory harvesters, the custom of renting farms in partnership or any one of a hundred other topics, Young will have remembered to ask about it and to note the answers.

This reprint reproduces the fourth edition of the Tour, which was edited by Arthur Worlston Hutton and published in London in 1892. It carried a new introduction by Professor J. B. Ruane of University College, Dublin, in which he gives a brief account of Young's life and work and pays tribute to his gifts as an observer. The first volume contains the topographical descriptions and other particulars relating to the various districts visited by Young in the four provinces; in the second, this corpus of heterogeneous data is digested in twenty-four chapters dealing with the tenantry, labouring poor, prices of provisions, agriculture, stock-raising, waste lands, etc. It is an indication of the richness of the material he collected that in these digests Young himself falls far short of having exhausted its possibilities. Of the books written about Ireland, there are few worthier of reprinting than this one.

A. T. LUCAS


In the series of "Faber Monographs on Glass," edited by R. J. Charleston, the most recent is on glass made in Ireland and is by Mr. Phelps Warren of New York. The book is entitled Irish Glass and deals with the period from the revival of the Irish glass industry in 1780 until about 1835. The author travelled much while collecting material for the book, and has had access to private
collections and to unpublished documents on Irish glass. He is himself a collector, and a great many of the pieces illustrated are from his own collection. The work consists of nine chapters, seven appendices, four colour plates, a hundred and three monochrome plates, a bibliography and an index. The initial date of Mr. Warren’s study is set by the passing of an Act in the English Parliament removing restrictions on Irish trade, thereby making it possible to revive the glass industry in Ireland. This new freedom of trade offered commercial incentives to English glass-makers, then hampered by the Excise tax in their own country. Accordingly, several of them came to Ireland with teams of craftsmen and equipment, and set up glasshouses in Belfast, Cork, Dublin, and Waterford. Under the new Act, glass metal in Ireland was not taxed by weight, thus permitting in its unrestricted use a variation and richness of cut patterns.

Mr. Warren, adopting the term ‘exuberance,’ by which term the late W. A. Thorpe, English glass historian, referred to the evolved period of Irish glass, uses this same term as the sub-title of his book and as a main theme of his study. The first chapters deal with the history of glass making in England and then in Ireland, and also with taxes, imports and exports. Further chapters deal with documented pieces, forty of which are impressed with the name of the maker or retailer. Another section, discussing articles enclosing Irish coins and those bearing Irish hall-marked mounts, is very useful in illustrating examples which, as far as I know, have not been previously published. After that, the main bulk of articles which have no such internal evidence of identification are dealt with. In attributing the ‘Irishness’ of these, the author relies largely on his own chosen criteria, ‘lavishness of metal’ and ‘exuberance of the cutting’, terms which both mean superabundance. He states that the ‘Age of Exuberance’ began in 1800 and implies that from that date Irish glass is largely identifiable by a lavish use of metal, by certain patterns and by exuberant cutting. Unfortunately, the identification of Irish (as opposed to English) glass is not simple. In Ireland, from 1780, glass metal was freely used and much Irish glass is heavy. Therefore it has come to be accepted over the years that almost any piece of heavy glass must be Irish. The use of heavy metal was not, however, exclusive to Irish glasshouses. While English glass-makers were still restricted in the use of metal by the Excise Act of 1745, and therefore could only use metal freely at high cost, luxury articles such as lighting pieces, covered urns and preserve-bowls were often just as heavy and had just as much if not more cutting than their Irish counterparts. From 1780 until about 1820 the cutting on Irish glass, except on luxury articles, was moderate, even restrained. Rims of sweetmeat glasses, jugs and bowls, were scalloped and, later, serrated, while the body usually bore a single band or a festoon, together with some minor motif used sparingly and in order to soften a hard cut-line but still leaving much of the surface plain. After 1820, the use of steam-power machines greatly increased the speed of cutting, bringing about an elaboration of patterns which gradually invaded the surface of the piece. Some extant patterns for glass by Samuel Miller, foreman cutter at the Waterford Glass House during the 1820s and 1830s, illustrate current designs, some of which are very similar to English and Scottish patterns of the same period. In 1846 the century old Excise Tax on glass metal was repealed, permitting the same full freedom in the use of metal in Britain as Ireland had enjoyed since 1760. By that time, however, a freer interchange of patterns and a general decline in taste led to loss of individuality in much Irish glass. Many of the styles and patterns long associated with Irish glass houses were already widely employed, and in excess elsewhere. So that articles bearing known characteristics of Irish glass, when viewed out of their context, can, through over enthusiasm, be attributed not alone to Ireland but also to an earlier date than when they were actually made. While such wares may with accuracy be described as “lavish” and “exuberant,” these qualities are no guarantee that the pieces in question were made in Ireland. The identification of any Irish glass must be sought for in other features such as the metal, structural details, and in the treatment of the patterns.

Mr. Warren’s work has been painstaking and, as it is now fifty years since the late M.S.D. Westropp’s standard work on Irish Glass was published, the volume under review will be welcome to students and collectors in these islands, and especially in America where there has been for long a keen interest in Irish glass. The plates, which accompany the text, cover a wide field, and in addition to illustrating examples from Ireland and England also depict articles from America, Canada and Australia which would not otherwise be easily seen. In addition, the plates are keyed to the text, and vice-versa, by page and plate numbers thus making reference to the illustrations and relevant comments quick and easy.

The editor of the series, the author of Irish Glass, the publishers and all concerned are to be congratulated on the very fine production of this work.

CATRIONA MACLEOD

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This work, by a long-time member of our Society, consists of ninety-three pages, together with four inset pedigree sheets, reprinted from the Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, volumes LXXI-LXXIV (1966-69). The pagination of the original contributions to the journal is retained. It is unquestionably worthy of re-issue as an individual volume and if this is done it will be a simple matter to repaginate, but I would urge the author to add a full index, at least of persons. The main reason why I would like to see such a book published is that The Galweys of Munster is a model of how family history should be presented.

The two chapters of Part 1 are headed “Origin” and “Historical Outline.” Part II, “Genealogies,” is divided into a number of sections dealing with various branches: Galway of Cork and Kinsale; of Lota (with many sub-divisions); of Limerick; of Killarney; of Mallow; of Enniskillen (again with sub-divisions, including France and Portugal); etc. This brief description must not, however, be taken as implying that all Part II is just pedigrees; the introductory passages and the copious footnotes add greatly to their interest (there are 462 footnotes in all!).

This work is one of the best examples of the thorough research-work so necessary in this type of study which I have yet met. I cannot pretend to have checked more than a few of the statements made by Sir Henry Blackall, but the fact that a very penetrating review in another journal only found cause to doubt a couple of Sir Henry’s conclusions (pre-1900), one based on a source discovered since the article in question was written, certainly supports my view that this is a remarkably accurate work.

I did notice on page 142 (i.e. the fifth page of the present assemblage) one technical heraldic error (re baston and bond), but the mention of this only emphasizes my point.

One interesting question remains undecided: the balance of probability seems to suggest that while some Galway families in Ulster did take their surname from Galloway in Scotland, those of Munster derive from the Connacht place-name—definite proof of this is, however, still needed.

Sir Henry has, himself, had this series of articles reprinted, not for sale but to bring them together as a complete and easily managed unit for distribution to public libraries in Munster (including Limerick, Cork, Tralee, Ennis and Kilkee) and elsewhere in Ireland, in Britain, in America, and even as far afield as libraries in the southern hemisphere.

E. A. MacLYSAGHT


This little guide to the Burren area is most welcome. For long the visitor to that far-famed area has wanted something of this sort, though it is feared that the present production will not entirely satisfy his wants. Although a copy of the Ordnance Survey half-inch map of the region is provided with the booklet (and for this alone the money is well spent) it will not enable the visitor to find everything of interest easily. Even such sites of renown as Poulnabrone and Glinshinleen megalithic tombs, as Ballykinvarna, as Corcomroe, or as Newtown Castle are not indicated on the map, nor, of course, are the deep and lengthy caves for which the region is famous. The text, however, provides some compensation, though not sufficient for the archaeologist or antiquarian. Tours of interest are suggested, notes on some of the better-known early churches in the area and on the caves are provided, brief notices of the folklore and legends are given, and also some useful comments on the botany of this extraordinary area. The major contribution is, however, the list of butterflies and moths which Raymond F. Hynes provides, but this is probably far too scientifically presented for most of the tourists who will purchase this guide—the title itself, “Some Lepidoptera of the Burren,” will frighten many a reader off.

Attractively produced in a glossy cover showing some of the flowers found in the Burren, one must fault the production for the lack of a title page. The bare, rather mean look (as if something had been removed), with which one is presented on turning back the cover should, and could, have been avoided by omitting the two irrelevant poems on page 17, moving everything forward one page and using the page so provided for a title page. The Guide is largely saved by the excellent photographs reproduced in it, though one wishes that one of the fine Kilfenora High Crosses had been illustrated instead of that at Dysert O’Dea (which is, strictly speaking, not in the Burren region).

ETIENNE RYNNE

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