1976 was an unusually eventful and busy year for the Society. It marked the departure of two illustrious members from office, Dr. Sarah O’Malley, President 1973-75 and Mr. Christopher Lynch, Hon. Secretary 1971-75. Copies of John Hunt's *Irish Medieval Figure Sculpture* were presented to Dr. O’Malley and Mr. Lynch, in recognition of their years of service to the Society, at the Annual Social held at the Limerick Inn on the 2nd March. Shortly afterwards, at the Annual General Meeting on the 12th March, Dr. Robert Cussen, Vice-President and a long distinguished member, was elected President and the Rev. John Leonard was elected Hon. Secretary.

There were thirteen committee meetings during the year, one of which was held at the Westpark Hotel, Portumna, Co. Galway. Much of the committee's time was taken up with two important matters, viz. the City Museum and the printing of the Society’s *Journal*. A deputation from the Society led by Mrs. Mary Geary, discussed the question of the museum with the City Manager, Mr. T. F. MacDiarmada, and his officials in Cruises Hotel on the 18th May. As regards the *Journal*—the committee decided after much investigation and discussion to change the printer on the grounds of costs. This was done reluctantly, as the Society had had a long and happy association with Messrs John English of Wexford. It was decided that the new printer would be the Leinster Leader Ltd., Naas. It should also be noted that 1976 saw the beginning of the Society's association with Messrs O'Malley, Newport, who provided coaches for all coach outings during the year.

The Society held ten outings, four lectures and a film show during the year. On the 12th March, after the A.G.M., there was a showing of the R.T.E. film on Breandán Ó Riordáin’s excavations—“The Search for Viking Dublin”.

The outings were as follows:
24th April: The committee of Féile na Máighé invited members to Lough Gur where Professor M. J. O’Kelly was the speaker.
16th May: The President, Dr. Cussen, led an outing to Co. Limerick. The following sites were visited: Ballyculleen House (Carroll-Naish), Ballyclough House (Copley), and Toomeley Tower House. The speakers were Mr. Noel Peart, S.C. and Mr. Michael Dore.
16th May: Mr. Etienne Rynne conducted a river-boat outing to the ancient ecclesiastical ruins at Annaghdown, Co. Galway, and on Inchagoill in Lough Corrib.
15th June: Very Rev. Martin Ryan spoke on the Ralóhine Commune at Ralóhine near Newmarket-on-Fergus, and Dr. Patrick F. Doran conducted members around the Craggaunowen project.
27th June: Very Rev. Martin Ryan led an outing to North Tipperary and sites were visited at Nenagh, Rathurles, Dunkerrin, Monaincha, Roscrea and Mount St. Joseph’s Cistercian Abbey. The speakers were Fr. Ryan, Mr. Eamon de Stafford and Mr. George Cunningham.
18th July: Mr. T. J. Cahill and Mr. P. Lysaght led an outing to the Suir Valley. The sites visited were The Holy Stone in the Glen of Aherlow; the grave of General Sir William Butler in Kilardrigh Cemetery; Carrick-on-Suir castle; the high crosses at Ahenny and Kilkieran; Kilcash. Dr. Patrick C. Power, Mr. Cahill and Mr. Lysaght were the speakers.

22nd August: Mr. Brian Geary led an outing to Inis Cealtra in Lough Derg, where Mr. Liam de Paor conducted members around his excavations there.

9th September: Mr. J. W. Stokes led an outing to St. Mary's Cathedral and the Villiers Alms Houses; the Revd. Mr. T. R. Shorten was the speaker.

12th September: Captain Parker led an outing to East Galway and the following sites were visited: The Seven Monuments, Masonbrook; The Turoe Stone; Kilconnell Abbey; the battlefield and folk museum at Aughrim; the recently restored Clontuskert Abbey. The speakers were Mr. Etienne Rynne, Mr. Martin Joyce and Mr. Tom Fanning.

Clontuskert Abbey. The speakers were Mr. Etienne Rynne, Mr. Martin Joyce and Mr. Tom Fanning.

20th September: The President, Dr. Cussen, led an outing to Kenry. The sites visited were: Kilulta Church, Shanpallas, Mellon House, Shannongrove House, and Castletown. Mr. Máirtín Ó Corrbúi was the speaker at the sites.

The four lectures held were as follows:

16th January: "The Study of Irish Folk Life".
Dr. Alan Gailey, Ulster Folk & Transport Museum.

29th October: "Rents, Tenure and 19th century Agriculture".
Dr. John O'Brien, Department of History, U.C.C.

19th November: "Prehistoric Farming in the West of Ireland".
Dr. Seamus Caulfield, Department of Archaeology, U.C.D.

10th December: "Discovering Kerry—writing local history".
Mr. T. J. Barrington.

REV. JOHN D. LEONARD
Hon. Secretary
OBITUARIES

JOHN HUNT, M.A.
(1900-1976)

Because of the magnitude of his stature, it is not easy to write an obituary of John Hunt. There were so many facets to the man, so many seams of expertise—scholarship blending easily with craftsmanship, a profound understanding of Man’s use of even the simplest artifacts as well as of his motivation in fashioning them—that to encapsulate his qualities is as difficult as a precise word-picture of one of the medieval art treasures he loved so much.

His interest in art—and in collecting—began in his schooldays, and over the years he acquired a world-wide reputation as an expert, particularly in that area he made peculiarly his own—the religious art of the medieval period. He has been truly described in The Connoisseur as “one of the best known medievalists in Europe”. As such his advice was for many years sought and accepted by the most notable collectors in both Europe and America. But while his scholarship was widely acknowledged and a acclaimed outside his homeland, and although for long a member of An Comhairle Ealaion (The Arts Council), in Ireland he was best known for his passionate interest in the material evidence of Man’s existence on this island. Not surprisingly, his greatest personal interest was the study of Irish medieval art.

Here in Thomond he will always be remembered with particular gratitude for his lasting contribution to the culture of his birthplace. Although his family moved to London while he was still in his teens, he came back to live here, by Lough Gur, in 1940. He not only joined our Society almost immediately (he was elected a Vice-President in 1965),* but he became closely involved with Professor Seán P. Ó Riordáin and his excavations in the area. As an archaeological field-worker he had already gained considerable experience in one of the most famous and exciting excavations of the century, the Sutton Hoo ship-burial. In 1942 at Caherugillmore, near Bruff, he carried out one of the first excavations of a medieval site in Ireland, indicating for the first time the form and life-style of a medieval Irish house. Medieval treasures of the Thomond area had a special interest for him, and in 1952, with his great friend the late Monsignor Moloney, he organised in Limerick a memorable exhibition: “A Thousand Years of Christian Art and Ecclesiastical Antiquities” from North Munster.

Limerick’s three major ecclesiastical treasures, the Arthur Cross, made in 1625

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He also contributed a paper on “Prehistoric Burials at Caherugillmore, Co. Limerick” to North Munster Studies, Essays in Commemoration of Monsignor Michael Moloney (edited by E. Rynne), which was published by the Society in 1967.
to enshrine a piece of the True Cross, and the O'Dea Mitre and Crozier, both made in 1418 by Thomas O'Carryd for Conor (alias Cornelius) O'Dea, the then Bishop of Limerick, attracted his special attention. In 1955 he published a study of the Cross in the Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, showing that it is, in fact, really a seventeenth century restoration of an earlier medieval crucifix which may perhaps have been the work of Thomas O'Carryd. In 1953 he published a detailed study of the Mitre and Crozier, revealing for the first time the sophisticated techniques used in their construction and showing that "in addition to their striking appearance, and the richness and beauty of their magnificent combination of gleaming silver, soft gilding, precious stones and enamels, from an historical point of view also they are the most valued and important objects of Irish metalwork which have come down to us from the later middle ages". Both can be seen in perfect condition today, thanks to his concern and generosity, for in 1960-61 he had them expertly repaired by the Conservation Department at the British Museum.

John Hunt was conferred with his Masters degree from the National University of Ireland in 1946 for his work on "Medieval Armour in Ireland", from which he was subsequently to publish an important paper on "Rory O'Tunney and the Ossory Tomb Sculptures" in the Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland in 1950. His interest in medieval official sculpture continued to grow over the years, and shortly before his death Irish Medieval Figure Sculpture, 1200-1600 appeared. This two-volume opus is undoubtedly John Hunt's greatest academic achievement, and it will always remain an invaluable source of reference for all those interested in Irish Medieval Art. [A review article on these volumes had regrettably to be withheld, for lack of space, from publication in this year's Journal—it will appear in the 1977 number—Hon. Editor.]

Today, every discerning visitor to Thomond will make sure to see the restored Castle and the Folk Park at Bunratty, and the castle, crannog, ringfort and souterrain at Craggaunowen, all of which were inspired and completed under the guidance of John Hunt. But his final and crowning achievement for Thomond, and for the Irish nation, was the gift of his collection of Irish and European antiquities and art objects now so beautifully displayed in the new museum at Plassey, just outside Limerick City.

To the world at large John Hunt will be remembered as one of the great medievalists, a man of incomparable stature in that arcane world and a final court-of-appeal when the authenticity and the precise dating of a work of art was in doubt, but to those privileged to enjoy his friendship he will be remembered in the words of one of them as "a prince among men". He was a man of profound spirituality. Art divorced from religion had no meaning for him. The monks who inspired the creation of the Cross of Cong would have found in him a kindred spirit. The crucifix, however artistic in design, was always for him the source of his deep abiding faith, a faith that inspired every action of his life and has now obtained for him the seal and approval of the Divine Artist.

Very Revd. James Canon Culhane

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RIGHT REVD. ROBERT WYSE JACKSON, M.A., LL.D.,
(1908-1976)

When, on the 21st of October, 1976, the retired Lord Bishop of the United Dioceses of Limerick, Ardfeart and Aghadoe, died, the Thomond Archaeological Society not only lost a former Committee Member (1942-1958), Vice-President (1959-1965 and 1970-1976), President (1966-1969), and Honorary Life Member (1971-1976), but also lost a real friend, one who was not only proud to be a member but conscious and unashamed of that pride. Indeed, on more than one occasion, most notably on his being made a Freeman of the City of Limerick, did he publicly proclaim his association with our Society.

Born in 1908, and educated at the Abbey School, Tipperary, and at the Bishop Foy School, Waterford, his early upbringing was clearly a North Munster one. His initial interests tended towards the law, and in 1930 he graduated in Legal and Political Science from Trinity College, Dublin, a year later acquired the LL.B. degree, and in 1932 he became a barrister-at-law in the Middle Temple, London. Already, however, his mind was turning towards higher things, and although he never lost his interest in legal matters (he obtained the LL.D. degree in 1936 with a thesis on the Law of Accident) he decided to enter the church, and was ordained a Deacon in Manchester in 1934 and a priest in the following year.

After less than two years as a curate in Manchester he returned in 1936 to North Munster, to serve as curate of Corbally, in the Diocese of Killaloe, and it was at this period that he first made contact with our Society. Two years later, in 1938, he became rector of Ballymackey, Co. Tipperary, but in 1940 he returned to Limerick, as rector of St. Michael's, where he remained until 1946 when he was elevated to the Deanery of Cashel and also made rector of St. John the Baptist, Cashel, and of St. Patrick's Rock, Cashel. While still at Cashel he also, from 1949, served as Prebendary of Swords in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

The high point of his distinguished ecclesiastical career came in November 1960 when the Church of Ireland Electoral College elected him to the bishoprics of Limerick, Ardfeart and Aghadoe. His consecration took place on the Feast of the Epiphany 1961, and he was enthroned in St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, later in the same month. For almost ten years he administered his dioceses wisely and well, only retiring at the relatively young age of 62 in 1970 because of ill-health. On his retirement, the people of Limerick paid him the highest honour it was in their power to render—they conferred the Freedom of the City on him at a colourful open-air event on the 18th of August, 1970 [see the Editorial, in vol. XIII (1970) of this Journal].

But it is not only as an eminent ecclesiastic that Dr. Robert Wyse Jackson is remembered by his many friends and acquaintances, but also as a man of many parts and a recognised scholar in many fields. A constant worker and a prolific writer, he was author of many books on law, church and local history, the fine arts, literature and biography; he also worked in the creative field writing at least two novels and one play. He furthermore published numerous articles in many learned
journals, most notably in our own*—indeed, perhaps the last of the scholarly papers which flowed from his pen is that on Irish Glass which appears elsewhere in this Journal.

God granted him many talents, none of which he buried or hid under a bushel. A watercolourist of no mean ability (he regularly exhibited, and in 1973 held a one-man show in Limerick), he was also an accomplished musician, and a humourist who could turn his hand to a limerick with such effect that he could win the nation-wide competition for limericks run in conjunction with the Festival of the Maigue Poets in 1970).

Dr. Wyse Jackson (somehow he always seemed to be called by those two names, as if they were hyphenated, and few would immediately recognise him were the Wyse omitted!) was a big man in every way, a man whom no one could ever point the finger at unless to praise him, a man who made friends easily and who it was good to have known.

Although not of ancient Gaelic lineage, he was proud to say on becoming a Freeman of the City of Limerick that that honour “carries for me and for my people a sense and instinct that we are proud to be Irish, and it seals our constant effort to be loyal and full sharers in the life and work of our city and nation . . . that we are, before anything else, Irishmen”. His life, attitudes and hopes proved the sincerity of that noble statement—ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

Etiennne Rynne

The Society also tenders its sympathies to the relatives of the following members deceased during the year:
NICHOLAS CONDON, Caherdavin, Limerick.

May they rest in peace.


Dr. Wyse-Jackson also contributed a paper on “Stella: her relationship with Jonathan Swift” to North Munster Studies, Essays in Commemoration of Monsignor Michael Moloney (edited by E. Rynne), which was published by the Society in 1967.

The Thomond Archaeological Society was started in 1929, as a successor to and in continuation of Societies dating back to 1892, to encourage an interest in the study and preservation of all aspects of our past, with special reference to that of North Munster. Its horizons are wide, embracing archaeology, history, folklore, folklife studies, numismatics, onomastics, and other kindred subjects. Membership is open to all, and entitles to notice of and attendance at all lectures and excursions organised by the Society, and also to a free copy of the Society's annual JOURNAL.

Subscriptions should be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, Captain Frank Parker, "Asgard", North Circular Road, Limerick. Subscription rates: Ordinary Members £3 per annum (Family Members, £1 extra per person); Junior Members, £1.50 per annum.

Material intended for publication in the JOURNAL should be sent to The Honorary Editor, Mr. Etienne Rynne, Department of Archaeology, University College, Galway.

All other correspondence, including requests for back-numbers of the JOURNAL and for NORTH MUNSTER STUDIES (published by the Society in 1967), should be sent to the Honorary Secretary, Fr. John D. Leonard, Regional Hospital, Limerick.