Rathmichael Historical Record 2001
Published by Rathmichael Historical Society 2003

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SECRETARY'S REPORT—2001.

Presented January 2002 2001 was another busy year for the society's members and committee. There were six monthly lectures, and evening course, four field trips, an autumn weekend away and nine committee meetings.

The winter season resumed, following the AGM with a lecture in February by Cormac Louth on *Shipwrecks around Dublin Bay.* In March Eva 6 Cathaoir spoke to us on *The Rathdown Union workhouse at Loughlinstown* in the period 1838-1923 and concluded in April with John 6 Neill updating us on *Excavations at Cherrywood.*

The summer season began in June when Aida Whelan organised a trip to Dunsany Castle. In July, members joined Rob Goodbody on a tour of some prehistoric tombs in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown.

The 27th Summer School was held in August with contributions from Mary Deevy who spoke on *Recent excavations at Ballynamuddagh, Bray head,* Aidan O'Sullivan who talked to us about *Crannogs and lake dwellings in early medieval Ireland.* Professor Mike Baillie brought us up to date on *Recent developments in dendrochronology* whilst Professor Gabriel Cooney spoke on *Lambay: an island story.* The week concluded with Peter Pearson talking to us about *The heart of Dublin.*

The society celebrated Heritage Week in September by visiting Farmleigh House and Gardens. Later that month members of the society journeyed to the medieval town of Athenry which served as their base for several field trips in the county.

The autumn/winter season began again in October when Dr Edel Bhreatnach spoke to us about *DermotMac Murchada: in the Kingdoms ofWicklow*. This was followed in November by a lecture from Mary Clark on *People, Places and Parchment: The Dublin City Archives,* The year concluded in early December with Dr Edward McParland's *New Look atMalton 's Dublin.*

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 my fellow committee members, I would like to thank our President Dr. Betty O'Brien for her hospitality to us during the year.

Muirin O'Briain, Hon Secretary, 9th January 2002.

1.0th January 2001
ANNUAL **GENERAL MEETING**
The twenty-fifth annual general meeting of Rathmichael Historical Society was held in the Burton Hall, Rathmichael, on 10th January 2001. In the absence of the current president June Burry, the chair was taken by Rosemary Beckett, a former president
Apologies were received from June Burry, and John and Alison Risely.

The minutes of the twenty-fourth annual general meeting held on 5th January 2000 were read. A proposal, in the name of the president and secretary, that "The quorum of the AGM be reduced form 20 paid up members to 15 paid up members". After a lively discussion it was proposed by Rob Goodbody that a quorum should consist of 10% of members, paid up for the previous year. This was seconded by Rosemary Beckett and approved by the meeting. However, in the absence of a quorum at the AGM, it was agreed that the proposal would be put to a meeting in the forthcoming year at which a quorum of paid up members was present. At a meeting held on 6th December 2000, the proposal was put to and adopted by members present. The minutes of the 24th Annual General Meeting of the society were then signed by Rosemary Beckett acting as chairman.
The secretary summarised the society's activities for the preceding^ear.
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 Risely both for auditing the accounts and for his valued advice. Rob Goodbody congratulated the committee for the efficient management of the accounts and proposed their adoption. This was seconded by Dr. Betty O'Brien.
In June Burry's absence, a short address was delivered on her behalf by the chairman. In her review the

president said the 2000 had been a good year for the society". She expressed particular satisfaction that a grant of £17,000 from the Heritage Council had enabled Dr. Betty O'Brien to commission expert reports on artefacts excavated at the Ballyman and Dundrum Castle sites, and expressed the hope that the committee's continued efforts to obtain sponsorship to assist in the costs of publication would prove productive. The society's reputation had been enhanced by the quality of its lecturers during the preceding year and particular appreciation was expressed to Aida Whelan for her tireless efforts in this regard.

The meeting then proceeded to the nomination of officers and members for the incoming committee:

As there were no other nominations, the above were

Position	Candidate	Nominated	Seconded
President	Dr Betty O'Brien	Del Sherriff	Rob Goodbody
Secretary	Muirin O'Biiain	R. Beckett	J. McCaughey
Treasurer	Kay Merry	M. O'Brien	Aida Whelan
Editor	Del Sheniff	R. Beckett	Kay Merry
Committee	Aida Whelan	M. O'Briain	Kay Merry
	Joan McCaughey	Hazel Ryan	Ciaran Byrne
	Jim Scannell	Rob Goodbody	Ciaran Byrne
	Tom Moran	Ciaran Byrne	Aida Whelan
	Helan Purser	R. Beckett	Kay Merry

declared elected.

Rosemary Beckett paid tribute to the outgoing president declaring her term to have been a resounding success.

A vote of sympathy to the family of the late Paddy Healy- a much loved and respected member of the Society was proposed by Richard Ryan and seconded by Rosemary Beckett. Rob Goodbody announced thai-he had sent an obituary on Paddy Healy to *The Irish Times* and that an appreciation would be published shortly.

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.

7th February 2001

SHIPWRECKS IN AND AROUND DUBLIN BAY

Cor mac Louth

Cormac Louth is a member of the Maritime Institute of Ireland and of the Irish Maritime Archaeological Society. He is also a council member of the Old Dublin Society and has lectured and written on many aspects of maritime history. He is a diver and has dived on many of the wrecks mentioned in this paper.

The Dublin Bay area is considered to be between the Bailey lighthouse on Howth head to Sorrento Point at the southern end of Dalkey Sound. The bay and its approaches have long been notorious for shipwrecks. At least; fifteen hundred shipwrecks have occurred in the approaches to Dublin port. Sailing vessels were

dependant upon the winds and tides and were at the mercy of the elements. The area is tidal and there are strong tidal flows running mainly north and south.

Natural shelter is offered along the stretch of coast approaching Dublin with many hazards also, namely the line of sand banks running parallel to the coast. At the northern end the Bennet Bank merges into the Kish Bank, which in turn leads to the Bray and Arklow Banks. There is the Codling Bank, which is rocky and the Burford Bank that straddles the mouth of Dublin Bay, the Rosbeg Bank south of Howth Head and the Fraser Bank that runs south from Dalkey Island. These have combined with the broad sandy inshore area around Dublin Bay to become a graveyard of ships.

The mouth of the Liffey presented shallow sandbanks, requiring vessels to stand off at low tide, awaiting the turn of the tide to proceed, as a result they were caught by the winds blowing them ashore on dangerous areas of the North and South Bull.

Dublin port dates back to Viking times and beyond. Viking longships were shallow draught vessels and the remains of longships have been taken from the silt.

In the second half of the 18th century the great south wall from Ringsend to the Poolbeg lighthouse was constructed and helped define the river channel. A reservoir of tidal water which on the ebb tide funnels out through the now narrow entrance between the lighthouses. This created the Bull Island and made the port navigable. Despite all these improvements shipwrecks still occur, the most recent on 21st

November 1991. *MV Kilkenny* collided with the *Hazel Werder* in the channel and sank with a loss of three crewmen.

One of the largest ships to sink in Dublin bay was a Norwegian vessel *MV Bolivar* on 4th March 1947, which ran aground on the Kish Bank and broke in two. She was on her maiden voyage from south America via Liverpool with a cargo of grain for Dublin. The lifeboat from Dun Laoghaire rescued the crew and passengers but were unable to tow her off, so she was cut down to the waterline and explosives used to disperse her. The vessel lies almost alongside that of the 620 ton *Vesper* which sank seventy years earlier on 14th January 1876. Despite letting off distress signals other vessels passed her by until the *Princess Royal* accompanied by *Amelia* a gunboat and *Alert* an Irish Lights tender came alongside found her deserted. The crew had taken to the lifeboat landed on Killiney beach and had been given free railway tickets to Dublin by the Killiney stationmaster.

The mailboat *RMSLeinster* was torpedoed by a German submarine on 10th October 1918., there were 757 people on board of whom 550 were lost. Some of the casualties were troops returning to the front, postal workers and passengers.

A paddle steamer, the *Queen Victoria* sank on 15th February 1853 and lies about fifty metres due south of the Bailey lighthouse on Howth Head. It struck rocks near the lighthouse during a snowstorm with the loss of about 80 lives as it had not cut its speed an attempt to

get the ship into shallow water, failed and she sank immediately.

The wreck was rediscovered by divers in 1983 and was made the subject of a preservation order by the Office of Public Works, the first of its kind in Ireland. The immediate plundering and stripping of everything by a group of divers followed, the figurehead was found floating in Dublin bay by fishermen and was restored and is now in the Maritime Museum in Dun Laoghalre. One of the best known and most dived shipwreck is the iron-hulled clipper ship *Tayleur,* which went ashore and sank on Lambay Island with great loss of life on January 21, 1854, It was a new ship for the immigrant passenger trade to Australia and was on her maiden voyage. Instead of heading southwards down the Irish Sea it veered west and went ashore in a little cove on Lambay Island. Many of the 528 people managed to get ashore but 282 perished including almost all of the women and children.

The same distance off shore as the *RMSLeinster* but due east of Bray Head is one of the biggest and most intact wrecks in the vicinity of Dublin Bay is the *HMS Vanguard, a* Royal Navy battleship built in 1870. She sank following a collision with her sistership *HMS Iron Duke,* on September 1, 1875. In altering course suddenly during manoeuvres the *Vanguard*'tried to avoid a sailing ship in thick fog and collided with the *Iron Duke,* These ships were fitted with a projecting ram beneath the waterline, the device proved to be effective and sank the ship immediately. All 450 hands were saved and taken aboard the *Iron Duke.* The

captain and crew of the *Vanguard*were court-martialed and censured over the loss of the ship. No blame was attached to the *Iron Duke*.

Most famous of all was the *Palme* on Christmas Eve 1895. This Finnish sailing ship formally known as the *Frederick Tudor,* was a wooden vessel from Boston, built in 1866. In seeking shelter in Kingstown harbour lost both anchors in the harbour mouth and drifted into the bay and ran aground. A lifeboat, *Civil Service No 7* went to the rescue, overturned and lost all fifteen crew. The No 1 lifeboat *Hanna Packard* narrowly avoided the same fate but returned the crew to Blackrock. By St. Stephen's day the weather had improved sufficiently for the crew, the captain, his wife and baby daughter to be rescued by an Irish Lights vessel. There is a memorial to the lifeboat men near the lifeboat house and a plaque on the old boat house near the East Pier, recording the tragedy.

The last big sailing ship to go aground in the bay was the *Hamburg* from Germany, on October 29, 1925. She left Melbourne with a cargo of wheat heading for Cork. Off Ballycotton Bay she encountered gales and was forced to run up the Irish Sea. She anchored off Dun Laoghaire. After nightfall, gales increased and both cables parted. She was driven across Dublin Bay grounded at Red Rock and was holed. The *Hamburg* was a fully-rigged ship of 1895 tons, built in 1901 in France.

Wednesday 7th March 2001

THE RATHDOWN UNION WORKHOUSE AT LOUGHLINSTOWN 1838-1923

Eva 6 Cathaoir

Ireland did not have any equivalent of the Elizabethan poor law. The Barony of Rathdown was affluent but the small farms of Kimacanogue, county Wicklow, Little Bray and Glencullen were considered poor villages. Outbreaks of fever up until the 1860s and isolated cases of typhoid occurred during the second half of the 19th century.

In the Barony of Rathdown and in Dublin infirmaries, fever hospitals and dispensaries had been founded by private subscription and were subsequently supported by the state. An inquiry into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland recommended dealing constructively with the causes of destitution while rejecting the model of the English poor laws of 1834 as inappropriate for Ireland.

Despite the limitations of the 1838 legislation it was the first attempt by the authorities to deal with Irish destitution on a countrywide scale. The Rathdown Union was declared open on 12th October 1841, but few of the local poor entered it before the Great Famine. Those eligible were the destitute, those impoverished by illness, old age, physical or mental handicap, or who were orphans. After these the unemployed could be considered.

Throughout its existence more women than men entered

the workhouse. It became the last refuge of unmarried mothers and their children, deserted wives, old people, epileptics, vagrants, migratory workers and discharged soldiers. Many elderly and out of work servants sheltered there. Their livelihood was precarious - if dismissed without a character they were unlikely to find new situations. Many became prostitutes. The Rathdown Gruardians noted in March 1844 the large numbers of these unmarried mothers and prostitutes increasing.

The Rathdown Union modelled itself on the South Dublin Union that adjoined it in Donnybrook and had been opened in March 1840. Paid officers selected by the guardians with the commissioners' approval saw to the day to day running of the workhouse. Military men were preferred in the early years, experienced in keeping order. The Poorhouse Officer needed stamina, mental toughness and the ability to cope with considerable paperwork. The day started at 6 a.m. and ended at 9 p.m.

The Workhouse Officer had overall control and his assistants were a clerk, schoolmaster, porter, ward master and cook. The Matron had control over the women and children, the highest ranking female officer, she was supported by the nurse and ward mistress. By 1845 the Loughlinstown master, matron, clerk and porter had all been replaced at least once, some as many as four times, so satisfaction was sparse in this regard.

Ireland was divided into 130 Unions, the Rathdown Union with a population of 44,214 people in 1841

consisted of south Co. Dublin and north County Wicklow. The Rathdown guardians were mainly landlords, comfortable tenant farmers, merchants and professional men, For example Sir George Hodson whose mansion Hollybrook House featured in the film "Gone With The Wind", the ancestral home of Scarlet O'Hara.

The central location of Loughlinstown village for the building of the workhouse was an obvious choice. The building was strictly utilitarian, unplastered walls and without a ceiling in the upstairs rooms. Designed for 600 inmates, it cost £9,683 to build and soon revealed signs of poor workmanship, such as smoking chimneys and leaking walls.

The Loughlinstown complex consisted of three main structures. The admission block with provisional wards, clerk's office and boardroom. The main workhouse, where inmates were strictly segregated according to age and sex and the infirmary flanked by lunatic cells. The dining hall also contained a high altar for religious services also linked the other buildings. The grounds were enclosed by and eight foot walls confirming the prison like atmosphere,

The inadequate diet and discipline were used as a discouragement for the poor entering the workhouse. The food aimed to be worse than the local labouring families. Food supplied by contractors was of unacceptable quality.

The clanging of the poor house bell told the "paupers" when to rise, wash, eat and work. Orders were to be

instantly obeyed, while card games, smoking and drinking were not permitted. Punishments dealt our were, deprivation of food, solitary confinement in a cell known as the "black hole", the inmate and his family could be discharged from the workhouse or may have to spend time in Kilmainham Jail

The onset of the Famine increased numbers in the workhouse, which was declared full for the first time in December 1846. Although built for a maximum of 600 inmates, 700 people sheltered there on 23 rd February 1847, 762 on 11 January 1848 and 872 in February 1850. During the year ended 1849, 4,940 people were admitted with 738 on outdoor relief and for the year 1850, 6,958 people were admitted with 230 on outdoor relief. Many were turned away during this period. Outdoor relief was introduced due to the pressure on space and due to the fear of epidemic due to overcrowding.

The original workhouse had been extended by 80 places and a new building for 550 added. Many emigrated to Canada, being provided with clothes and food. On arrival in the New World adults received £1 to help them leave the port area. In September 1854 a group of 21 women inmates crossed the Atlantic on the *New Brunswick* at a cost of £5.10A Many girls from Rathdown were sent out to Australia to become servants and future wives, while inexpensive for boards of guardians, this scheme was ended after two years.

The workhouse uniform consisted of jacket, trousers, waistcoat, shirt, cap for men, cap, shift, dress, petticoats

and wrapper for women. The clothes were marked with the Union name. Everyone in the workhouse was supposed to work. The few able-bodied men maintained the buildings, acted as messengers, worked the treadmill operating the water pump and carried water from the Shanganah river when it failed. The women performed domestic chores and assisted in the laundry, nursery and infirmary. Pauper nurses were given extra food to keep them from snatching their patients food.

The rules were draconian and there were only two meals a day, 8 a.m. breakfast and 3 p.m. evening meal, The beds were raised wooden platforms, some with straw covering and most given a blanket and sheet. Emptying of the night bucket and locked in their dormitories all added to the unhygienic conditions. The Irish Poor Law Commissioners having become independent from the English parent body in 1847, the increase of its powers steadily developed and became the Local Government Board in 1872. From 1896 on, women could be elected guardians. Things improved somewhat by the 1880s, gradually the board realised that the workhouse was an unsuitable place for motherless children, so from 1869 on, youngsters were boarded out with foster families. In the post famine period 124 people died of cholera in Kingstown in 1861. Cholera sheds were erected in Kingstown in 1884 were never used. The nursing standards of the 19th century improved due to more formal training. In 1883 Mother Taylor ; (Fanny Taylor) known as Mother Mary Magdalene: founded the Providence Free Hospital of the first

workhouse entrusted to the congregation at Rathdown Union in 1899, Moderate nationalists flocked into the Rathdown boardroom and decided to upgrade the institution. After the arrival of the nuns, the chapel and St Patrick's Convent were built. The institution was finally closed by 1920. Due to lack of funds for renovation of buildings better conditions for patients could not yet be achieved. The paupers' graveyard continued to be used until 1939, however its neglected state was addressed later and in 1991 the monument honouring the souls, was erected on the 150th anniversary of the opening of the workhouse.

Wednesday 4th April 2001
EXCAVATIONS OF RURAL NORSE SETTLEMENT AT CHERRYWOOD, CO. DUBLIN.
JohnONeill

A number of areas were excavated during the earth-moving phase of the Science and Technology Park development at Cherrywood, Co. Dublin. This project is ongoing but so far the excavations have uncovered several fulachta fiadh, a late prehistoric/Iron Age ring barrow, a Bronze Age house and a Bronze Age cremation cemetery as well as some medieval features and the remains of Loughlinstown military camps (1791-99)

The latest site that has been excavated at Cherrywood so far is a hte prehistoric/Iron Age burial enclosure that was subsequently reused by Norse settlers. The site, identified was built to the west of a Bronze Age

cremation cemetery, the enclosure of which was marked by a ditch and possibly an outer bank constructed in the later prehistoric period. There was no entrance; but the ditch on the northern side was very shallow. A number of cremated human bone deposits were found in the ditch on the eastern side of the site; some small fragments of bronze and glass beads were recovered from these burials, Burials of cremated bone in the western part of the ditch did not contain finds and two were placed on stone settings. Two pits were also inserted in the silted-up ditch fill and covered over with a large boulder. Only one cremation was found in the centre of the site A small quantity of struck flint, including a thumbnail scraper, was recovered from the site. Some blue glass beads, a bronze fragment, a bone pin and an iron pin from separate deposits of burnt bone suggested that the burials date to the Iron Age, It is unclear whether any of the post holes in the centre of the site should be associated with this phase. In the sixth or seventh century AD, the interior of the enclosure was reused as an inhumation cemetery. Thirty-eight burials were removed. Adult male, female and child burials were placed in earth-dug graves oriented roughly east-west, with the head to the west. In some 76% of cases, the head was protected by "ear muff stones. Two buckles and some other iron fragments suggested that some burials were clothed. An iron spade-shoe was uncovered from one of the grave fills. Two structures were built at the southern end of the site during the early use of the cemetery, although one isolated burial lay between the two. The eastern

structure appears to be some form of keyhole-shaped drying kiln. The western structure was described by an oval setting of post holes containing a sunken area. A bone pin or needle was recovered from the sunken area. A single sherd of ware and a lignite bracelet found in the topsoil, may also date to this phase. At some point in the seventh or eighth century, the cemetery passed out of use (perhaps superseded by Mount Offaly, Cabinteely). In the late ninth century, Norse settlers constructed a long house on the site. The rubbish from this long house was deposited in a pit on the site and contained a large amount of animal bone and artefacts, including a whale bone plaque, generally associated with Norse women, and other typical Norse finds. The people who inhabited the site at this date left evidence for metal working, textile production and pastoral and arable agriculture. When the long house was deliberately demolished it was replaced by two structures. The path linking the two structures survived in one place as a narrow cobbled area. The northern structure was similar to type 1 houses from urban levels in Dublin and appears to have been rebuilt in the same place a number of times. The entranceway was marked by a small cobbled area, and a ringed pin and bone comb were uncovered from this structure. The second structure was rectangular and had an entrance to the south.

A number of Norse artefacts, including an amber bead, and eleventh or twelfth century bone comb and a number of ferrous artefacts that were paralleled in more secure Norse areas, were recovered from the fill of the ditch. A three-pronged object and a number of knives

were recovered, as were other sherds of Dublin-type wares. Similar pottery was recovered from the base of a drying kiln to the north-east of the site. This also included part of the millstone and pivot stone from a horizontal mill. Early Irish law tracts indicate that a certain level of noble, known as an *occaire* had to have a share in a kiln, a granary and a mill As kilns were too dangerous to locate within ring forts they were located on a communal property, such as a local cemetery. This appears to be the case at Cherrywood.

There was **no meeting in May due to the travel restrictions in force during the outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease***

Saturday 9th June 2001 OUTING TO DUNSANY CASTLE

The trip to Dunsany Castle was a half-day outing. Twenty members and friends attended and the day was remarkably fine and dry.

As soon as you enter the castle you are embraced by the feeling of a home that has been occupied by generations of Plunketts. The castle was built in 1181. We were shown around by Thomas Potterton who started in the hallway, ornamented by swords, sabres, pikes, some guns and suits of armour which may have been imported.

The guided tour included the dining room and the 18th century staircase which gave a central focus to this castle with its homely and lived-in atmosphere. Portraits of all the barons Dunsany hung on the dining

room walls.

The Dunsany estate was originally part of Killeen Castle estate and was divided between Plunkett sons.

The library, which is being refurbished, is a striking room with red and gold wallpaper and drapes and dark wood panelling. The Wedgwood room was bright and light by contrast. There were elegant old and recently-restored items of furniture, an elaborate screen, a beautiful Japanese lacquered cabinet and objects d'art.

The bedrooms on show were also elaborate, colourful and tastefully laid out with bathrooms en suite. The attention to detail was everywhere. The rooms were to accommodate visiting dignitaries and heads of state.

In the kitchen and basement area the present Lady Dunsany keeps a special collection of china, glass and table settings for sale to the tourists. The expensive artificial flowers on sale are also to be seen displayed in the state rooms of the house.

There is a lovely walled garden some yards from the house, while inaccessible to us on that day, we enjoyed the view through the wrought iron gates.

Heather King gave us a detailed tour of the church which was built by Nicholas Plunkett, first Baron Dunsany, in the middle of the 15th century, on the site of an earlier church. There are towers at each corner. In a niche in the north wall is a tomb which depicts the dress of the time and is said to represent Christopher, Lord Dunsany and his wife Anna Fitzgerald. The baptismial font is ornate and decorated with depictions

of the crucifixion and the twelve apostles.

The present Lord Dunsany, Edward Plunkett and his wife reside in the Castle.

Saturday 21st July 2001
OUTING TO SOME PRE-HISTORIC TOMBS OF THE DUN LAOGH AIRE-RATHDOWN AREA.

Fifteen members met Rob Goodbody, who was conducting the tour, at the dolmen in Ballybrack, Situated on the west side of the road almost entirely surrounded by houses, formally part of the Domvile estate, it a small dolmen, but none the less impressive, with a capstone which measures 2.75 metres by 2,14 metres by 1,7 metres is firmly in place on its four supporting stones. A roughly-made knife and a number of flint flakes were found close to the dolmen. We travelled on to the townland of Kiltiernaa The portal tomb here has an enormous capstone and is the largest in the area and one of the finest in the country. It was partially excavated in 1956 and flints and potsherds were found,

Our next port of call was in Glencullen, where, we stopped briefly to view a single standing granite pillar in the middle of a field on the left side of the road. It is believed to be as deep underground as is visible above. The granite pillar was thought to have been placed there by the Vikings and it is thought there was another one nearby and was used for some sort: of sport! We travelled on to visit a very interesting gallery grave at Ballyedmonduff. This is a Bronze Age wedge tomb

on the south east slope of the Two Rock Mountain. This is now a forestry area and there is an avenue through the forest from Glencullen-Stepaside Road. The view from here is a rich reward for the short climb up the hill Our hopes and plans to proceed on to Kilmashogue were curtailed by the lateness of the hour, traffic and Leopardstown races. The outing came to a close on this note and grateful thanks to all who provided lifts.

27th Summer School
Evening Lectures 20th 24th August 2001

The series of evening lectures was opened by the president of the society Dr. Betty O'Brien, by dedicating the 27th Summer School to the memory of our most esteemed and loved colleagues who had passed away in this past year, Paddy Healy and Leo Swan.

Monday 20th August 2001 RECENT EXCAVATIONS AT BALLYNAMUDDAGH, BRAY HEAD.
Mary Deevy, MA

Mary Deevy was the archaeologist in charge of this excavation she is now the project manager for roads in Meath Co. Council.

The archaeological assessment of this site was as a result of the application for planning permission by Dwyer Homes for an 18-hole golf course. The site was on the landward side of Bray Head on land that had

been part of the Kilruddery Estate. When developing a golf course, developers usually plough the land, therefore the first necessity of the evaluation was to systematically field walk the area, so Darragh Lee set out the scheme for fieldwalking in 10 metre transects to systematically record all the artefacts. A huge amount of flint was found including arrowheads, and a jet bracelet. The proposal was made to monitor the development as the fairways were likely to be stripped. This was done by hand in metre squares at the flint areas and the areas with a spread of burnt stone or soil; They also did test pits and in the northern area found a lot of flint. A flint hoard or cache was found with over 100 struck flints which had been deposited carefully by someone. Analysing the cores and flints, some were unfinished and some ready for use, there were still intact cores and scrapers which were not associated with any structures, On fairway 10 more flint was found and as the topsoil was deep with archaeological features turning up, test trenches were dug. A ring ditch was found with pits and hearths so the whole fairway was valuable. The developer was shocked because the usual way to make a fairway is to take off the topsoil and then cut down or build up the area. Fortunately this was to be built up, so the finds arid features were recorded and then covered with a geo textile and then back-filled and preserved. The ring ditch was 5 metres diameter and had charcoal and cremated bone on the surface. There were pits which were probably funerary. Ring ditches are a simple form of funerary monument and this one had

been built over many centuries in the Bronze and Iron ages. Inhumations are also associated but are usually later. A circular feature was found which may have been a building, but there were no artefacts associated with it.

Fairway 8 had a couple of assorted features. There were small charcoal-filled pits, fragments of pottery and burned bone. One pit had pottery deliberately placed. There was a spread of hard baked white clay with pottery and flint associated with it and these may have been areas of human activity. It may be sub-soil exposed or deliberately placed there as the pottery sherds and flint may have been trodden in. In one part there was evidence of a fulacht fiadh with a mound of charcoal, burnt stones and a trough. No wood was found from the trough just stake holes. A fulacht fiadh is where water is heated in a trough with stone heated in a fire and food cooked in the water.

A small penanular slot trench was found which may be a bronze age hut with a very narrow entrance with postholes, beside it was another circular slot trench with what looked like a cist in it, there were no artefacts found. It seemed bizarre to have a rectangular cist in a hut. A large double circle of post holes was found nearby which is unlikely to be of the same period. Another structure with very large post holes, linear slot trenches which may not be a house but palisades. There were no artefacts with it and any charcoal will be dated by experts.

In another part of the site, post holes in an arc were

found with an opening to the south west which looks out to the Little Sugar Loaf, it had no hearth, This archaeological excavation and investigation shows that Bray Head is obviously a more important area than originally realised.

Tuesday 21st August 2001

CRANNOGS AND LAKE DWELLINGS OF EARLY MEDIEVAL IRELAND Aidan O'SuIIivan, MA

People have been living on lakeshores in Ireland since early prehistory, and we have a rich archaeological record of the use of lake dwellings in the Mesolithic, Bronze Age, early Medieval and late Medieval periods. The economic advantages of wetland life are well known in terms of abundant fish, wildfowl, plant foods and raw materials for building. In social terms, wetlands are places of refuge and defence, either through cautious island-living or the natural isolation of a waterlogged lakeshore.

Inspired by recent developments in anthropology and landscape archaeology, wetlands can now be seen not only as a physical backdrop for human action or environmental resources, but as a potential storehouse of cultural meanings for local communities. Myths, memory and certain types of activities could have been used to invest particular places with symbolic significance,

Early Irish historical sources reveal that lake shores were often seen as the homes of water serpents and monsters, e.g. Lough Derravaragh is well known as the abode of the children of Lir. Magical significance also attached to islands in the Early Medieval period. In the twelfth century Giraldus Cambrensis heard about an island in a north Munster lake where no one ever died of old age. Clearly they were seen as powerful places in the Early Medieval imagination.

Strong secular and ecclesiastical figures, such as saints and kings w[r]ere associated with lake and island stories; and some social groups may also have used the popular perception of islands and lakes to contest and resist power.

Crannogs, the distribution of approximately 1,200 of which is broadly known in Ireland, are traditionally defined as artificial islets of stone, timber, and soil, enclosed within a stout wooden palisade; but this narrow definition obscures a further range of cairns, platforms, lake-edge settlements and enclosures on natural islands

The origins and chronology of Irish crannogs has long been the subject of debate. The traditional interpretation that crannogs were first constructed in the Early Medieval period, possibly introduced from Scotland, has now been revised by recent discoveries on Lough Gara, Co.Sligo which demonstrate that classic crannogs, small palisaded islands out in the open water, were being built in the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age.

However, there is also a wide range of archaeological, artefactual; and dendrochronological evidence that suggests a particularly intensive phase of crannog occupation between the sixth and ninth centuries AD. Some Irish crannogs also continued to be occupied and used into the late Middle Ages and beyond.

Crannogs have traditionally been interpreted as the homesteads of lower nobility or kings. However, there is sufficient variation in their form, size and material assemblage to suggest more complex hierarchies of social status, economy and occupation history,, Depending on their size, location and history of use, crannogs were used in quite different ways. Historical and archaeological evidence indicates that some were used as royal summer lodges, high-status assembly and feasting places, and as places for the negotiation of treaties. Others were used as the island homesteads of the 'middle classes[1], or as places of specialist craft production (typically iron-working), while others were used as safe storage places for church metal-work, and as temporary defensive refuges for local communities. In other words each particular site needs to be interpreted in its local context. Lagore crannog, Co. Meath is the historically attested royal site of the kings of Brega, the southern Ui Neill dynasty, and is frequently referred to in the Irish annals between the seventh and tenth centuries AD. Excavated in the 1930s, it has produced archaeological evidence of a royal residence, and of rituals of kingship. Other historically-attested royal crannogs can be identified in the landscape, such as Island MacHugh, Co. Tyrone;

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Cro-Inis, Co, Westmeath; Ardakillen, Co. Roscommon; and Lough Hackett, Co. Galway. The crannogs at Ballinderry 2, Co. Offaly; Rathinaun, Co. Sligo; Moynagh Lough, Co. Meath, and Levinallaree, Co. Mayo, are also likely to have been centres of lordly, if not royal, power in the Early Medieval settlement landscape.

The speaker posed a series of questions about the different roles of crannogs:

- Why were they used as royal sites?
- Why were they used as domestic farmsteads by people who seemed to ignore the wetland resources around them?
- Are crannogs the abode of those attempting to subvert the social order?
- Why were some crannogs used as metal-working sites?

After a stimulating paper outlining possible answers to these questions, the speaker concluded that "Early Irish historical and archaeological sources indicate that crannog and lake-dwelling served a range of different functions in the early Medieval settlement landscape. It is apparent that some sites could have served many functions at the same time, for example, a crannog would have been at once a place of dwelling, a place for production, as well as a place where the social relationships in the community were constantly negotiated, through gift-giving, reciprocity and exchange, and through the exchange of knowledge as in ironworking. What linked these activities together was the perception of lakes in early Medieval Ireland. Lakes were seen as significant places, partly in terms of

politics, economy, and defence, but partly also in-terms' of myth and memory. They were seen as places at the centre of people's lives, yet also curiously liminal - the island glistening out on the water reminding people of things that they already knew - the dangers of nature, and the ability that they themselves had, to negotiate with these forces/'

Wednesday 22nd August 2001
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN DENDROCHRONOLOGY
Professor **Mike Baillie**
In 1988 scientists observed that a series of Irish oaks exhibited their narrowest growth rings around AD540. The earth may have had a close encounter with a comet, plunging the planet into several "years without a summer", spreading famine across its surface and spawning a host of myths to explain and control a disintegrating world.

This was one of a list of dates identified in the Irish tree-ring record which seemed to be linked with environmental downturns due to large volcanic eruptions. The most famous of these dates has to be the 1628 BC event It was first noticed as a severe frost-ring in American bristlecone pines for 1627 BC. It is now pretty certain that this wide spread environmental downturn was caused by the eruption of Thera. This has been confirmed by recent discoveries of tiny glass fragments of tephra or volcanic dust from Thera in a Greenland layer.

Volcanologists have long recognised AD536/37 as the most severe "dry fog" or "dim sun" event of the last two millennia. The Chinese recorded severe famines in the late 530s, with several references to dust falling from the sky, and the ruling Wei dynasty was engulfed in crisis and split in two. In the Mediterranean, the plague of Justinian named after the emperor who was lucky to survive it, arrived at Constantinople in AD 542, having apparently broken out one or two years earlier in Egypt. Irish and Welsh annals record plague reaching Britain and Ireland in the mid-540s. Something nasty seemed to be happening on a global scale.

The analysis of the growth patterns of oak trees for this time over the British Isles and northern Europe showed that the event was one of the worst for oaks in the last 1500 years. AD 536 was the second coldest year recorded in northern Sweden and 535, 536 and 541 were three of the coldest ever years in the Sierra Nevada.

What caused it? If it was a volcanic eruption there was no sign of volcanic dust in the Greenland ice core. Dr Baillie started to look at alternatives. The key to a global, dim sun, cold climate event is "atmospheric loading" - a mass of material injected into the stratosphere which reflects back sunlight preventing it from reaching the earth, thus causing the surface to cool dramatically, If it wasn't from a volcano could it have come from the outer space. There could have been lots more of it higher up and therefore hanging around for longer. Was it material left over in the disintegration of a comelt within the inner solar system, or bits of a comet

passing close by the earth. Three British astrophysicists had published a paper in which they argued that the period AD 400-600 had experienced and abnormally large number of major meteor showers, and that impact by a shower of cometary debris in this period was a very real possibility, Two independent projects coming from different directions had arrived at the same conclusion around the same time. A brush with a comet around AD 540 looked like something more than mere speculation.

Historical records for the period are limited and the ancient writers whose work does survive, make no reference to an environmental downturn, though maybe things were so chaotic that record keeping was impossible. Later there are hints of something awful in the recent past. Zacharias comments around AD 556 that "what we have just been through and the generation before us is like the curse of Moses in Deuteronomy. There is a reference in an Irish myth where Bres the Irish king asks the druids, 'Why is the sun coming up in the west today, when every other day he comes up in the east?' Their reply was 'That is the face of Lugh of the Long." In other words, the druids would have preferred it to have been the sun but the bright object coming up in the west was something else, could this be something to do with a comet.

From his research Dr Baillie found other references to a comet gradually increasing with the head in the east, the tail in the west and remained visible above forty days. Records of a comet in Gaul when the whole sky seemed on fire. In the same year, there dropped real blood from

the clouds, and a dreadful mortality ensued. One third of Europe's population died, in China there was famine and the ruling dynasty broke up. In Central America, the Maya faced drought, famine and population collapse. There are so many disasters recorded from that time.

Was there a brush with a comet?

Thursday 23rd August 2001

LAMBAY :AN ISLAND STORY

Professor Gabriel Cooney

Lambay is an island off the Dublin coast with a long history of settlement. It has a rich wildlife, particularly seabirds. Lambay and the rocky shore at Portrane on the mainland to the west are the remains of a volcanic island . This has given the island a complex geology which includes porphyry. A great deal of worked flint has been found and appears to be mostly Neolithic. Pebble flint occurs on the rocky beaches on the western side of the island and there is evidence of flint imported from Antrim,, The presence of javelin heads suggests that there were individuals of some social stature in the community.

At the harbour there were at least two crouched inhumations accompanied by objects that date them to the latter part of the 1st century AD. One of the burials appeared to be that of a warrior with his iron sword and shield, and some of the other objects, such as an iron mirror, may indicate that there was a female burial present..

There is "also evidence of Romano-British material and speculation that there was a community engaged the trading with Roman Britain.

Lambay Island was owned by the Ussher family until the early nineteenth century and over the next hundred years it passed through several hands until purchased by Cecil Baring in 1904. Cultivation ridges remain from this period in sheltered areas on the rough, higher ground to the east. In the 1930s the White House was built to a design by Sir Edwin Lutyens with the collaboration of Cecil and Maude Baring they transformed the area from the harbour to the castle. Lutyens was keen to use local materials and Lambay Porphyry was used as the main building stone, with limestone quarried near Skerries.

Stone axes made of porphyry were found in the 1920s, More recently an excavation has been carried out and has found a site of axe production on Lambay.

A grave containing six individuals, all believed to be male and in their late teen and early twenties has been found. There was no indication of trauma to the bones, they may be the remains of a ships crew who died from illness. Some Spanish pottery was deposited nearby.

The island is privately-owned and permission must be sought to visit it.

Friday 24th August 2001

THE HEART OF DUBLIN
Peter Pearson

This lecture was an illustrated tour of Dublin looking at

the centre of the city and where it is at the moment and started with a view from a helicopter looking up river through the heart of Dublin to the Guinness Brewery from Liberty Hall. This was a good place to start as the Liffey is the spiritual heart of Dublin with its quays and its future looked grim with demolition, dereliction and neglect twenty years ago. Now there is new life with the board walk, the new Millenium Bridge and the Halfpenny Bridge being restored. There has been a radical transformation with people now living in the centre. Dublin Castle has been transformed, gone from an administrative and tax office, to a good tourist attraction with the Chester Beatty Library and many conferences as well as the tribunals. The River Poddle flows around the castle, through Palace Street and then close to the Olympia Theatre, a branch once formed a mill race near Dame Street. The Poddle culvert which was built in 1900 was broken into by mistake near the Chester Beatty Library and looked very attractive but unfortunately it couldn't be left like that because of security worries at the castle. The chapel is a beautiful building, no longer used for religious purposes. It has beautiful stonework and many carvings.

Speeds 1610 map shows the River Poddle, the castle and Trinity College. The houses are shown with gables. Small gables in the style known as Dutch Billy, many were probably replaced by the Wide Streets commission in the early 19th century.

The only bridge crossing the river was at Church Street, there was also a ferry.
Much of the city is on the south side of the Liffey.

Gilbert's three-volume history of Dublin published in 1850s didn't venture north.

Very little remains of the walls which surrounded the city, there are some in Cook Street and Ship Street and St Audoens's Arch. Cook Street was known for coffin-makers and French polishers, traditions which lasted up to forty years ago.

The buildings now occupied by Kevin Street Garda Station contain several elements of the Palace of St Sepulchre, including a sixteenth-century arched entrance, on the side closest to the cathedral, with some carving above it, the original seventeenth century staircase and a panelled door. Peter showed slides of the house he lived in for ten years, no. 2 Palace Street; Palace Street is near the pedestrian entrance to Dublin Castle. Number 2 is the only original house to survive and was built around 1766 and modified in the 1800s, It had been the offices of The Sick and Indigent Roomkeepers' Society since 1855 until the 1990s. When it was bought and refurbished.

The steady decline of the city evident in the 1970s and 80s has been slowed, demolitions are not so common. Symbolic of the revival of the city is the restoration of City Hall. It is now one of the most majestic public buildings in Dublin. It was originally called the Royal Exchange and was a meeting place for trading and for storing goods. It was erected by the merchants of Dublin, who required a proper space in which to do business, it was also close to the Custom House then nearby on the quays. It was taken over in 1852 by Dublin Corporation as its headquarters and meeting

place, walls and screens were constructed, separating the central domed area from the surrounding spaces. This allowed for the creation of offices and meeting rooms within the building. It has now been completely renovated with the structural changes removed and the inside opened up and is a top quality European building."

Dublin has changed very little, prints from 1790 of the Four Courts show the scale of the houses and the width of the quays are still the same. The lifeblood of the city is the river and the port, the Custom House, built a considerable distance downstream from the earlier one, was restored in the late 1980s and is a remarkable building. It has a magnificent cut-stone facade which fronts on to the river. There are carvings of ships around the pediment and the heads on the keystones which represent the rivers of Ireland are carved from single blocks of Portland stone.

A light ship at the end of the South Bull was replaced by a lighthouse built of granite from a quarry in the area of Bulloch near Dalkey. An engraving from 1791 shows ships and a crowded river. The quays didn't have walls as they do now and merchants had warehouses behind Bachelors Walk. The area near the city quays was becoming derelict in 1980s, so much has been restored it is hard to believe it is the same place. Temple Bar so nearly got completely wiped out for a bus station. The oldest house in Dublin is in Aungier Street was about to be demolished when the Dublin Civic Trust intervened and Dublin Corporation acquired what was found to be the oldest surviving house dating from

1666. The Dublin Civic Trust arranged for the conservation of the staircase and stabilised the structure. It was then sold on to a sensitive developer who has created a small B&B business whilst preserving the historic features.
The Georgian part of the city Mention Square built on land owned by Lord Fitzwilliam from 1751 and overseen by his land agent Mrs Verschoyle is still largely intact with its beautiful park in the centre. As with Fitzwilliam Square many of the original features such as fireplaces have been stolen. We were shown a slide of one of the very few houses in Fitzwilliam Square which is still in use as a family residence. Those with sharp ej'es might have recognised the figure in the window as one of our members! It is interesting to note that so many people now giving evidence and involved with the planning tribunals currently sitting in Dublin Castle are the people who were responsible for the destruction of much of our city.

Saturday 8th September 2001
OUTING TO FARMLEIGH HOUSE

Fifteen members and friends visited Farmleigh House and gardens. It was to have been a private showing, but just a day beforehand, the Office of Public Works decided to open the house to the public. Nevertheless, there were not too many visitors when we arrived, on that beautiful September afternoon.

The 18th century mansion set in 78 acres had recently been purchased by the state and after much restoration it is now being used for visiting heads of state and other

dignitaries and the occasional North-South Executive meeting, It was bought by Edward Guinness in the mid 1870s and extensively re-modelled in Victorian splendour, it served as a Guinness residence for the next 130 years.

We drove past a picturesque gate lodge up a long winding drive from which we had a splendid view of the house. It is a very large three-storied building, clad in Portland stone and has quite a long frontage, The external appearance dates from the late 19th century. (The 19th century architects were James Fuller and William Young).

The entrance is through a pillared porch and a solid Victorian pillared hall. This leads to a long corridor running parallel with the front and dividing the house in two. From this, various rooms lead to the front and back and at the end is a really magnificent conservatory, built in the early 1900s, containing some exotic plants and leading to the lovely gardens.

The designs and decor of the various rooms are modelled on different historical styles, for example the 17th century style oak-panelled dining room, the morning room with fine Adamesque stucco work and the fine ballroom with delicate French 18th century style plasterwork.

In the corridor were some very antique tapestries and we were intrigued by the large "Debtor's chair" which trapped the unfortunate debtor by the wrists in a suitable hollow on the arm rest, until he paid up.

The library houses some quite valuable works, placed in

the overhead gallery, the entrance to which is, understandably, secret.

We were not shown the upper rooms, nor the basement which contains a swimming-pool and gym.

The gardens on this lovely early autumn day were at their best, stately old trees, ponds with fountains, orchard, a sunken garden, a very cool dairy with lots of marble and pretty stained glass windows depicting suitable dairy scenes, large glass houses and picturesque old mews.

An interesting item was the fact that the ground around the front porch had been made especially soft so the sound of carriages and horses' hooves would not unduly disturb the residents.

Some of us ended the enjoyable afternoon with tea and cakes in the nearby interpretive centre,

28th—20th September 2001

WEEKEND VISIT TO ATHENRY

Nineteen members gathered at the Castle Gate Hotel on the Friday evening. After supper we were joined by some members of the Galway Historical Society and assembled for a lecture by Professor Etienne Rynne. We started with wine and refreshments compliments of our host who told us of the discovery of an ancient bell and grave slabs and a Sheila-na-gig in Templemoyle near Athenry. We were given handouts on the Synod of Whitby, Knockmoy Abbey, Athenry, the medieval town.

Early on Saturday morning accompanied by Professor Etienne Rynne we went to Knockmoy Abbey a Cistercian abbey founded by Cathal Crovdearg O'Connor, King of Connacht in 1190 and built on marshland. The medieval frescoes on the chancel wall depict the Martyrdom of St Sebastian, a Crucifixion and three living and three dead kings, under the three dead kings is the inscription "We have been as you are, you shall be as we are"

In the afternoon we were joined by more members and we visited the castle built by Mayler de Bermingham. it was started in 1241 and enlarged in 1324, then rebuilt in 1427. A wealth of historical records are to be found here amongst beautiful windows, tombs, recesses and engraved grave slabs.

We toured the walled town of Athenry and saw the finest medieval walls remaining in Ireland, we went as far as it was possible to see the walls without trespassing on private property. We also saw the market cross and its 15th century lantern or tabernacle-type cross used to seal bargains.

The next morning after linking up with our lecturer and his wife we were taken to the mausoleum of the Frenches of Monivea. Monivea was originally home to the O'Kellys and bought by Patrick Fitzrobert French in 1609, who later fortified the castle. After Patrick's death his son Robert succeeded him. following his death in 1649, he was succeeded by his son Patrick, who supported the confederation of Kilkenny and lost his landis to Cromwell on 1653. Monivea was

eventually repurchased in 1676 with a dowry of £350 and a family loan,. We heard more about the French family and were able to visit the mausoleum and go up onto the roof. We visited the 18th century ice house and the site of the old castle,

We visited the Turoe stone, a 1.68 metre high domed pillar carved on its upper part in a curvilinear style which is in the Celtic art style known as La T&ne.

After a very interesting and successful weekend we all headed for home.

Wednesday 3rd October 2001

DIARMAIT MAC MURCHADA AND THE KINGDOM OF WICKLOW. Dr Edel Bhreathnech

The twelfth-century king ofLeinster, Diarmait mac Murchada, known to many generations for his abduction of Derbforgaill, wife of his rival Tigernan Ua Ruairc, and for his introduction of the Anglo-Normans to Ireland, was a complex and controversial figure even to his own contemporaries. This is exemplified by the contrast between two of his death-notices (1171): Annals of Tigernach

DiarmuidMac Murchadha, king ofLeinster and the Ostmen, the man who troubled Banba and destroyed Ireland, after mustering the foreigners and after ruining the Irish, after plundering and razing churches and territories, died at the end of an insufferable disease, through the miracles ofFinnian, Columcille and other saints whose churches he plundered.

Book of Leinster *Diarmait son of Donnchad son ofMurchad (reigned) 46 (years) and he was king of the southern half of Ireland and ofMeath He died at Ferns after the victory of unction and penance in his 61st year. Thereafter, the English wretchedly rule. Amen. Amen.*

He was described by Giraldus Cambrensis as being tall and well built, a brave and warlike man among his people, whose voice was hoarse as a result of having been in the din of battle. He preferred to be feared by all rather than loved. He treated his nobles harshly and brought to prominence men of humble rank. He was inimical towards his own people and hated by others. "All men's hands were against him and he was hostile to all men".

Diarmait reigned as king of Leinster during a period in Ireland when there was fierce competition between a small number of kings for the prize of the kingship of Ireland: An ambitious king had to be ruthless and skilful on many fronts;

-controlling his own kingdom
-conducting negotiations and making strategic political alliances

-controlling necessary economic resources

- military tactics

-controlling the church and its resources

-recognising an opportunity and seizing it quickly to his own advantage.

In his bid for the kingship of Ireland, Diarmait mac Murchaida made a determined effort in all these spheres,

sometimes succeeding and sometimes failing miserably.

Controlling his own kingdom

ATigl 141: 'Seventeen of the dynasts of Leinster were killed or blinded by Mac Murchada.'

This was Diarmait's method of dealing firmly with possible enemies. A further means of control was the concept of 'planters': defeating or annihilating a dynasty and replacing them with outsiders

Conducting negotiations and making strategic political alliances

While the powerful king of Connacht, Toirdelbach Ua Conchobair was alive, Diarmait was his ally: thus gaining a strong defence against Tigernan Ua Ruairc and northern king Muirchertach Mac Lochlainn. On Toirdelbach's death in 1156, Diarmait switched allegiance to Mac Lochlainn. He used marriage as a political tool: he himself married into the two main north Leinster dynasties (Ui FMain, Ui Muiredaig) and married his daughters to Mac Gillamoeholmoc, Ui Briain and Strongbow.

Diarmait[5] s skills of negotiation may have been erratic: on one hand he succeeded in gaining assistance (of a kind) from Henry II and in persuading Anglo-Norman adventures to come with him to Ireland. Yet, a darker side of Diarmait and his reluctance to negotiate is often suggested in the sources.

Controlling necessary economic resources

He controlled Wexford and Dublin and took tracts of land under his direct control: exacting tribute/tax, and endowing churches and new ecclesiastical orders.

Military tactics

In 1137: Diarmait used a fleet of 200 ships from Dublin to attack Waterford.

Patronage of the church

This was personified in the relationship with his wife's brother Lorcan Ua Tuathail, abbot and archbishop of Dublin. He helped re-defme the diocese of Glendalough at the Synod of Kells 1152. He established and endowed new reformed orders especially at Baltinglass (strategic) and in and around Dublin (All Hallows, St Mary de Hogges).

Opportunist

He made alliances and switched them. He used church reform e.g. relationship with SS Bernard and Malachy, and was addressed by Bernard in a letter to him as 'the sublime and glorious king of Ireland'.

How were these strategies evident in the kingdom of Ui Briuin Cualann (Wicklow)?

The Kingdom of Ui Briuin Cualann comprised part of the older and more extensive territory of Cualu, and extended from Dublin to Inber Dea (variously Newcastle/ Wicklow/ Arklow) - and west into Dublin / Wicklow mountains. This area included Dublin/ Booterstown/ Dalkey, to parishes of Newcastle/ Kilcoole. Sources mention that Glenn Muniri (Ballyman), Dun Brea (Bray), Telach na n-Escop (Tully),, Senchell (Shankill), Delgany, Tech Conaill

(Powerscourt) were included.

Dynasties associated with the territory included (up to the seventh century) the Dal Messin Corb (Ui Nair, Ui Garrchon). Whose saints included: Berchan of Shankill, Findbarr of Killegar.

The eighth century saw the ascendancy of the Ui Mail, Ui Theig and Ui Chellaig Cualann < Cellach Cualann (d.715). This is when the territory acquired the name of Ui Briuin Cualann.

The Ui Dunchada (Mac Gilla Mocholmoc, FitzDermot), expanded from west Dublin/ Kildare in the eleventh century, although since they held kingship of Leinster occasionally to the tenth century they could have ruled this territory at an earlier stage.

The Mac Torcaill, Kings of Dublin in the twelfth century, replaced the earlier Norse dynasty of Sitric Caech,

However, it is possible to suggest that strategies undertaken during the reign of Diarmait mac Murchada influenced subsequent land grants in the kingdom of Ui Briuin Cualann. The evidence is contained in his own charters e.g. circa 1162 the charter founding All Hallow's, Dublin; Baltinglass; Christ Church Deeds (Holy Trinity) no. 364, Confirmation of lands by John including ... Achatillagh nuneascoib and Culaght (granted) by Sigraghre son of ThorkiL.Rathkyllyn by Dearmarth, son of Imarchadan, king of Leinster... Balyhamind, Leasleran, and Ballyeghogan, by earl Richard...

Relations with Mac Gillamocholmoc dynasty

Diarmait controlled the Mac Gillamocholmoc dynasty from 1141 (as he did other Leinster dynasties) and Domnall mac Gillamocholmoc's (and his wife Derbforgaill's) deeds must be seen in this context, also the fact that he held his lands at Newcastle Lyons as a feudal tenant only rendering nominal rent of two otter skins and a liability for military service not necessarily fitting into new regime, just moving from one overlord (Diarmait) to another (Strongbow and the King).

Relations with Mac Torcaill kings of Dublin

Fraught since they had ignominiously killed his father m 1115. Askulv, son of Ragnall son of Thorkil repudiated Diarmait's claim to be overlord of Dublin in 1166 and could be regarded as one of those responsible for Diarmait's flight in that year. We know from land-grants made to Christ Church that the Mac Torcaills had held large tracts of land in Ui Briuin Cualann. They granted lands at Tully, Balluacharan and Tirodran to the church. Askulv was killed in 1171 by the Normans (at the time of Diarmait's death), thus ending the Norse kingship of Dublin. It is no wonder that Strongbow, acting as deputy to the King, could grant the lands of the sons of Turchil to Walter de Riddlesford in the immediate aftermath of Askulv's death.

Relations with Lorcan Ua Tuathail and Glendalough

Diarmait interfered with the Ui Muiredaig dynasty, which controlled Glendalough. Lorcan Ua Tuathail, abbot of Glendalough and archbishop of Dublin, was his brother-in-law. He probably supported the abbacy

of Thomas, Lorcan's nephew. In a remarkable charter dated 1172/6 Strongbow confirmed the abbacy of Thomas and the grants of lands of Glendalough -including a series of places in the lands of Macgillamochalmoc (e.g. Killegar, Glenmuniri Deirgni, Cellmaccabuirinn, Cellmomothenoc etc.). The charter ends with a statement by Strongbow which could not bring us any closer to Diarmait[5] s intentions for Glendalough and its lands

"Wherefore I will and bindingly ordain that the aforesaid abbot should have the aforementioned lands... free of tribute and...of all service to layman, as in the word of truth King Diarmait testified to me... *(stent mihi in verba veritatisDiarmicius Rex testatus)"*.

In the post-Norman period, a sizeable amount of the lands belonging to Glendalough passed into the possession of the archbishop of Dublin when the Sees of Dublin and Glendalough were united in 1216.

New Religious Orders

Diarmait was patron to the new Orders at: St Mary's Abbey: Carrickbrennan etc. It is noteworthy that a charter was issued after 1168 to St. Mary's by Derbforgaill daughter of Diarmait, Domnall Mac Gillamocholmoc, and possibly Enna son of Diarmait.

Strongbow/ Royal demesne

Strongbow had close relations with Diarmait, his daughter Aife was married to Strongbow: The Glendalough charter, already mentioned, provides evidence of Strongbow[1] s willingness to carry out

Diarmait's wishes and formally execute them; also the grants to Walter de Riddlesford, later curtailed by King John as it conflicted with royal policy of directly administering Dublin and the surrounding districts. The Royal demesne included: Cork near Bray, Ballycorus, parts of Kilmacanogue, Powerscourt, Carricolyn.

In spite of all Diarmait's strategies and alliances, Giraldus Cambrensis, when referring to the events of 1169, notes that in his hour of need, because of the desertion of many of his allies, he (Diarmait) found very few true friends apart from the followers of FitzStephen. So he retreated not far from Ferns, where he set about felling trees, made the woods impenetrable from all sides with fallen trees and logs joined together, broke up the level ground with deep pits and trenches, prepared hidden and narrow entrances and exits by tortuous routes, and in short made the terrain passable for himself and his followers and impassable for the enemy, thus greatly increasing its natural difficulty by artificial means.

Diarmait, who succeeded in re-establishing his kingship of Leinster in 1169, died at Ferns in 1171.

Wednesday 7th November 2001

PEOPLE, PLACES & PARCHMENT: THE DUBLIN CITY ARCHIVES Mary Clark

The Dublin City archives comprise the historic records of the civic government of Dublin from the 12th century

to the present. These include city council and committee minutes, account books; correspondence, reports, court records, charity petitions, title deeds, maps and plans, photographs and drawings, all of which document the development of Dublin over eight centuries.

The City Archives contain a significant number of medieval documents including charters issued to Dublin by successive English monarchs, many of which are beautifully illuminated. The White Book and Chain Book of Dublin are bound manuscripts on vellum, which include a compilation of civic laws, while the important City Assembly rolls record the activities of civic government from 1447 until 1841. The archive also holds lists of citizens who had the right to vote from 1468 onwards and these are a valuable genealogical resource, especially of old Dublin families. The archives of the Wide Streets commission are particularly important for any study of Georgian Dublin. The commission was one of Europe's first town planning authorities and was established in 1757 to develop wide and convenient streets through the city of Dublin. Among its other achievements the commission built Parliament Street, Westmorland and D'Olier Streets as well as Carlisle Bridge, now replaced by O'Connell Bridge. The minute books, maps, title deeds and architectural drawings produced for the commission before it was abolished in 1849 are all held and tell the story of the transformation of Dublin from medieval town into an elegant 1-8'th century city.

From the mid 17th century onwards, Dublin expanded in size and population, a process which was accelerated in the 19th century by the great famine, which drove people from the land into the city. Dublin Corporation, which was reconstituted in 1841 with Daniel O'Connell as Lord Mayor, had the responsibility for managing this expansion, a story which is told through minutes and reports. The development of the Vartry water supply, the construction of social housing, the introduction of public libraries, technical education, parks and playgrounds, the improvement of roads and management of traffic were all Victorian innovations which continued throughout the 20th century, the archive also holds the records of independent townships, Pembroke, Rathmines and Rathgar, which operated until 1930 and managed the development of Dublin's southern suburbs.

There are also records of several charitable committees, which were set up by various Lord Mayors of Dublin in the late 19th century. Chief among these is the Mansion House Fund for Relief of Distress in Ireland, which was created in 1880 to cope with the devastation caused by the little famine arising from several years of harvest failure in the late 1870s. The Mansion House Fund contains reports from over 800 local committees which co-ordinated relief efforts in every county in Ireland, describing often in harrowing detail the impact of the famine on the countryside and the people. Other charitable committees records include the Canadian Relief Fund, which attempted to develop the fishing industry in Ireland as an alternative source of income.

The South City Markets Fire Relief Fund helped street traders and stall holders who had lost their livelihood as a result of a devastating fire in 1892.

The City Archive can be consulted at the Pearse Street Library.

Wednesday **5th** December 2001

A NEW **LOOK AT MALTON'S DUBLIN**

Dr E **McParland**

Many Dublin people have been brought up on the prints of Dublin by James Malton. They have been on doctors' waiting room walls and have become table mats and are now regarded as a cliche, The thrust of this lecture was to open our eyes to the detail which may have been missed through familiarity.

The biographical details of Malton the man are obscure, Maurice Craig and the Knight of Glin have written about him, the most recent is by Andrew Bonar-Law and is packed with unpublished information.
James Malton was born in London, his father was an engraver. James came to Dublin as an apprentice in Gandon's office. He was exhibiting in London watercolours of Dublin, He drew and painted from field notes he made in 1780 and published in the 1790s. Sets of four or five at a time were published, each set sold for one guinea. They were all published together at the end of 1790. .{
Later he worked as an architect and published designs for cottages, these were sentimental designs evoking

rustic life, this was fashionable at the time. Dr McParland produced a copy of the property supplement of the *Irish Times* where there was a drawing of new (2001) houses in suburban Dublin showing a remarkable resemblance to Malton's drawings.

His first great book of engravings of city views was a de luxe edition. The quality was fantastic compared to others. Malton's watercolours were produced for exhibitions.

In his book Bonar-Law says he is of the opinion that no coloured aqua tints were produced in Malton's lifetime.

In 1799 A bound volume of 25 aquatints was priced at £16.10 shillings. The title page was very elaborate with wonderful calligraphy and coats of arm. Each view has an accompanying page of text relating to the view.

The prints are teeming with life and architectural detail, though they are not all believable. There is a lady depicted looking out of the window of Leinster House as the hall rises to two or more stories, she would have to have been able to levitate. The Blue Coat School shows a spire in architectural drawings but in fact was never built. Some of the perspective view points were not always correct. Facades were "swung" to give a better picture than is really possible. His lamplighters, street fountains, and the dress of the passers-by are all correct. He shows the wooden railings in the grand streets. The vehicles were accurate including the solid wheels of the Dublin carts. The sedan chairs show the licences which had to be bought and displayed, the profits of which went to the Rotunda Hospital.

All life on the streets were shown, tiny perfect vignettes. Apple sellers outside Trinity College and timber being floatted down the Liffey, shopping and merchandise being brought out to the coaches of the purchaser. There is fantastic architectural detail, though some licence was taken, occasionally the shadows suggest that the sun would have to have been in the north,

The streets are shown as very clean with no horse manure

Leo Swan

We lost a distinguished and much loved member of Rathmichael Historical Society this year. Leo will be remembered for the generous input of his guiding hand at the summer school, where both young people and adults were introduced to archaeology, many later graduating to the professional ranks thanks to Leo's encouragement. He was involved in the day to day running of the summer school programme from 1979 to 1992 and when the excavation programme associated with the summer school ceased in 1992, he continued to be involved in the summer lecture series until the year before his death.

He is greatly missed

Editor's note I wish to thank most sincerely all those who helped me with this edition of the Rathmichael record. Particularly Dr. Betty O'Brien, June Burry Aida Whelan, Rob Goodbody and Rosemary Beckett.