

A Titanic Venture: The New Archive Repository for PRONI

The latest addition to the Belfast skyline is the future Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. Currently under construction, this new state-of-the-art repository is situated adjacent to the Odyssey Arena at the heart of the Titanic Quarter - formerly home to shipbuilders, Harland & Wolff.



Artist's impression of new PRONI Building

In August 2007, Titanic Quarter Ltd was appointed to provide the site, design and construct the new PRONI. Construction of the new building at Titanic Quarter commenced on 24 November 2008 at an event attended by the then Minister for the Department of Arts, Culture and Leisure, Gregory Campbell, and Nigel Dodds, Minister for Finance and Personnel, at that time.

In little under a year, the vacant site has been transformed by the erection of the four storey vaults which comprise the hub of the new building. The imaginative design of the record office means that the remainder of the staff and public areas will encircle the repositories. Available facilities will comprise amongst others: exhibition areas, multi functional space, a search room incorporating a Family Records Centre, reading rooms, conservation and reprographic facilities. Of particular importance, the visitor experience will be considerably enhanced with provision for 80 users in the 'split' reading rooms, one of which will be tailored specifically to the needs of serious researchers. At the time of writing, both manual and electronic racking is being installed in the vaults.

From the outset of the project, business continuity has been factored into the equation.

For example, to cater for rising sea levels (based on a 200 year prediction), global warming and the possibility of a tidal wave sweeping up Belfast Lough, the building has been elevated 4.2 metres above the surrounding area. The finished floor levels of the new record office will now far exceed any predicted future rise in sea level.

In the run up to and during the move, the decant of the records to Titanic Quarter will, however, form only one part of the transition process. The enormity of moving 40km of material, staff, equipment, furniture etc. and the associated logistics of setting up the new building was recently described by Nelson McCausland, Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure as '**a mammoth task**'.

With the new building will come a transformed PRONI with a range of new services and associated processes and procedures including improved on-site customer service, more digitised material and additional on-line databases. To assist in the delivery of the new services, PRONI has conducted a series of benchmarking exercises which have access and preservation at the heart of the process. Plans are also at an advanced stage for hosting the inaugural exhibition at the new site.



Building work progress at PRONI Site September 2009.

The expected date of opening to the public for the new record office will be May/ June 2011. It is estimated that to physically move the 40km of material will take approximately 6 months. To ensure that services in the new building will be operational, PRONI will have to impose a 'Temporary Change to Service Delivery'. This is expected to last from September 2010 until May/June 2011. In a recent press release Minister McCausland advised: "*Discussions are currently taking place with partner organisations to put in*

place arrangements to allow customers to have alternative sources to draw upon during this period. Whilst the public will not be able to physically access the Balmoral Avenue site during the move, PRONI will continue to provide a limited correspondence and telephone enquiry service and will address FOI and urgent legal enquiries."

Lawrence Stanford and Stephen Scarth, PRONI

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ARCHIVES IN PROFILE:
Archives at Knock, Co. Mayo

In August 2008, John Kirwin, Archivist with J.D Consulting was contracted to catalogue the large collection of paperwork which had built up at Our Lady's Shrine, Knock during the past fifty years.

Before John Kirwin's arrival at Knock two important collections have previously been accessioned: the **Coyne Collection** and the **Cusack Papers** (Nun of Kenmare). These two collections amount to 3,500 documents and were an important base upon which to continue the archival work.

The earliest contemporary material found to-date comes from the periods when the Rev. John Colcannon (1956-64) and his successor, the Rev. John Fitzgerald (1964-68) were parish priests of Knock and administrators of the Shrine of Our Lady of Knock.

Earlier material does exist, such as a bound volume of a London based weekly newspaper entitled *The Age* from 1828, which is the foundation year for the present parish church. In view of Knock's relatively recent forays into matters matrimonial, I note the following from the issue of 24 February, entitled 'Connubial Maxims'.

- If your object is to be happy, never marry a rich woman...
- If you mean to be a really domestic man, never marry an ugly woman, even though she have the wealth of Plutus and the virtues of an angel.
- If you would live happy, always whistle or laugh while your wife is scolding.
- If she gets into a fury, take yourself off without trying to pacify her; a man who exposes himself to as storm, is sure of being pelted, while the storm is never the shorter nor the less severe.

Nine other maxims appear in this invaluable marriage notice! And mention of matrimonial matters brings to mind, the Knock Marriage Bureau, which commenced operations in 1968 under the guidance of the Rev. Michael Kane. This is represented in the archive through some files from the late 1980s through to the early 1990s, which derived from The Rev. Kane's office.

Other early material includes a small collection of letters relating to Sister M. Frances Clare Cusack, otherwise 'the Nun of Kenmare' which will be incorporated into the Cusack Collection, already mentioned. On 15 December 1881, this great lady wrote from the Poor Clare Convent at Harold's Cross, Dublin to Archbishop McCabe of Dublin, seeking permission to visit Knock. She wrote: 'There is a great work to be done in and around Knock quite apart from what the Church may eventually decide about the matter – and it is for this Dr. McEvilly [Archbishop of Tuam] wants me. His Grace says there are at least 400 children who should be at school and are not.'

In this category too we have a copy of Daniel Campbell's account of life in and around Knock written long after he had emigrated to England. This author was born at Knock in 1825 and his family is still well represented in the area. Hearing about the Apparition at Knock, shortly after its occurrence in August 1879, Daniel decided to write an account of his native place which he hoped would be of interest to the wider world. The writer's grandson the Rev. Brother Philip Brennan, C.P., (Passionist Congregation) loaned the 120 page notebook to the Rev. John Baptist Byrne, C.P., who subsequently had a typescript made up. The whereabouts of the original manuscript is unknown and what we have is a photocopy. The National Library of Ireland has a copy too (ms. 31,718) amongst its holdings.



New strong rooms at Knock Archives

There are many other things of interest in this collection. The earliest surviving parish account book for instance covers the years 1909 to 1963.

This opens in April 1910 with details of the 'Parochial Collection for Church Repairs'. By 15 June 1912, £313 3s.1d. had been collected which was spent on repairs to the church roof including the provision of lead, then as now an expensive commodity. Repairs were also necessary to the confessionals and some of the windows. New baptistery rails were installed, a spiral staircase to the organ loft was inserted, some existing statues received new pedestals and a painting of the vision of Knock was repainted (touched up) and mended, while its frame was re-gilded.

In 1925, Harry Clarke (1889-1931) the now famous Irish stained glass designer and illustrator, was paid £160.00 for two stained glass windows while

the equally renowned Miss Sarah Purser (1848-1943), received £40.00 for a 'Rose' window. Mr. [Albert] Power (1881-1945) the Dublin born sculptor received £100 for a Statuary group, then on the South Gable of the parish church but now in the Museum. The archives also document the gift of a sculptor of the Sacred Heart, again by Power, to Knock, from the Society of Jesus, Rathfarnham, Co. Dublin in the 1980s.

The collection includes records relating to the many building projects undertaken in the past fifty years. These include Knock Airport, the Basilica, the Reconciliation Chapel, St. Joseph's Hostel, the New Apparition Chapel and the Knock House Hotel.

In all, 1,800 files have been listed and boxed to-date, which largely derive from the days of Msgr. James Horan and his successor Msgr. Dominic Grealy. The photographic collection has yet to be tackled. It is hoped that material relating to the Knock Medical Bureau and other as yet unidentified material from private sources will also be transferred to Our Lady's Shine Archive.

With its own specially commissioned archival building, with proper shelving recently installed, Knock can now offer a safe haven to archival material.

John Kirwan, Archivist, JD Consulting

Transatlantic Event in Dublin



Neil Horstman, White House Historical Association, with Lord Mayor of Dublin Eibhlin Byrne, at the launch of James Hoban, Architect of the White House in Dublin's City Hall.

Washington Comes to Dublin was the title of a day-long celebration on 1 May 2009. This was a joint initiative by Dublin City Archives in partnership with the Dublin Civic Trust, the Royal Dublin Society and the White House Historical Association. It was designed to showcase two travelling exhibitions from Washington D.C. and to strengthen links between the partner organizations and their respective cities.

The day began at 10.00 a.m. in Dublin's City Hall, with the launch of James Hoban, Architect of the White House. This exhibition documents the life and career of Kilkenny-born Hoban, who trained at the Dublin Society Schools before emigrating

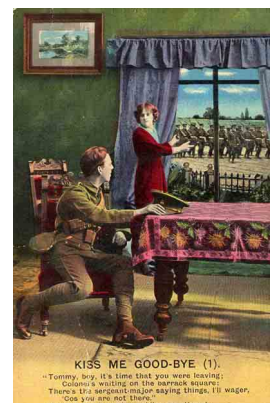
to the United States in 1785. His work in Philadelphia, the temporary capital of the new Republic, brought Hoban to the attention of George Washington and, following a competition arranged by Thomas Jefferson, he was appointed to design the presidential residence in the new capital city, Washington D.C. The neo-classical style chosen by Hoban was inspired by the architecture of the Georgian Dublin of his youth, and his knowledge of the Royal Exchange (now City Hall) informed his estimate of construction costs for the new White House. In launching the exhibition, Lord Mayor Eibhlin Byrne noted that Hoban had also engaged in local politics, and was a member of the City Council in Washington D.C. for over twenty-five years. Professor Kevin B. Nowlan then gave an address in the Council Chamber entitled *James Hoban in Context* which placed Hoban's work in its political and constitutional framework. As Professor Nowlan remarked, this scion of Kilkenny soil had found himself unexpectedly at the centre of world events, with the creation of a new Republic in the New World, and had risen to this challenge by designing a defining symbol for the fledgling nation.

The large audience then moved to the Royal Dublin Society, where the second exhibition *Horses of the U.S. Presidents* was launched in the afternoon, with news that President Obama is planning to have the White House stables re-built for its current equine inhabitants! The special guest speaker at both launches was Neil Horstman of the White House Historical Association. Dublin City Archives hopes to build on these connections in the years to come, since links both local and international are invaluable to all parties concerned.

Mary Clark, Dublin City Archivist

Keogh Postcard Collection at Dublin City Archives

In June 2009 Dublin City Archives acquired a collection of nineteenth and twentieth century postcards, which were donated by Mr. George Keogh through the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Association.



The collection originally belonged to Mr. George Keogh's granduncle, who served in the Royal Muser Fusiliers. The Keogh Postcard Collection consists of 47 postcards relating mainly to the Cretan Insurrection (1897), Easter Rising (1916), First World War (1914 - 1918) and Irish Civil War (1922 - 1923).

RDFA/17/33 Bamforth Song Set Postcard

The postcards vary: from coloured collages to black and white amateur photographs, from greeting cards to images documenting the atrocities of the Great War. Also included in the collection are Greek postcards commemorating Cretan soldiers during the Insurrection in 1897, and an 'Erin go Brach' postcard, made in France in support of 3rd Royal Munster Fusiliers.

The atmosphere of the first months of the Great War has been captured by postcards depicting the Dardanelles campaign preparations, which document soldiers' life in the temporary base at Lesvos (Greece). Researchers may also be interested in series of colour song postcards from the popular Bamforth Song Sets and a set of postcards of the British fleet in 1914.

The collection also documents a turbulent period of Dublin and Irish history with postcards containing images of Easter Rising heroes, of the destruction of the Dublin's streets in April 1916, and images from the Irish Civil War



RDFFA/17/45 O'Connell Street, 1922

The Keogh Postcard Collection has been scanned and listed by Anna Cwidak, University of Gdansk, Poland whilst on internship at Dublin City Library and Archive (DCLA) and have been added to the Royal Dublin Fusiliers Archive, held at DCLA.

Anna Cwidak, University of Gdansk, Poland

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ACAI Summer Course 2009

The Association of Church Archivists' Ireland summer course was held at Holy Cross College, Clonliffe Road, Drumcondra from 29 June to 3 July. Twenty persons attended, mainly representing religious congregations. On the first morning we were welcomed by Dominique Horgan, the Association's Chairperson and the course began with a lecture on the management of archives by Kerry Holland from the UCD School of History and Archives. Kerry outlined the aims of an archive service. She spoke about why archives should be preserved and the role of an archivist within an institution, especially the importance of being given organisational authority to carry out the functions of archivist. For the rest of the week Kerry

continued each day to give us direction in relation to the management of archives taking us through the various key tasks involved in processing a collection and compiling a catalogue or descriptive list.

Marianne Cosgrave, Congregational Archivist, Sisters of Mercy, covered the pastoral function of Church Archives as outlined in the circular letter from the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church, dated 2 February 1997. She said that Church Archives are now not just seen as static objects but something that can be utilized to promote the mission of the Church. Ellen Murphy, Senior Archivist at the Dublin City Archives took us through the challenges in providing a reader service for users of archives, including all the aspects that would need to be considered in the setting up of such a service.

The first day ended with a visit to the Dublin Diocesan Archives' new premises situated in the old Seminary Library at Holy Cross College where Noelle Dowling had on display various documents, photographs and volumes which she used to demonstrate some of the physical problems encountered in the preservation of archives. The new archive was very impressive with its spacious room and smooth running mobile shelving.

Marie Stuart gave us a lively introduction to oral archives. She spoke about how the human voice can give quality and depth to an event or story that would not be apparent in the written word and gave us some advice about how to conduct an interview. Tom Quinlan from the National Archives brought the rather dry subject of records management to life. Fr. Ciarán O'Carroll, author of *Paul Cardinal Cullen: Portrait of a Practical Nationalist* (Veritas, 2008), concluded our second day with an entertaining talk on religious archives and the historian. His perspective was slightly different from that of the archivist!

Zoe Reid, Conservator at the National Archives, took us through the basics of record preservation and conservation, illustrating her talk with examples from the collections in her care. In her second lecture Marianne Cosgrave stressed the importance of religious organisations having an access policy with regard to their archives which should have a predisposition towards openness while protecting the rights of the individual by withholding access to sensitive material. The whole group admired the new archive of the Christian Brothers in Griffith Avenue when we visited there. The archivist, Michelle Cooney, showed us around their fine new purpose built premises which contains reading and processing rooms, three store rooms and an air-conditioned photograph storage room.

On Thursday morning Pat Reidy opened our eyes to the many aspects of electronic records management and told scary stories about data breaches! He emphasised the importance of having proper policies, procedures and practices within Information Technology systems. We spent Thursday afternoon on a very worthwhile visit to the UCD Archives at Belfield where Orna Somerville and Lisa Collins took us through their search room practices and the processing and storage of their archives.

Our final day began with a stimulating lecture on film archives and the work of the Irish Film Institute from Sunniva O'Flynn. She informed us as to the background and establishment of the archives, its holdings and storage facilities and strongly encouraged anyone who found films in their care to deposit them in the Film Archive as they have the most ideal storage facilities for long-term preservation. Penny Woods, Russell Library Librarian, NUI, Maynooth, spoke to us about the care of books, particularly those pre 1840 and took us through the various stages of sorting a collection. She then gave us a good grounding in the history of printing especially in an Irish Catholic context.

Sincere thanks are due to Sister Marie O'Leary and the committee of ACAI for organising such an interesting, diverse and informative week long course and to Noelle, Dublin Diocesan Archivist, for looking after all our in house needs.

**Brigid Clesham, Archivist & Researcher,
Landed Estates Database Project**

Archive Awareness Month 2009

The launch of the 2009 Archive Awareness Campaign took place in the Guinness Archive at GUINNESS STOREHOUSE® on Thursday 20 August. The guest speaker was Vincent Browne, renowned journalist and broadcaster, who provided much entertainment in his speech, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.



Journalist and broadcaster, Vincent Browne

I would like to thank all members who attended and supported the launch. A special thanks is due to our colleagues from the Special Repositories Group who travelled from overseas.

Thank you also to Kevin McParland who took photographs on the night.

A wide range of archival events took place

nationwide during Heritage week and during the months of September and early October. Highlights of events include: Exhibition of Annie Brophy wedding photographs in Waterford City Archives; Stories of Dublin by Joe Lee, Film Maker in Residence at Dublin City Council; Series of lunchtime talks at the Guinness Archive to celebrate 250 Remarkable years of GUINNESS®; Public Lecture and Guided Tours at the National Gallery of Ireland; Exhibition of local elections in Ireland at Central Library, Ilac Centre organised by the Local Authority Archivist's Group; Lectures at the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Merrion Square; Exhibition exploring the life of Séan Ó Riada in University College Cork; Historical exhibition celebrating Cork's rich archival heritage at Cork City & County Archives; Exhibition of old photographs of Dundalk in the Old Gaol Dundalk; Touring exhibition organised by Donegal County Archives.

Culture night also took place on Friday 25 September, with many archive services taking part. Further information on culture night is available on www.culturenight.ie

Events which took place in early October include the National Archives annual open day on 3 October, and a series of talks on Sunday afternoons continuing until 11 October organised by Waterford County Archives.

I would like to extend my gratitude to all who organised events and took part in Archive Awareness in these challenging economic times.
Deirdre Flood, Publicity Officer, Society of Archivists, Ireland

Society of Archivists Conference 2009

The 2009 Society of Archivists Conference took place from the 1-4 September in the Marriott City Centre hotel in Bristol. This year's conference had as its theme Preservation and Access in a Digital World, reflecting a strong emphasis on digital preservation and the management of electronic records.

Highlights of this year's event included the keynote address by Poet Laureate Professor Andrew Motion, who gave a very interesting presentation, entitled 'Old Wine in New bottles: the Life and Lessons of the Poetry Archive', on his involvement with the development of the poetry archive in the U.K. The archive has collected thousands of sound recordings of poets, which have been digitally enhanced and presented on the website www.poetryarchive.org. Professor Motion explained how his own English teacher, who used sound recordings to bring the words to life, inspired him. The archive is invaluable as a means of promoting the work of poets and their meaning, while emphasizing the importance of

regional accents and intonation to the meaning of the work.



Professor Andrew Motion

Professor Motion used examples from the website, including the earliest recording in the archive of Robert Browning reciting his work at a dinner party in 1889. The website was launched 3.5 years

ago following 5 years preparation, and currently receives 175,000 hits of more than twenty minutes duration a month.

The theme of ethics and the power of archivists to influence policy were also prevalent at this year's conference. Professor Randall Jimerson, Professor of History and Directory of the graduate programme in Archives and Records Management at Western Washington University, gave an interesting talk on the political and legal aspect of archives and the power of archivists to protect citizens. He discussed the concept of archivists as co-creators of the archival record through appraisal and the illusion of archivists as neutral custodians of the record. He contended that archivists are not impartial and always leave some mark of their own views. He used South Africa as an example and discussed the importance of archives to the peace and reconciliation process and the role of archivists, such as Vern Harris, a white archivist working in the South African National Archives during Apartheid, as active participants in the struggle for social justice and freedom. The issue of ethics was further explored by Patricia Whatley, Directory of the Centre for Archive and Information Studies at the University of Dundee, in her talk 'Employer v. Society: Ethics and Morality in the Workplace Environment'. She posed the question of whether archivists have a duty to be loyal to their employers. She maintained that integrity, honesty and hard work are often confused with loyalty. Whatley argued that loyalty implies a reciprocal relationship and asked whether employers should, therefore, protect archivists who become whistleblowers or who appraise records and sign off on destruction only to discover they were not fully informed of the political reasoning behind such decisions, as was the situation in the Heiner Affair in Queensland. Whatley contends that societal pressures on archivists to maintain information can undermine their ability to be objective. The only way to ensure the protection of archivists, she maintains, is to promote new skills within the

profession to cope with ethical issues, both in terms of traditional problems that arise and new issues stemming from electronic records management and an increased expectation of the role of the archivist as information manager.

The conservation element of the conference produced some interesting talks. Conservator John Lambert gave a talk entitled 'The Nitrate Time Bomb: Work on Nitrate Film at Cambridgeshire Record Office' in which he described his work on the Lilian Ream photographic collection. The collection contained 250,000 images, 12% or 25,000 of which were nitrate negatives. The collection was housed in a building that was due to be gutted, with the result that the entire collection had to be checked, re-boxed and moved to alternative storage in less than a year. John described the slow process of identifying nitrate film and the difficulties associated with this process. He described how any negative suspected of being nitrate had to have a sliver taken off and set alight. Nitrate film burns bright and aggressively and is difficult to extinguish, whereas safety film burns slowly and leaves a hard black ball residue. By the end of the project, 21 boxes of nitrate negatives had been identified. These are now stored in a missile bunker at the Weatherfield Air Base in Essex.

The various discussions on electronic records management highlighted the problems the pace of technological change has caused for archivists and records managers. Current legislation and funding has not kept up, with the result that information has been, and will continue to be lost. The need to preserve records at the time of creation was continually emphasized, and the need for archivists to embrace a changing profession was also discussed. The power of the internet as a promotional tool for archives was discussed at various seminars. The internet provides a hugely valuable resource for archivists when used to promote content and to make local content interesting for global users. The limitations of the web were also emphasized, particularly the use of the web as a means of long-term storage and preservation.

Attendance of Irish archivists and conservators at this year's event was down on previous years, reflecting budgetary constraints. Throughout the four-day conference, calls were continually made for the need to promote archives and to ensure continued funding is made available as the sector faces cuts in both Ireland and the U.K. The conference ended with a gala dinner in the Roman Baths and Pump Rooms in Bath.

Niamh McDonnell, National Archives of Ireland

Publications

Across the Atlantic- Emigrating from Merville and Derry

Donegal County Council and Derry City Council Archives Services in conjunction with New Brunswick Provincial Archives have collaborated on a unique publication, to coincide with the launch of a public art monument in Donegal dedicated to emigrants from the north west of Ireland to Canada and the United States of America.

The sculpture is called *The Fid* and stands at the quay in Merville. The book is entitled *Across the Atlantic- Emigrating from Merville and Derry*. The title symbolises the unique history of Merville and Derry as major points of departure for thousands of emigrants over more than two centuries. The book contains a series of short articles on the history of emigration from the north west of Ireland, particularly to New Brunswick, Canada.



'Emigrants boarding a paddle steamer bound for Merville' Biggar/MacDonald collection Donegal County Archives.

Merville was a small village in the first decade of the 19th century. But by the middle of that century it was a bustling market town, and had become a major port for passengers heading on the McCorkell Line sailing ships to the 'new world', especially to Canada.

By the 1870s large transatlantic passenger steamers of the Allan Line and the Anchor Line had replaced the sailing ships. Small boats called tenders took emigrants leaving from Donegal and Derry to the ships anchored in the Foyle waters.

The book is edited by Niamh Brennan, Donegal County Council archivist, and Bernadette Walsh, Derry City archivist. It features contributions from Paddy Fitzgerald at the Migration Centre, UAFP, Omagh; Denis Noel, Archivist, Provincial Archives, New Brunswick; Mickey McGuinness, local historian; Bernadette Walsh; Berni Campbell, local studies librarian, Donegal County Council; Niamh Brennan; Ciara Joyce, archivist; Declan Sheehan, assistant public art manager, Donegal County Council; Sean Beattie, local historian; and Brian Mitchell, local historian.

The book includes chapters on available sources for emigration in Donegal, Derry and online, and is illustrated with photographs and facsimiles of archives. Illustrations include photographs, extracts from emigration letters, notices and shipping lists - images relating to emigration. Emigration of course affected the lives of our parents, our grandparents and our great grandparents. It affected those who had to leave and those who were left behind. Emigration touched peoples' lives at every level, as it still continues to do today, and this is reflected in some of the letters quoted in articles in this book. The sense of sorrow and loss of parting is starkly evident in Jane Dudgeon's letter, written from Inishfree to her sister Elizabeth who had emigrated to Ohio, as long ago as 1828:

'You must think I have quite forgot there is such a being on earth as you Do not, I pray, my dear sister. Neither distance of place or length of time can ever make me forget a sister of whom we all often think'.

Niamh Brennan, Donegal County Archivist

Virtues of a wicked earl: the life and legend of William Sydney Clements, 3rd earl of Leitrim (1806-78), APW Malcomson. Four Courts Press, 2009.

Dr Anthony Malcomson has shown us in his many publications that primary source material is the stuff of which good historical writing is made. As a former director of the highly regarded Public Record Office of Northern Ireland he is, of course, more than familiar with the world of archives. Furthermore, he is especially conversant with the Clements archive that he has worked on for the Irish Manuscripts Commission. He has the gift of using his sources with style (and frequently with wit, and it is interesting to note that he was drawn to his present subject by the 'flashes of humour' that he glimpsed in the earl's correspondence).

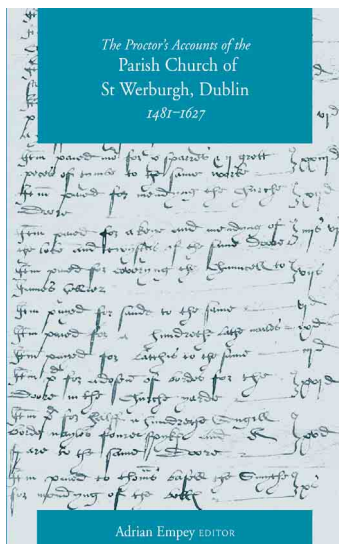
The author transforms what might so easily have been 'dryasdust' into literature, as he previously showed to particular effect in his biography of Archbishop Agar. Malcomson's *Agar* not only provided fresh insights on the prelate as a man, but also illuminated our perception of his age, and described the Established Church of the time in a graphic manner unequalled in any comparable treatment. Likewise, the third earl of Leitrim, an 'improving' landlord as it turns out, is shown against the background of the politics, national and local, of his day, and we watch him change from the lively, somewhat whiggish, character of his youth to the austere and rather unsympathetic figure who met his death by assassination on a roadside in Donegal. Despite its title, this is no exercise in whitewashing, but a scholarly endeavour to get at the truth, such as in the examination of the earl's alleged exercise of the 'droit de seigneur' where his younger female tenants were concerned.

Part of the importance of a volume like this, eschewing generalisations and firmly rooted in evidence, is to bring home to the reader the complexity of human nature and therefore of all historical figures. Malcomson demonstrates that while this trenchant defender of the position of the Established Church of Ireland could engage in bitter disputes with the local Roman Catholic clergy, did so entirely in defence of what he saw as his own rights, and not in a spirit of bigotry. His views on his own Church and its clergy were by no means uncritical, as the author shows.

The book is richly illustrated, often in colour, and with many captions that enhance the main text. As perhaps can go without saying in the case of any publication with the Four Courts imprint, production values are of the highest.

Kenneth Milne

Proctors' accounts for the parish church of St Werburgh, Dublin, 1481-1627



The fourth volume in the Representative Church Body Library 'Texts and Calendars' series, which is published by Four Courts Press, will be available in November.

It is an edition of the churchwardens' accounts of the parish of St Werburgh, Dublin, for the late medieval and early modern period.

These accounts are unique for no similar body of material has survived for any Irish parish. They reveal the workings of a parish community and enable comparisons to be made with contemporary parochial communities in England and on mainland Europe.

They also reveal a high level of lay participation in the religious life of the parish. The post-Reformation accounts, chiefly from the Elizabethan period, indicate the extent to which earlier medieval liturgical practices had disappeared.

The accounts survived among the parish records which were stored in the vestry of the church in Werburgh Street. In 1998 they were transferred to the RCB Library where they were listed and, for the first time, made generally available to researchers.

Raymond Refaussedé, RCB Library

ISA MATTERS

ISA NEWSLETTER

Items for inclusion in the Spring 2010 Newsletter to be issued in March 2010 are welcome and must be received by the 15 February 2010. Please send items to Ellen Murphy, Dublin City Library and Archive, 138-144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2 or e-mail ellen.murphy@dublincity.ie

ISA COMMITTEE

We are pleased to announce that Antoinette Doran has joined the committee as membership secretary. We wish to warmly thank Orna Somerville, who has retired from the committee, for her significant contribution the Irish Society for Archives for the past number of years.

IRISH ARCHIVES JOURNAL LAUNCH

November 2009: The next edition of the Irish Archives journal will be published in November 2009. The journal launch will take place during the week beginning 25 November 2009. Exact date and location to be confirmed.

ISA LECTURE SERIES 2009/2010

Lectures are held at Dublin City Library and Archive, 138-144 Pearse street, Dublin 2. Lectures will begin **promptly at 7pm**. Please join us for a glass of wine before each lecture from 6.30 pm. All are welcome.

Tuesday 6 October 2009: *The Irish Times Digital Archive* by John Grenham, genealogist and author .

Tuesday 1 December 2009 "Imitate, if you can": the legacy of Jonathan Swift and the archives of St Patrick's University Hospital, Dublin , by Andrew Whiteside, Archivist St Patrick's Hospital.

Tuesday 2 February 2010 "Moving History" An Introduction to the Irish Film Archive' by Kasandra O'Connell, Irish Film Archive.

ISA VISIT TO GUINNESS ARCHIVE

Tuesday 6 April 2010

Visit to Guinness archive 5.30pm@ Guinness Storehouse, St. James Gate, Dublin 2.

ISA Committee Officers:

- Dr Raymond Refaussedé, chairperson; email raymond.refaussedé@rcbdub.org
- Ms. Estelle Gittins. Hon. Secretary; email: isar@eircom.net
- Dr. Kerry Houston; Hon. Treasurer, kerry.houston@dit.ie
- Ms. Antoinette Doran. Hon Membership secretary, antoinette.doran@ucd.ie
- Ms. Elizabeth McEvoy, co-editor *Irish Archives*, emcevoy@nationalarchives.ie
- Dr. Susan Hood, co-editor *Irish Archives*, susan.hood@rcbdub.org
- MS. Ellen Murphy, newsletter editor, ellenmurphy@dublincity.ie
- Ms. Kate Manning, website editor, kate.manning@ucd.ie