IRELAND

QUIGLEY

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IRELAND

by LILLIAN FOX QUIGLEY

ILLUSTRATED WITH MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

A NATIONS TODAY BOOK

$2.95

IRELAND

BY LILLIAN FOX QUIGLEY

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS

You don't have to be Irish to love Ireland! The country is blessed with beauty, with warm and friendly people, and with irresistible legends and leprechauns. Ireland is, in fact, removed from the wear and tear of twentieth-century living. And that, as Lillian Quigley discusses in this book, is one of the problems Ireland must consider concerning its place in the world community.

The author's account is an affectionate and understanding portrait of an appealing country with unique problems. While the rest of the world is concerned with overpopulation, industrialization, and international relations, Ireland remains underpopulated, predominantly rural, and politically preoccupied with the six counties and ageless disputes with England. This book relates these problems to both the geography and the history of Ireland.

Though Ireland is just beginning to catch up with the rest of the Western world in economic growth and technology, the author points out that Ireland has given the world —and especially America—a rich cultural heritage: giants of literature, inventors, entertainers, and statesmen.

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H. T. GARRETT

LILLIAN FOX QUIGLEY was born in Princeton, New Jersey, and visited Ireland—home of her ancestors—for the first time at the age of twelve. She has since returned many times and has lived and traveled extensively in England, France, and Italy. She is currently on the administrative staff of the College of General Studies of George Washington University and is a former President of the Adult Education Association of Washington, D.C. Mrs. Quigley is the author of *The Blind Men and the Elephant* and *The Christmas Donkey*.

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Ireland

BY LILLIAN FOX QUIGLEY

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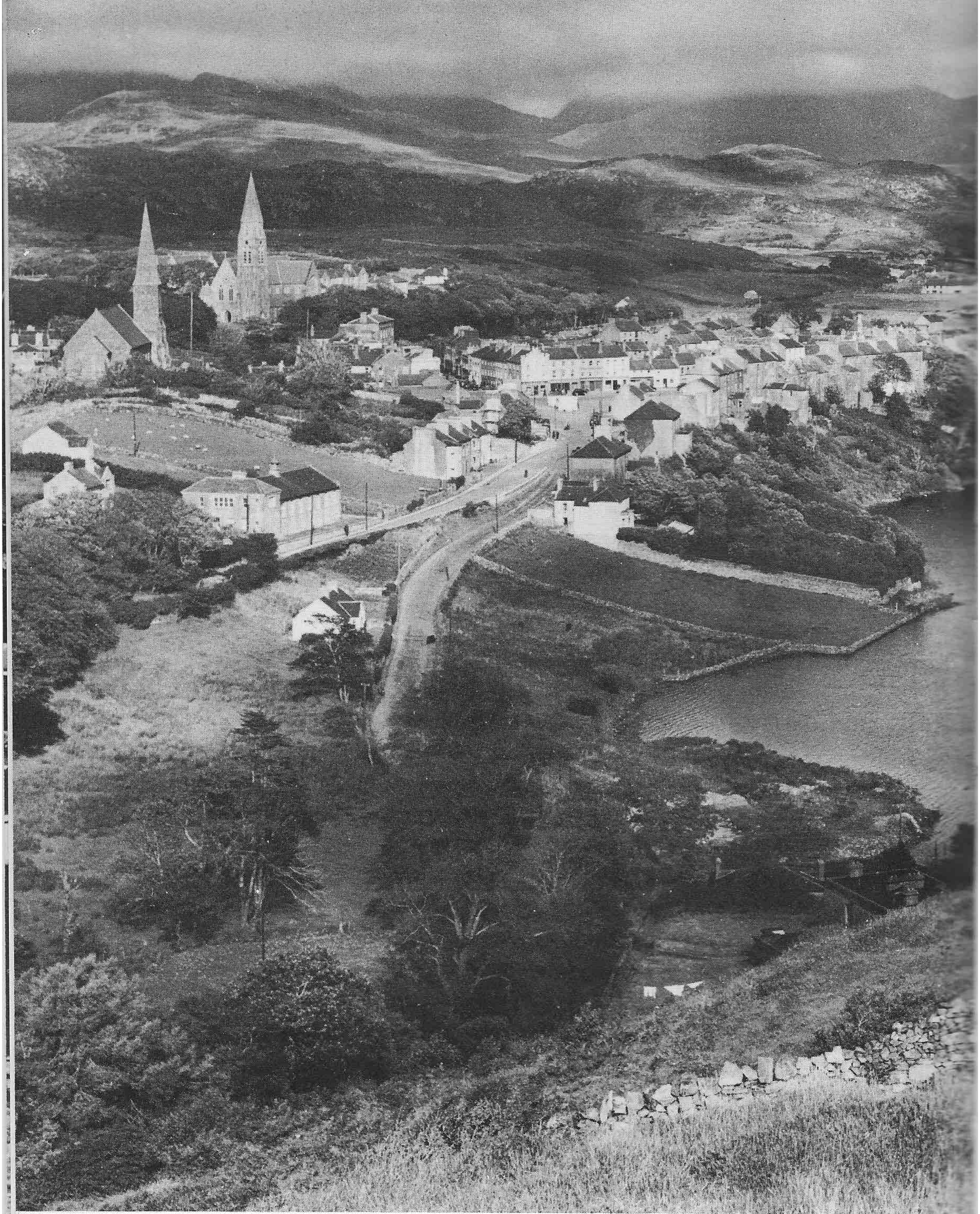
Ireland



I

THE LAND AND THE CLIMATE

IRELAND, considerably smaller than the state of Indiana, lies where the great land mass of Eurasia meets the restless seas of the Atlantic Ocean. Its people came west from the European continent; its weather comes east from across the Atlantic Ocean. Much of Ireland, as we know it today, is a consequence of these two influences.

To an American, Ireland is very small. Its length from north to south is 302 miles. Its greatest width is 189 miles, and no part of the country is more than seventy miles from the sea. There are thirty-two counties, and, in more than half of them, the landscape is so varied that one gets the impression of visiting many different countries.

Since Ireland is almost as far north as Labrador, it has a short bright summer and a long dark winter. In June it is daylight from 4 A.M. to 10 P.M. For much of that time, the sun is low in the sky, shining in your eyes, rather than high overhead as it is in most of the United States. Since it rains, or at least showers briefly, almost every day, Ireland has that dazzling look that we often see following an afternoon thundershower.

Children in Ireland see rainbows in the sky much more frequently than do American children. It is very likely that the old story about the pot of gold hidden at the end of the rainbow originated in Ireland. Generally the Irish are sure that wonderful things are to be found in remote places or at remote times.

In the winter the daylight lasts only about seven hours, and it is usually cloudy. In December, Irish children go to school while it is still dark, and the day is ending when they walk home from school in the afternoon.

Despite its northern position, Ireland is not cold in the winter, and snow is rarely seen on the ground, except in the mountains. The ocean cools the country in the summer and keeps it relatively warm, and very wet, in winter. In addition, the Gulf Stream, which sweeps by southern Florida, reaches the coast of Ireland many days later still retaining some of its southern heat.

This combination of warmer water and cool air often brings fog and mist to Ireland, especially in the winter. All of Ireland's weather comes from the sea, on westerly breezes laden with water vapor. Even on sunny days, great masses of clouds rise out of the western horizon and, marching in endless ranks, pass slowly overhead, off to the east to England and Europe. Wherever the sky shows through, it is of an intense blue, sparkling and clear in sharp contrast to the whiteness of the clouds and the intense green of the land.

Much of Irish life and the outlook of the Irish people are derived from this unchanging cycle of the days, the seasons, the years, and above all from the steady march of the weather from the ocean in the west to the land in the east. As the westerly winds reach the rocky land of Ireland, they are forced upward toward cooler levels of the atmosphere. This is particularly true in summer afternoons, when the heated land surface forces the air over the island to rise upward exactly as the heated air in a balloon lifts it toward the skies. The western breezes, forced upward by this column of rising air, drop their moisture in frequent showers on the glistening land. This constant alternation of rain and slanting sunlight covers much of Ireland with brilliant green, helping to conceal the fact that there are large areas of mostly rock with only limited patches of soil. Grasses and vines grow vigorously, but because of too much rain and lack of deep soil, trees are less frequent, and there are few real forests.

In some places the rock of Ireland is openly exposed to the eye. In the west the Cliffs of Moher rise from the sea along five miles of shore. In most places they are four or five hundred feet

The Cliffs of Moher in County Clare

high, but at one spot they rise to 668 feet. The tourist who approaches the top of these cliffs across the desolate and almost uninhabited countryside looks down to see the ocean ceaselessly smashing against the foot of the cliffs. Halfway down, sea birds of startling white circle and swoop as they pass to and fro from their fishing grounds at sea to their nests on the ledges and crevices of the cliffs. Farther north, in Donegal Bay, the cliffs near the water drop, almost straight, for 2,000 feet.

In many places the rocks are exposed on the hillsides and low mountains. None of the mountains is high, and sharp peaks are rare, for the rocks of Ireland are old and worn round. Most of the higher land is close to the sea—in the north, in the east, and in the southwest. Thus, although the highest mountain reaches no more than 3,414 feet, the mountains of Ireland seem higher because of their closeness to the sea. Even those which are farther inland are generally surrounded by beautiful lakes or verdant valleys, so that the outer rim of Ireland provides beautiful views, looking up at the mountains from the water or down on the water from the heights.

In Northern Ireland, known as Ulster, which remains part of Great Britain, the mountains form a jumble of confused rocks and waters. In the extreme northeast the Mourne Mountains reach up to 2,796 feet. From that height, running westward toward Donegal, are the Sperrin Mountains near Londonderry (2,240 feet) and the massed mountains of Donegal, which reach 2,466 feet. In the center of Ulster is the largest lake in Ireland, Lough Neagh. It covers 153 square miles and is surrounded by mountains. Just south of Ulster is Cuilcagh Mountain (2,188 feet); from its southern slope Ireland's longest river, the Shannon, flows southwestward across the flat plains of central Ireland to reach the sea 230 miles away.

The most famous natural sight of Northern Ireland is the Giant's Causeway. This is an expanse of hexagonal columns of cooled lava set side by side in an upright position. If all of the columns were cut off at the same height, it would look like a

flooring of gigantic hexagonal tiles, but as the columns are all of different heights, the Causeway must be climbed over rather than walked on. It was not constructed by giants, as the fable says, but is lava which cooled in this crystal form.

The eastern mountains form a rugged line roughly parallel to the sea and fifteen or twenty miles from it, running from just south of Dublin toward the seaport of Waterford in southeastern Ireland. These range from 2,300 to over 3,000 feet, with the greatest heights in the Wicklow Mountains south of Dublin. Along this whole distance of almost one hundred miles are many beautiful views for the traveler who makes his way southward between the sea on the left and the mountains on the right. The most breath-taking of these views is just south of Dublin, where one looks across Killiney Bay to Bray Head with the Wicklow Mountains forming a great ridge on the right. At

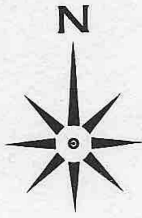
The Giant's Causeway

many places streams of water hurrying to the sea leap down from the rocky heights.

Although the Wicklow Mountains are only a few miles from Dublin, they were almost impenetrable until 1800. Through the preceding centuries, they provided a stronghold of resistance to English efforts to penetrate Ireland southward from Dublin. Only in 1798, with the construction of a military road running southward deep into the mountains, was the area opened up to outsiders. The blockhouses built by the English along this route may still be seen. The first of these is at Glencree, near the source of the Liffey River which flows northward eighty miles through the center of Dublin to the sea. From the source of the Liffey, the road goes in the opposite direction southward over Sally Gap, the highest mountain pass in Ireland (1,631 feet).

Farther south is the vale of Glendalough. Famous for the wild beauty of its scenery and its remote historical associations, it contains the ruins of the monastic settlement St. Kevin established there in the sixth century. This was destroyed by the English invaders in 1398. But during its eight hundred years of existence it became one of the great centers of learning of the early medieval period, the residence of thousands of students from all parts of western Europe. Many tourists visit this area to see St. Kevin's bed—a cave dug into the rock about thirty feet above a lake. It measures only four feet wide, seven feet deep, and less than four feet high, and must be reached by boat. All around are numerous ruined churches and the remains of beehive cells constructed of many stones as living quarters for the monks. Nearby is a round tower, more than a thousand years old and still in excellent condition, 110 feet high and 52 feet in circumference at the base. South of this interesting spot is the Vale of Avoca, which leads down to the sea at Arklow.

Avoca, "Meeting of the Waters," was made famous by the songs and poetry of Thomas Moore. Many travelers come to the valley to see the stark skeleton of Tom Moore's tree. Now long



SCOTLAND
North Channel
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Lough Foyle
Londonderry
ANTRIM
LONDONDERRY
Larne
Ballymena
DONEGAL
Strabane
ULSTER
Sperrin Mountains
River Shrule
Belfast
Bangor
Newtownards
Lough Neagh
TYRONE
River Lagan
Donegal Bay
DOWN
Enniskillen
Sligo
FERMANAGH
ARMAGH
Mourne Mountains
Lough Erne
Newry
MONAGHAN
SLIGO
Dundalk
Louth
MAYO
LEITRIM
CAVAN
LOUTH
CONNAUGHT
IRISH SEA
ROSCOMMON
LONGFORD
MEATH
Lough Mask
WESTMEATH
TARA HILL
Lough Ree
Royal Canal
Lough Corib
Athlone
Dublin
Dun Laoghaire
Galway
GALWAY
Grand Canal
DUBLIN
River Liffey
ARAN ISLANDS
Galway Bay
OFFALY
KILDARE
LEINSTER
WICKLOW
Lough Derg
LAOIGHIS
Cliffs of Moher
CLARE
CARLOW
SHANNON AIRPORT
WEXFORD
Kilkenny
River Shannon
Limerick
TIPPERARY
KILKENNY
Enniscorthy
Mouth of the Shannon
LIMERICK
River Barrow
MUNSTER
Wexford
Tralee
Waterford
St. George's Channel
WATERFORD
River Blackwater
KERRY
Dungarvan
Dingle Bay
CORK
Killarney
Macgillicuddy's Reeks
Cork
Cobh
River Kenmare
Bantry

Ireland and Northern Ireland

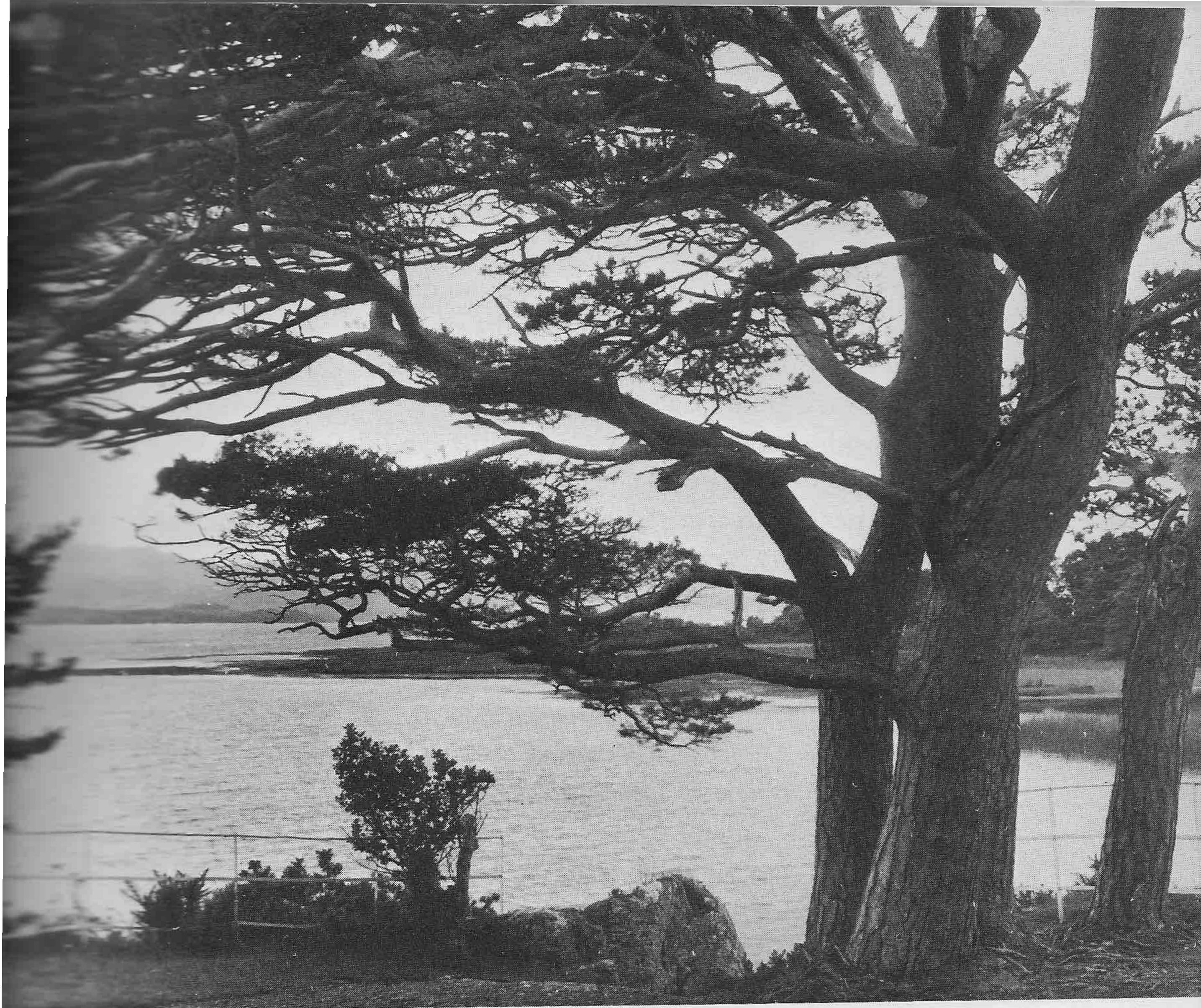
MILES

dead, more than one hundred and fifty years ago its foliage sheltered Tom Moore who wrote many songs still sung by the Irish, including "Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms," "The Last Rose of Summer," "Oft in the Stilly Night," and "The Harp that once Through Tara's Halls." From Avoca it is seven miles to the sea at Arklow, a fishing center where St. Patrick landed in A.D. 432.

From Wicklow southwestward through Wexford to Waterford, is a less dramatic road between the sea and the mountains. Waterford on the River Suir is a seaport more than a thousand years old. Further south, near Youghal, stands the most perfect round tower in Ireland. It is called the Ardmore Round Tower, and dates from the end of the twelfth century. Inland from Waterford is the Blackwater Valley, often called the "Irish Rhine" because of its fine river scenery. West, overlooking the Suir, are the Knockmealdown Mountains, rising to 2,609 feet, the last significant mountains in eastern Ireland.

In the southwestern mountain area around County Kerry is the beauty spot of which Thackeray wrote: "Were such a bay lying upon English shores it would be a world's wonder. Perhaps if it were on the Mediterranean or Baltic, English travellers would flock to it in hundreds." The sea penetrates deeply into the land at Bantry Bay, Kenmare River, Dingle Bay, and Tralee, so that the land stretches out southwestward into the Atlantic Ocean like the rocky fingers of a skeleton hand. Between the knuckles of that hand are beautiful lakes, of which the best known are the waters of Killarney.

Killarney, separated from the sea by a mass of mountains known by the strange name of Macgillicuddy's Reeks, consists of three large lakes stretching from the mountains down to a broad valley. Around the lakes are magnificent woods of oak and other trees, mingled with flowering shrubs. South of the middle lake, known as Muckross, is the wooded peak of Torc Mountain (1,764 feet). Down the side of this mountain from the Devil's Punchbowl fall a series of waterfalls, flowing down



Killarney: the middle lake as seen from Muckross Drive

a deeply wooded glen. On the western side of the lower lake, massive mountains are separated from the Reeks by the famous Gap of Dunloe. Many visitors go up this desolate Gap of Dunloe on horseback or in two-wheeled pony traps. Five small lakes strung along the Gap are connected by a turbulent stream, which is crossed and recrossed by many stone bridges along the narrow rocky passage. At the top of the Gap, eight hundred feet above sea level, the upper lake is found, and from this point boats take the visitors down the swift waters to Muckross.

Southwest of Killarney are the highest mountains of Ireland, Macgillicuddy's Reeks, almost blocking the entrance to the Kerry Peninsula that points southwestward to Skellig Rocks,

where gannets and shearwaters make their nests. Dingle Bay washes the land on the north, while the deep indentation of the Kenmare River forms the southern boundary of this peninsula. The road follows the shore line of the peninsula, and is known as the "Ring of Kerry."

The fourth group of mountains is in the west on the peninsula that stretches westward toward Achill Island, between Galway Bay on the south and Donegal Bay on the north. The chief heights in this area are The Twelve Bens, rising to 2,395 feet between Galway Bay and Mayo. (The word *ben* in Celtic means "mountain.") The eastern side of these mountains is marked by a series of large lakes which cut across the peninsula. The Twelve Bens and the land around them are more barren than the mountains of Kerry, and much more so than the mountains of Wicklow. Their rocky domes, joined together by barren ridges, partly conceal one another so that it is very difficult to see all twelve at once.

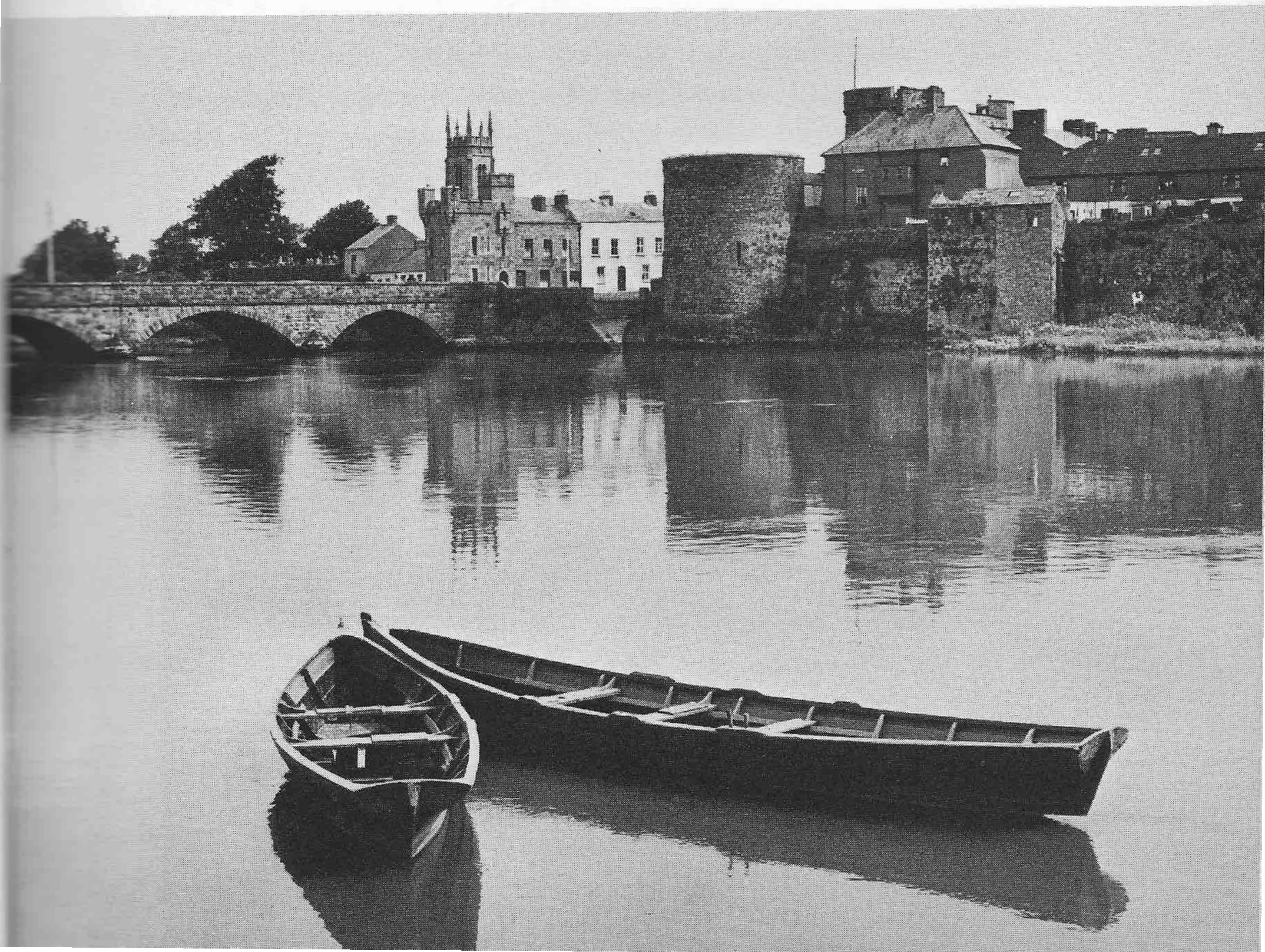
These four mountainous areas of Ireland enclose a rather flat, grassy center not unlike Indiana, southern New York state, or parts of Maryland, except that it also contains bogs. There are great stretches of meadow, excellent for livestock. Cattle and horses are everywhere, just as sheep are scattered all over the slopes of the higher mountains. Ireland is famous for its horses, especially for riding horses of better quality. In the days when the British army used cavalry horses, most of them came from central Ireland. A portion of this flat country near Dublin is known as The Curragh. Until 1914 it was the chief camp of the British cavalry. In that year the forces stationed at The Curragh caused a crisis when they mutinied against the efforts of the British Parliament to pass a bill granting Home Rule to Ireland.

The combination of variable altitudes and extensive rainfall makes Ireland a land of flowing waters. There are eight hundred lakes and streams, none of them very large. Many of the streams are excellent for fishing, but, except at their mouths, few of these waterways are much good for navigation. The scarcity of large

trees prevents the building of wooden vessels, while the absence of a domestic iron industry has restricted the building of metal ships. Many local Irish boats owe their form to the ancient basket-like structures covered with oxhide that were invented in Central Asia thousands of years ago and spread across Europe to Ireland before 2000 B.C. In Ireland they are called *curraghs*. Nowadays they are made of canvas covered with tar or some other leakproof material stretched tightly over a light wooden frame. The boats are fragile and dangerous on the stormy western sea, but are so light that they can be lifted from the water and carried far up on the land after use. Irish beaches are stony and steep, and wooden boats would be damaged as they came up on the shore in surf or waves. But the curraghs are easily lifted up over the rocky beach.

The most significant river in Ireland is the Shannon, which flows across the central flatland from north to south. It reaches

The River Shannon at Limerick



the ocean at Limerick, in western Ireland, about halfway between Killarney and Galway. In the flat country on the north bank of the river and halfway between Limerick and the sea is Shannon Airport, the chief international airport of Ireland.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural resources of Ireland are limited. Its soil is of fair quality but in many places is found in meager patches and shallow layers. Often the rock underneath is so close that deep plowing is difficult, and traditionally Irish farmers have used a mattock or hoe rather than a plow. Grain crops, especially wheat, are hard to grow in most areas because the seed may mold in the rain-soaked earth before it sprouts, and the daily rains make it almost impossible to harvest grain. For this reason the Irish have turned more to livestock raising rather than crop farming.

Mineral resources are rare. What little coal there is is of poor quality; there is very little iron, and water power is also limited.

Most peat bogs, like this one near Clonfanlough, are privately owned.

Burlap bags, wheelbarrows, or carts are also used to carry peat in remote rural areas.

Thus, Ireland's industrial development came rather late. Ireland depends, more than any other country of western Europe, on man power and on animals. Large quantities of coal and oil must be imported, but fuel deficiencies are overcome to some extent by one of Ireland's greatest resources—peat. Peat bogs cover at least one-fifth of Ireland. These are not swampy areas, but great masses of remains of water-loving plants. Many of these plants are moss-like, and build up spongy cushions of vegetation formed in hummocks and hollows. Even today such bogs grow on the high mountains as well as in the valleys. Where the slope gets too steep, or rainfall increases, or turf cutters remove the edges, the whole mass of turf may creep down the slope, like a great glacier of vegetative matter looking like cold, wet milk chocolate.

Since bogs grow, they tend to rise above the surrounding land, but they grow so slowly that centuries may be required

to change their appearance greatly. They grow more quickly under wetter conditions, so they are more prevalent in the west of Ireland than in the east. They grew in the past more rapidly in the wet periods, from 5800 to 2500 B.C. and again from 1000 B.C. to A.D. 300 than they did from 2500–1000 B.C., which was drier. Often today, when turf cutters remove the layers of bog, they find the remains of a birch or pine forest beneath the turf. A third period of bog growing, which occurred in the cold wet climate of 1200 to 1800 A.D. gave the most recent layers of turf. These are still growing very slowly in some areas today.

Bogs are not good for crops and are almost worthless for livestock, even sheep, but they are indispensable for supplying fuel, especially in rural areas. Lacking oil and coal and timber, the Irish would be chilled completely if it were not for the heat provided by turf fires. The turf is cut by the men and boys in the summer months between planting and harvesting. It is piled, like great loaves of brown bread, along the drier edges of the bog until it gradually dries out. As it dries, it becomes lighter than cork. It is then carried home.

Ireland's natural plant and animal life is quite different from that of Europe, and even that of England. There are only about two-thirds as many kinds of plants as in England, but Ireland shares plants with Spain and America which are not found in Britain at all.

More interesting, perhaps, are the differences in animals. English animals, such as the weasel and the mole, for example, are not found in Ireland. Insects and slugs found in Ireland and Spain are not found in Britain or France, and as everyone knows, there are no snakes in Ireland. These differences in wild life are due to the fact that Ireland was an island during the Ice Ages (before 12,000 B.C.) while Britain was part of the Continent until thousands of years after the last glacier retreated. Any snakes which Ireland may have had before the glacial period perished in the cold and could not return when the climate improved because of the Irish Sea.

II

THE ORIGINS OF THE IRISH PEOPLE

MORE THAN most peoples the Irish are, both in body and spirit, a product of their geographic conditions and their history. We call them "Celts," but the Celts were only the most significant of eight successive peoples who came to Ireland from the east between 6000 B.C. and A.D. 1700. The Celts, who came about 300 B.C., were preceded by three earlier peoples and followed by four others. Any visitor can see that the Irish are diverse in origins because they are so very diverse in appearance. Today most Irish speak English, which is not a Celtic but a Teutonic language, derived from the Angles and Saxons who invaded Britain from the continent about A.D. 500 but did not reach Ireland until much later.

The diversity of the Irish rests on the fact that this small island was the final stopping place of successive waves of people who came westward across the great land mass of Eurasia or by boat from Spain and the Mediterranean. Such movements of peoples out of Asia go back to the very dawn of human history, hundreds of thousands of years ago; but no men could reach Ireland until boats were invented, for Ireland, unlike Britain, has been surrounded by water from the remotest period.

THE EARLIEST IRISH

When the last great glaciers melted, fifteen thousand or more years ago, Ireland remained as it had been through the slowly changing eons of the past, with its own vegetation and wild life, but without men. However, men were on their way, for knowledge of the boat, which had been invented somewhere

in Asia, was crossing Europe toward its western edge throughout the period 10,000 to 5000 B.C.

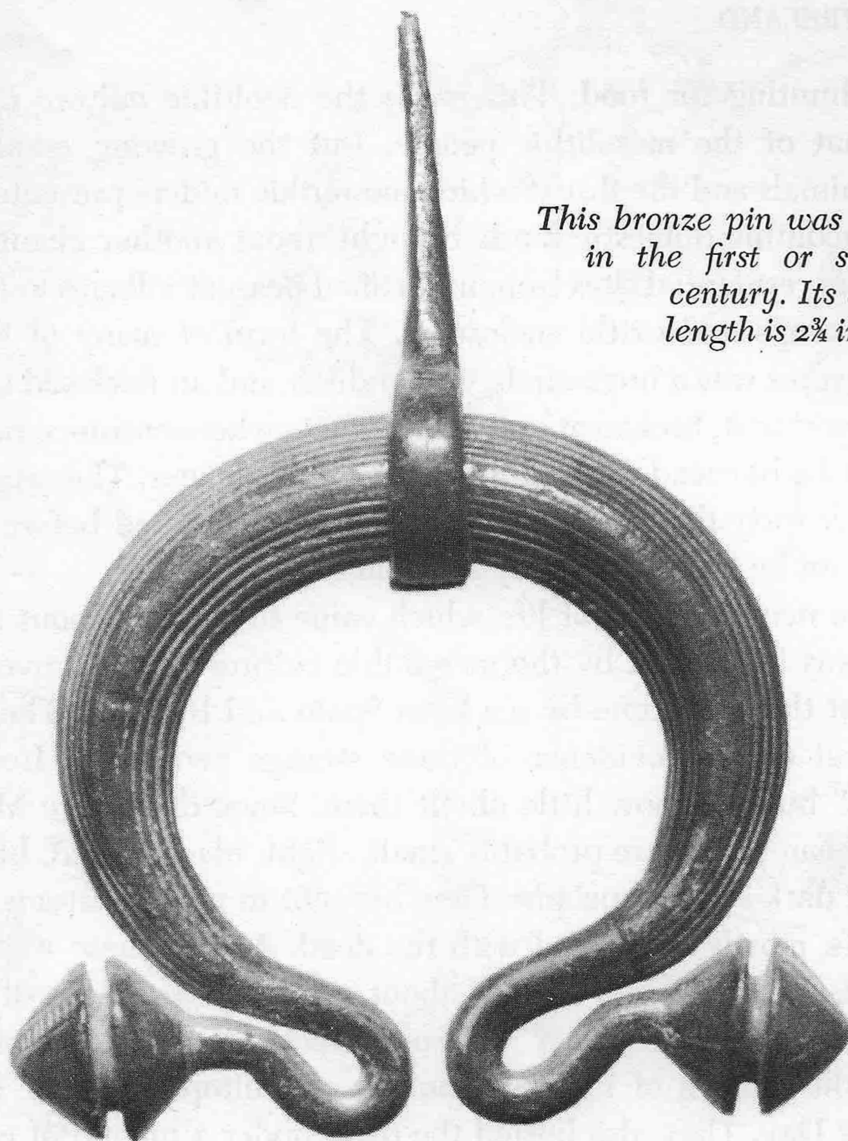
These early boatmen had a new way of life, called mesolithic, that was quite different from that of the mighty Stone Age hunters of mammoth and reindeer who had lived in Europe in the earlier glacial periods. The mesolithic culture was that of quiet forest people who lived on shores and riverbanks by fishing, fowling, and snaring small animals.

These mesolithic peoples were the first inhabitants of Ireland. Before 5000 B.C. they crossed the Irish Sea in skin boats, probably from Scotland, on either side of the Firth of Clyde to County Down and County Antrim. They were never very many, but their traces, especially shell heaps and campsites, are found in many places in northeast Ireland and along the River Bann. Their way of life continued to spread over Ireland and was still to be found, in modified form and in more remote areas, even two hundred years ago.

We do not know what these earliest inhabitants of Ireland looked like, but they were probably small-boned and relatively slight, with dark skins, eyes, and hair.

For about four thousand years, the mesolithic people quietly occupied portions of Ireland until just before 2000 B.C., when two new cultures, probably carried by several kinds of peoples, came in almost simultaneously. One of these, which had come across Europe from the Balkans, is known as the neolithic culture. The other, known as megalithic, came by sea across the Mediterranean from Syria to Spain, continued by sea from Spain to Brittany, and from there went to western Ireland. The neolithic cultural movement brought the knowledge of agriculture, especially grain growing, while the sea rovers from the Mediterranean brought the use of metals (gold, copper, and bronze) as well as many new religious ideas and the custom of building large stone monuments.

The neolithic was a peaceful farming culture, dominated by women and concerned, in its ideology, with fertility, death, and



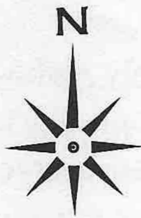
This bronze pin was made in the first or second century. Its actual length is 2¾ inches.

revival, all in terms of the earth and the changing seasons. Its people were rather stocky and round-headed, with brown eyes and straight brown hair. Growing wheat and barley, and raising pigs, cattle, and sheep, these people gradually crossed Europe, mostly along the route of the Danube and Rhine Rivers, reaching Ireland about 2000 B.C. and mingling readily with the earlier mesolithic settlers. As they moved across Europe, the neolithic peoples became less peaceful, less matriarchal, and more concerned with cattle raising. These changes were greatly intensified in Ireland. One reason for this was that the wet climate of Ireland was better for growing grass than for growing wheat, thus making it necessary to rely on animal husbandry, fishing,

and hunting for food. This made the neolithic culture closer to that of the mesolithic people. But the growing emphasis on animals and the threat which mesolithic raiders presented to the neolithic domestic herds brought about another change—a shift in residential sites from unfortified peasant villages to fortified camps and cattle enclosures. The form of many of these enclosures was a huge circle with a ditch and an enclosed stone wall within it, broken at only a few points where entrance ramps could be barricaded at night or in time of danger. The remains of over forty thousand such enclosures, constructed before A.D. 600, can be identified today in Ireland.

The neolithic way of life which came to Ireland about 2300 B.C. was influenced by the megalithic culture which arrived at almost the same time by sea from Spain and Brittany. There is a great deal of evidence of these strange peoples in Ireland today, but we know little about them. Since they were Mediterranean they were probably small, slight, black-haired, black-eyed, dark-skinned people. They brought in many customs and beliefs, mostly associated with the dead. Among these was the belief that the dead wander about until the last night of the year (for them, October 31, from which we get Hallowe'en) and the custom of lighting bonfires on hilltops on their New Year's Day. They also buried the dead under a mound of earth and put an upright stone at the head of the grave. They built many other stone structures, some of them quite elaborate and not connected in any way with living quarters, which were simple huts. Some of these monuments are quite large. A dolmen (a large flat stone supported by three or more upright stones) at Kilternan has a capstone which is 23 feet long, 17 feet wide, and 6 feet thick.

The meaning and function of these megalithic monuments are not clear to us, but they seem to have been associated with religious ideas that were eagerly accepted and spread by the neolithic and mesolithic peoples of Ireland and Britain. The newcomers were able to organize and to control the labor of



ATLANTIC OCEAN

DERRY

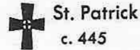
546

812

1566

ANTRIM
1177

COUNTY DOWN
1177

ARMAGH

St. Patrick
c. 445

IRISH SEA

KELLS

550

1019
1315

DULEEK
Battle of the Boyne
1691

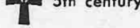
TARA HILL

Battle of Clontarf
1014

ATHLONE

CLONMACNOISE
548

1552

DURROW

5th century

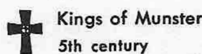
DUBLIN

837
1170

GALWAY CITY
1232

LIMERICK

922

CASHEL

Kings of Munster
5th century

WEXFORD

922
1170

WATERFORD

914
1170

St. George's Channel

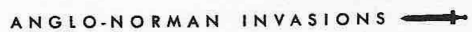
CORK

922

Settlement of Ireland

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES

VIKING SETTLEMENTS

ANGLO-NORMAN INVASIONS 

the native people to make their monuments increasingly elaborate. The megalithic intruders were few in number, and since they were mostly men, they married native women and were soon assimilated. But their ideas and religious customs were accepted and followed by the natives.

In some places in Ireland there are scores of these strange monuments within a few square miles. Some of them have been overgrown with vines, and many of the stones have toppled over and have even been split by growing trees. In the last thirty years many of these monuments have been cleared of underbrush, reconstructed, and marked by the Commissioners of Public Works. These markings provide information in English and Irish, but even a visitor with no knowledge of either language can experience the excitement of examining Bronze Age stone structures nearly four thousand years old.

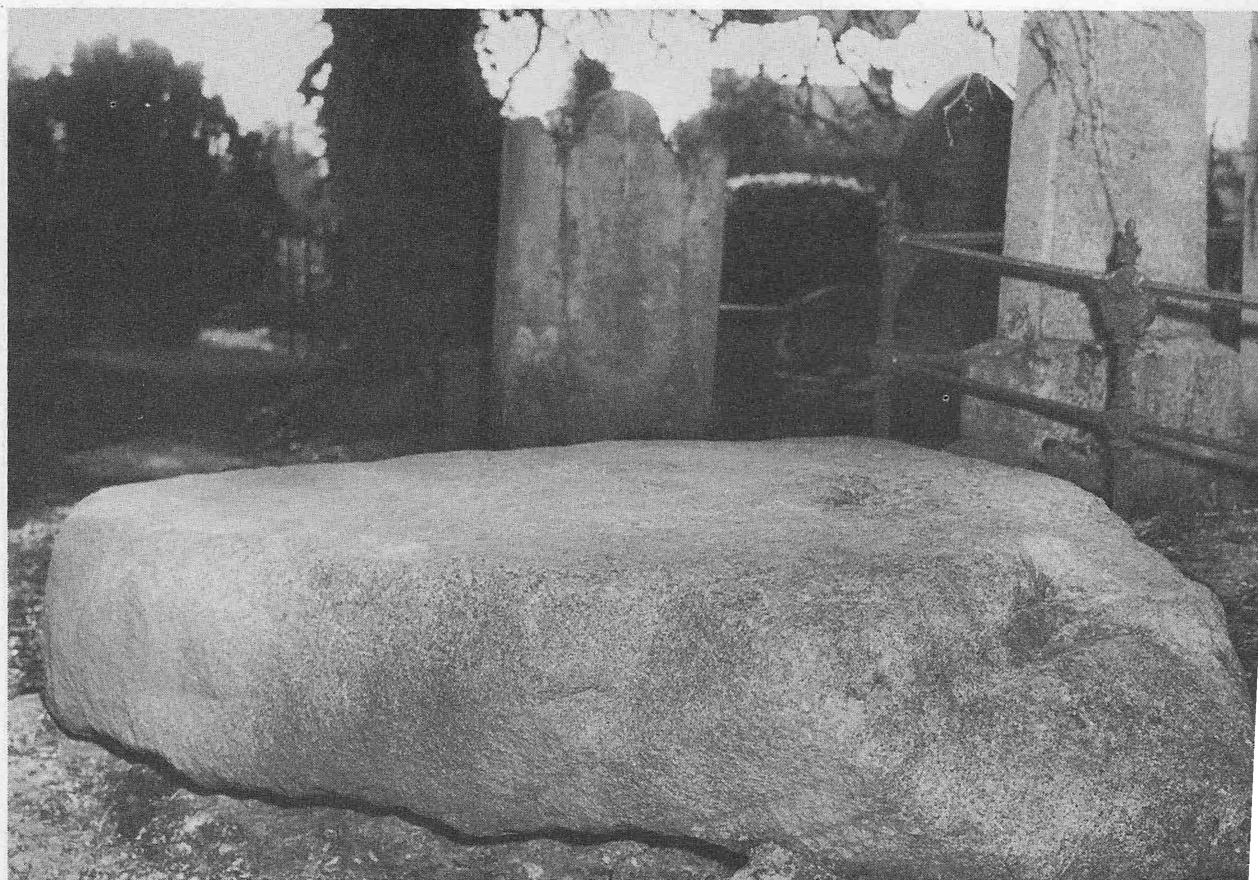
The greatest megalithic monument in Ireland, comparable to Stonehenge in England, is the great burial mound of Newgrange, the largest of three such mounds on the River Boyne in County Meath, north of Dublin. As originally constructed it was a hemisphere about fifty feet high and 280 feet in diameter. In the middle of the mound is a large burial chamber.

This burial mound, the greatest of many similar structures in Ireland, was plundered by Viking pirates in A.D. 861, over eleven hundred years ago. At that time it was already more than two thousand years old. Markings on its great stones show that its original religious inspiration goes back over five thousand years to the Near East, a source which also inspired the large megalithic monuments of Arabia, Egypt, and Ethiopia.

From this evidence it must be clear that Ireland already had a complex society before the Celtic peoples began to come in during the centuries before Christ. But the Celts, a vigorous warlike people, who came in with fire and sword, made a great impression. Their language was the principal speech of Ireland for almost two thousand years, and their character can still be observed today.

The Celts were heavy-boned people with large frames. They had light eyes of gray or blue, ruddy complexions, and sandy or reddish hair. With their iron weapons, violent sky gods, masculine-dominated society, and extremist outlook, they impressed their character, language, and physical types on the complex societies they found in Ireland during the period 300 B.C. to A.D. 400. In the last fifteen hundred years at least four other influences have added to this mixture. These four are the Christian missionaries following A.D. 432, the Viking invaders (Northmen) after 795, the Anglo-Norman "conquest" after 1170, and the much-disputed English supremacy from 1542 to 1922. In the last of these periods, the ancient Irish political organization, based on the relationships of clans and tribes, was disrupted, and the Irish language was replaced by English.

The reputed burial place of St. Patrick in County Down



III

FROM MYTH TO HISTORY

THE HISTORY of any country is determined to a great extent by its past, but in Ireland this has become an obsession. Until recently Ireland's vision of its own past, and especially its insistence on making old controversies part of the present, has hampered the country's achievement of a satisfactory existence. Any country whose brightest era was more than a thousand years ago is a country with an unfortunate—and tragic—history. When an Irishman speaks of Ireland and calls it the "land of saints and scholars," the response is, "But that was a long time ago." And indeed it was.

The saints and scholars are associated with early Christian Ireland in the sixth century, when European literature and culture was being destroyed on the Continent by the Germanic invaders. It was preserved in the monasteries of Ireland, which these invaders did not reach. Only later, in the ninth century, were the Irish monasteries ravaged by the Viking invaders, who also spread to Iceland, Greenland, and even North America about the year 1000.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES

The arrival of St. Patrick as a missionary to spread the word of Christ to the pagans changed the entire face of Ireland. St. Patrick was successful because he understood the Irish people. As a boy of sixteen he had been captured by slave-raiders in France and taken to Ireland. For six years he tended sheep on a mountainside in northern Ireland until he escaped and returned to France. There he studied for the priesthood. His

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Ruins of the church and round tower at Clonmacnoise

and the High Crosses. Suddenly, in the eighth century, the saints and scholars were interrupted by the arrival of plundering invaders from the seas.

THE VIKINGS

In 795, boatloads of Norse raiders appeared off the coast of Ireland. Tall, blond, and splendid in their scarlet cloaks, they swept in from the sea. The Irish could not defend their placid island because they had neglected to maintain any kind of defense. Lulled into a false security by the golden age of learning,

the Irish calm was shattered by the arrival of destroyers. No place in Ireland is more than seventy miles from the sea, and the rivers penetrate so deep into the country that the Vikings could not be stopped at the shore. For the next two hundred years, the invaders raided and plundered the wealth of Ireland. They ransacked the monasteries, where most of the wealth was concentrated. The monks fled in terror, taking with them whatever they could carry, but many of the treasured manuscripts were lost when the Norsemen, in their ignorance, burned most of the monasteries to the ground.

On the edge of a ninth century manuscript is a short poem written in Irish. It was written by a monk on a dark, stormy night. Safe in his tiny room, he was confident that the rough seas would keep the pirates from raiding:

Fierce and wild is the wind tonight,
It tosses the tresses of the sea to white;
On such a night as this I take my ease;
Fierce Northmen only course the quiet seas.

During the period of the Viking raids, Irish stonemasons built round towers to protect the monks and their treasures. From these watchtowers, the bells would ring out to warn of the Vikings' approach. Seventy of these round towers still exist. The best preserved is at Kildare, and dates from the early ninth century. The towers were often over a hundred feet in height with the door fifteen feet above the ground. Entrance was provided by a removable ladder. There was usually one narrow window—just a slit in the stones—on each floor.

As the Norsemen sailed in and out of the Irish rivers during the next two centuries, they established settlements at Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Wexford, using these as trading ports and harbors. The Viking pirates were soon joined by other sea robbers, the Danes. The Irish called them the "dark ones" to distinguish them from the Norsemen whom they referred to as the "light ones." Savage fighting continued over much of Ireland between the marauding invaders and the Irish kings.

Brian Boru, High King of Ireland

The resistance of the Irish to these invaders increased when Brian Boru became the High King in 1002. For two years Brian Boru trained his soldiers and made his plans to engage the Vikings in battle. The battle was fought at Clontarf in 1014. In Irish history it is as famous as the Battle of Bunker Hill is to Americans, or the Battle of Trafalgar to the English.

Brian Boru, too old to fight, directed his men from a tent on a hillside. The Irish won the battle, but one of the fleeing Vikings circled back to the tent where Brian Boru sat. Slipping under the back flap of the tent, he split open the head of the

The death of Brian Boru

High King of Ireland with an ax. For twelve days the people mourned Brian Boru, and everyone came from miles around to pay tribute.

Despite the death of Brian Boru, the Battle of Clontarf broke the power of the Vikings in Ireland. The Norsemen who stayed in Ireland settled down, married into Irish families, and became part of the people they had conquered. They became Christians, adopted Irish customs, and were known thereafter as Ostmen (Eastmen). They were responsible for establishing the cities of Ireland, and being skilled in commerce and the seas, they shared this knowledge with the Irish. They also joined them in the struggle to keep out new invaders, the Norman Kings of England.

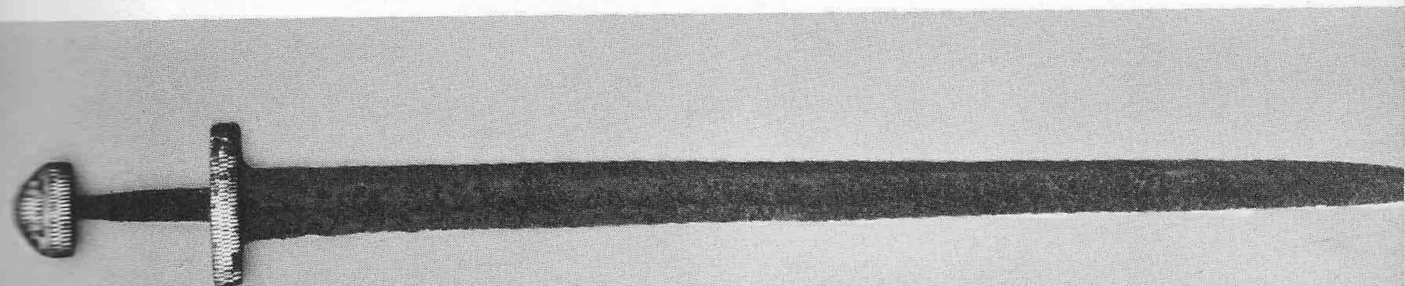
THE ANGLO-NORMAN CONQUEST

The Norman kings of England were distantly related to the Vikings. They had settled in France in 911, and in 1066 they crossed the English Channel under William the Conqueror to subdue the English. William's great-grandson, Henry II, cast greedy eyes toward Ireland. He was aided in his scheming by an alliance with the King of Leinster, who had been driven from Ireland by the High King. With Henry's help, Leinster raised an army of fifteen hundred Norman adventurers and captured Waterford and Dublin in 1169. Encouraged by this success, Henry II landed at Waterford himself, with an overwhelming feudal army, in 1172. The Irish leaders soon yielded and were made subjects of Henry's lords who carried Norman names like de Lacy, de Courcy, and de Clare.

The aliens treated Ireland as a colony, exacting heavy taxes from the people and leaving them no personal rights. England could not govern the whole of Ireland from such a distance, and soon English power was restricted to the area around Dublin known as the "English Pale." Irish lords remained supreme in much of the remainder of the country, but the English could not be expelled because the Irish kings and local chieftains spent much of their time fighting one another.

Two centuries after Henry II, when English kings were deeply involved in the Hundred Years' War with France (1338–1453), the unruly Irish were a considerable nuisance to the English rulers. King Richard II said that the Irish were divided into the "wild Irish, our enemies; the rebel English; and the obedient English." The "obedient English" were the settlers and traders who had gone to Ireland to make a living. These men remained English, both in custom and language. The "rebel

A Viking sword of the tenth century



English" were descended from the earlier Normans who had settled in Ireland under Henry II. These families had become extremely Irish, and even spoke the Irish language. But still they did not mix with the original natives, and they took great pride in their Norman surnames. They often refused to obey the laws that were issued from England. The "wild Irish" were the poverty-stricken, original natives against whom all the harsh laws were aimed.

The constant disorders in Ireland were a threat to the English kings, since they might interfere with the French wars, and with the obedient English in the Pale. King Edward III determined to crush the Irish by depriving them of their language and culture. For this purpose the Statutes of Kilkenny were passed in 1366 and enforced on Ireland for two hundred years. Much like the laws that Hitler used against the Jews in Germany, they carried heavy penalties. The Irish language was forbidden. Irish names were ordered to be changed into English ones. Intermarriage between the Irish and outsiders was prohibited. No one could invite an Irish poet or musician into his home. Irish games could not be played, and riding a horse in the Irish style (without a saddle) was made a crime.

The existence of such laws as the Statutes of Kilkenny explains why the English and the Irish, who lived side by side for centuries, remained separate people. They also explain Ireland's regression during the years when the Renaissance was taking place in Europe (1450–1650). Under the heels of conquerors who forbade all Irish culture, education virtually ceased during this period. Ireland, which had its own language and a rich heritage of literature reaching back in the ancient past, suffered a crushing blow. This enmity reached its peak in the sixteenth century, when King Henry VIII renounced the Pope and made himself head of the Church of England. The Irish, outraged at Henry's personal immorality, and seeking any method to oppose the English, clung ever more closely to their old religion.

ENGLISH SUPREMACY

For almost four hundred years the enmity between the Irish and the English took the form of mutual religious intolerance. The Irish were crushed by military force under Queen Elizabeth I, the daughter of Henry VIII, and two great burdens were added to the lives of the Irish peasantry. Their lands were taken away and given to English landlords who demanded high rents, provided no repairs for the cottages, and could evict their tenants at any time. A system of Anglican parishes and dioceses was imposed on Ireland, and the Irish people, almost all Roman Catholic, were compelled to contribute to support the alien Anglican clergy even in districts where there were no Anglicans.

Oppression continued between 1558 and 1715, as a result of the land and religious policies of Elizabeth, of Cromwell (1649) and his parliamentary Roundheads during the English Civil War, and of the House of Orange, during the period following the overthrow of James II in 1688–1690. In this period the Irish generally supported Charles I against Cromwell and James II against William of Orange. In both cases the Irish supported the losing side and found their political, economic, and religious difficulties increased as a consequence.

After the Cromwellian massacres in 1649 and the destruction of Ireland's last effort for independence by supporting James II, the Irish were plunged to new depths of despair. After his defeat at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, James II fled to France. In the hope that some rights might be gained, the Irish fought on. But they were left without means to resist when the last of James's army withdrew to France. With it went 11,000 Irish soldiers, who became known as the Irish Brigade. This desertion by so many capable officers and soldiers allowed the people no hope, and they were left isolated to survive, as best they could, the rule of the English.

History records that a "bad century" began when the Treaty

William III leading the English in the Battle of the Boyne

of Limerick was signed in 1691. It was supposed to continue the same privileges, including toleration of Catholics, which the Irish had enjoyed under Charles II. But the Irish Parliament, which was composed entirely of Protestants, passed a Penal Code directed against the Catholics. Its provisions forbade Catholics to teach, to possess arms, to own or inherit property, and all priests were required to register. One result of this persecution was to make the kinship between the people and their priests even closer. Thus, during the 18th century, there grew up a unique understanding between them. Even today we can observe this close relationship which began as a common bond of suffering.

During the eighteenth century the tide began to turn. Many able Protestants, sparked by the writings of Swift and Grattan,

began to defend the rights of Irish Catholics. The seeds of revolution were in the air, and were fanned by the American Revolution (1775–1781). In Belfast the Presbyterians were also persecuted by the dominant Anglicans. Driven out of Northern Ireland, these Ulstermen fled to America where, during the American Revolution, they formed one-sixth of the population of the colonies.

By 1791, Wolfe Tone, a young Protestant lawyer from Kildare, decided to form an organization to defend the rights of all Irishmen. He called this organization the Society of United Irishmen. Branches of the society were founded in Belfast and Dublin. They aimed to form a "brotherhood of affection, a communion of rights, and a union of power among Irishmen of every religious persuasion, and thereby to obtain a complete reform of the legislature, founded on principles of civil, political, and religious liberty." Dissenters and Catholics vowed to work toward a common end, as both had been subjected to persecution by the Anglicans. Tone went to France to get aid and returned from Brest to Bantry Bay with 15,000 soldiers in 43 ships in 1798. High winds frustrated their attempts to land, and one by one the ships turned back to France. Months later Tone made a second attempt with fewer men, but they were intercepted by the English. Tone surrendered and was condemned to death. However, he died by his own hand.

This ineffectual uprising alarmed both the English and the Irish ruling class. To prevent any separation of the two countries, the Irish Parliament was abolished, and Ireland was given representation in the British Parliament at Westminster. However, Catholics continued to be denied most education and to be excluded from political life. Their economic exploitation was also intensified.

On January 1, 1801, when Daniel O'Connell, a young lawyer, saw the Union Jack go up over Dublin Castle, he vowed to work for freedom for Ireland. But during the next twenty years little progress was made, although an insurrection was planned

by young Robert Emmet in 1803. It was a failure. It turned out to be little more than a street riot, and Emmet was captured after weeks of hiding out in the Dublin mountains. His trial lasted thirteen hours, and the condemned man's speech became a battle cry for those who followed him. Emmet himself was publicly hanged in Dublin. His death had a far-reaching effect on Irish political sentiment, although historians regard it as a poetic and tragic affair, rather than a political one. Thomas Moore, who had been Emmet's friend at Trinity College, wrote:

Oh, breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade,
Where cold and unhonor'd his relics are laid;
Sad, silent, and dark be the tears that we shed,
As the night-dew that falls on the grass o'er his head.

But the night-dew that falls, though in silence it weeps,
Shall brighten with verdure the grave where he sleeps;
And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,
Shall long keep his memory green in our souls.

Daniel O'Connell did not believe in bloodshed and felt that the Irish could achieve independence from England without unnecessary violence. Working with the Catholic Association he sought to win religious emancipation by constitutional means. From small donations, gathered in parish churches throughout Ireland, a fund was accumulated which was used to advance the cause through the newspapers and to contest unjust proceedings in court. A persuasive speaker before the Bar in Ireland and a brilliant lawyer, O'Connell decided to forsake practice of the law and to work only for Catholic emancipation. He was elected in 1828 to the British Parliament as a Member of the House of Commons for County Clare. He was successful in taking his seat, although he refused to take the Oath of Allegiance to the King as Head of the Church. The following year Catholics were emancipated. They could vote and take seats in Parliament, although they were still unable to take university degrees. Catholics were permitted to hold public and municipal posts, but only those who paid a high

"The Liberator," Daniel O'Connell

annual rent were allowed to vote. In 1831 a system of national education was started.

O'Connell, who was known as "The Liberator" by his faithful followers, continued to preach his policy of winning "national independence" but not necessarily "national separation." He wanted to re-establish the Irish Parliament. In 1843 he and five other men were prosecuted for conspiracy against Sir Robert Peel, Prime Minister of England, because they had summoned a large meeting at Clontarf to arouse the people. Although the meeting was canceled by O'Connell because he was ordered to do so, he and his five followers were condemned by a jury in

Dublin. The verdict, however, was reversed by the House of Lords in 1844.

From that time on O'Connell never regained his leadership, and his health began to fail. He was discouraged by the challenge presented by a new political party, the Young Irelanders. Depressed also by the terrible effects of the Great Famine of 1845–1848, O'Connell abandoned public life when his plea in the House of Commons to let the Irish keep the wheat they raised was rejected. Weakened by illness, seventy years of age and feeling useless, O'Connell left for Rome. He hoped to realize a lifetime ambition to visit that city, but, on the way, he died in Genoa in 1847.

Reforms came slowly to Ireland. The most needed reform was for the redistribution of land. The British Prime Minister Gladstone introduced a Land Act in 1870, but no important remedy was achieved until 1881 when the Irish obtained "the three F's": Fair rent, Free sale, and Fixity of tenure. This was a considerable gain, but the crusade for land ownership went on. After 1875 the land question became linked with Home Rule for Ireland. (This sought the establishment of an Irish Parliament in Dublin, even though a Lord Lieutenant would be appointed by the Crown and have the final veto.)

Founded by Isaac Butt, who entered Parliament in 1874, the Home Rule Association was carried on by Charles Stewart Parnell. Parnell became a Member of Parliament from County Meath in 1875 and within three years became the leader of the Home Rule Party.

The Home Rule Bill, sponsored by Gladstone, was rejected by the House of Commons in 1886, and Gladstone had to resign the Prime Ministership. He tried again in 1892, and this time it passed the House of Commons but was thrown out by the House of Lords. By now Parnell had been forced to resign, as a result of a personal scandal, and had died of exhaustion at the age of forty-five (1891). The common people felt, in spite of the scandal surrounding Parnell, that they had lost their "un-

crowned king." Gladstone also died without achieving Home Rule. The Bill finally passed in September, 1914, but it did not come into force until the end of World War I. As a result, discontent in Ireland rose drastically during the war years (1914–1918), but, in spite of this, tens of thousands of Irish volunteers fought and died for England in the war.

THE EASTER RISING

On Easter Monday in 1916 Irish rebels seized Government offices in Dublin, including the General Post Office. For five days a thousand men, including Eamon De Valera, held out against the British forces. There were street fighting, shelling, and a general looting of stores by the public. As the days passed by, all the rebel posts were recaptured except the Post Office. Field guns were set up, including a gunboat in the Liffey River. Much of O'Connell Street was blasted away, and the upper

Damaged buildings on Sackville Street in Dublin, 1916

At this review of his army, in County Clare, President de Valera issued the proclamation advising rejection of the peace terms.

story of the Post Office was shattered. Still the rebels held out within the battered building. However, their position became unbearable when the building caught on fire, and their leader, Padraic Pearse, had to surrender. Fifteen men were executed, including Pearse, and many others were imprisoned, among them De Valera.

The Easter Rising was a disappointment to the rebels because the people had not responded to the call for revolution. Lack of planning and coordination turned the uprising into a disaster instead of a victory. Although England's attention was elsewhere, the foreign aid the Irish expected did not materialize. Sir Roger Casement, who had worked in the British Consular Service in Africa, expected arms from a German ship. A mishap in planning resulted in Casement's arrest off the coast of Kerry; he was taken back to London as a spy, and the Irish rebels received no arms. The Easter Week Rebellion did accomplish something, however. It united the people in horror at the executions, and it reinforced their desire to be independent.

When World War I ended, the British sent soldiers to Ireland to keep law and order. Most were volunteers and did not belong to the Regular Army. Wearing khaki jackets, black trousers, and black caps, they were called by the Irish "Black and Tans." Until 1921 fighting went on between the rebels, supported by the Irish people, and the "Black and Tans," working for the British. Policemen were shot, informers were killed, and public and private property was destroyed.

In December, 1921, Prime Minister Lloyd George and the Irish delegates signed a treaty. De Valera did not approve of some of its terms, so he resigned, and Arthur Griffith became President of the *Dáil* (House of Representatives). The Irish Free State became a dominion with self-government, like Canada, and the British turned Dublin Castle over to the new government. But there was great discontent in Ireland, because six northern counties forming the chief part of the old province of

do so. Primary schoolteachers are required to know Irish in order to certify for a teaching position. Employees of the government are required to pass a test in Irish.

However, English continues to be the spoken language of Ireland. The Church, which oversees education, has not openly resisted the Gaelic Movement, but neither has the Church encouraged it. Even in the west of Ireland, where Irish lingered longer than most places, sermons are preached in English.

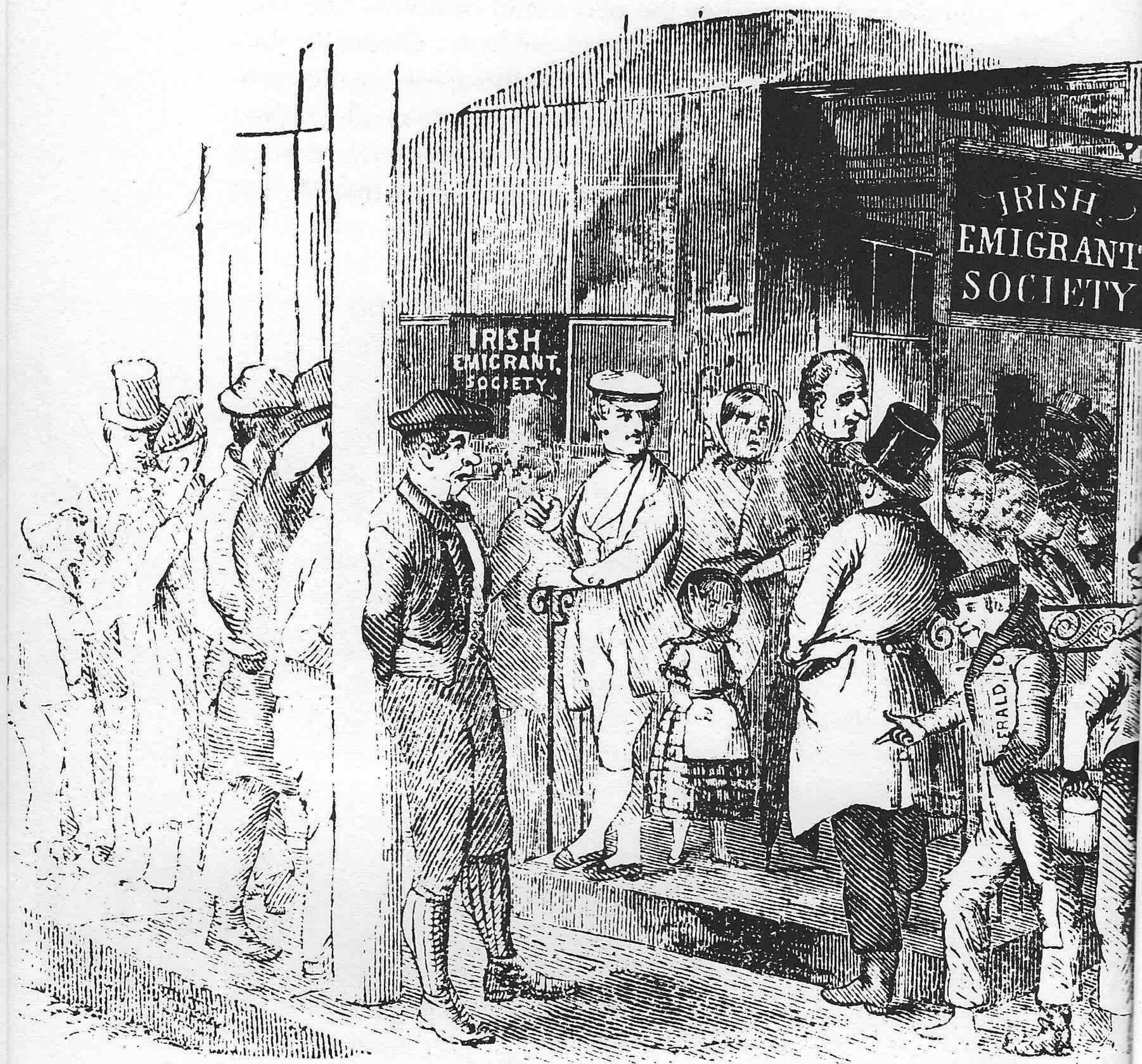
While the revival of Gaelic for cultural or sentimental reasons is understandable, it is not a language that adapts easily to present-day needs. The language has no technical or abstract vocabulary, and committees of linguists are working to fill in the gaps. A knowledge of Irish as a key to understanding the past will give substance to an ancient heritage. But with Ireland taking its place in a technical and scientific world, it seems reasonable that the Irish language is used most effectively in non-technical subjects.

THE ABBEY THEATRE

Part of the revival of Irish nationalism was an effort by a small group of people—Lady Gregory, W. B. Yeats, and Edward Martyn—at the end of the nineteenth century to build up a school of dramatic literature. Financial contributions were solicited, and the prospectus that was issued read, "We hope to find, in Ireland, an uncorrupted and imaginative audience, trained to listen by its passion for oratory . . . we will show that Ireland is not the home of buffoonery and of sentiment, as it has been represented, but the home of an ancient idealism."

In 1904 the Abbey Theatre opened in Dublin with three one-act plays: Synge's *The Shadow of the Glen,* Yeats's *On Baile's Strand,* and Lady Gregory's *Spreading the News.* But the Abbey did not attract a steady audience until three years later, when J. M. Synge produced *The Playboy of the Western World.* Synge tried to present a realistic picture of Irish attitudes and

behavior. He showed the Irish as a very imaginative people who were carried away by a situation to a point where they began to act a role and soon became incapable of distinguishing between truth and fiction. Amid storms of objection from the audience, a riot broke out. Hundreds of policemen were summoned to calm down the crowd so the play could continue. The riot proved to be a very successful bit of publicity. Gradually the Abbey became one of the foremost English-speaking theaters of its time. Although originally maintained by a small private group, it now receives an annual subsidy from the government. A new theater is now being built based on a plan that W. B. Yeats once suggested to Lady Gregory.


IRISH EMIGRANT SOCIETY
IRISH EMIGRANT SOCIETY

X

THE IRISH IN AMERICA

THE IRISH started to leave their country a long time ago, even if we do not believe that St. Brendan discovered America by sailing west in the sixth century. But we do know that Columbus reached America, and the Irish will tell you that he stopped in at Galway to hear Mass in the Church of St. Nicholas. The records of that voyage show that Columbus took with him on the *Santa Maria* an Irishman by the name of Rice de Culvey. The Irish have been leaving their own land for many years, so it is easy to believe that there are more people living in other countries who call themselves Irish than there are living in Ireland.

There were Irish in America even before the American Revolution. In the seventeenth century, Maryland and Pennsylvania became havens for Catholic families from England and Ireland. Although there are no official records of the Irish who fought for General George Washington in the Continental Army during the Revolution, it is said that fifty per cent of that army was made up of Irish. Since no Irishman can resist a good altercation and since the Irish did not like England, this may be true. Most of these had fled from the north of Ireland.

History records that when the English troops left Boston on March 17, 1776, General Washington ordered that the watchword that night be "St. Patrick." And the most famous unit of the Revolutionary Army, the "Pennsylvania Line" was renamed the "Line of Ireland," in honor of the men whose names were Burke, Kelly, Murphy, Shea, Donovan, and Sullivan.

Commodore John Barry of Wexford, known as the Father of the American Navy, was captain of the first American fighting

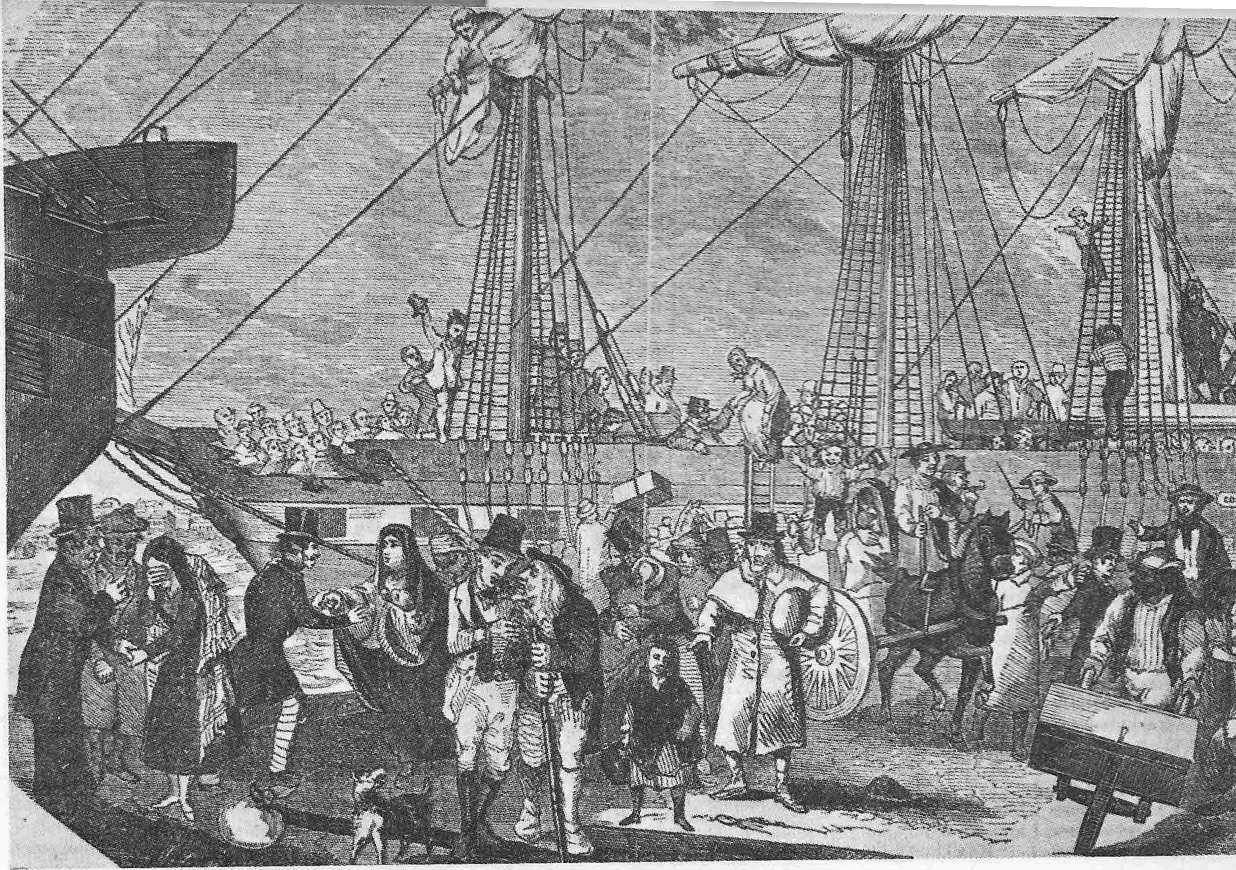
ship officially commissioned. In May, 1914, President Wilson dedicated a monument to John Barry, saying that he was an Irishman "whose heart crossed the Atlantic with him."

Although the American Irish were not so eager to fight during the Civil War, they had to serve like every other man who did not have the money to pay a substitute. At Bull Run, Fredericksburg, Antietam, and Chancellorsville, the Irish soldiers fought courageously. At Chancellorsville, the Irish Brigade was shot to pieces, and few came out of that battle alive. Whenever the Civil War is mentioned, the Irish point with pride to Philip Sheridan, the Union cavalry general, son of Irish immigrants. And we must not forget Stonewall Jackson, who was of Ulster background.

The Great Famine of 1846 and the two minor famines are now a part of history, but they left a mark on Ireland which cannot be erased—the small number of people who still live there. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there were eight million people in Ireland. Today there are less than three million. In 1846 a million people starved to death. Another half million fled because there was nothing to eat. In every part of the world Irish people are found. These are the great-grandchildren of the lucky ones who escaped. Some emigrants reached New Zealand, others landed in Australia, but many came to North America to settle in Canada or the United States. The average length of the voyage across the Atlantic was about thirty-five days, depending upon the prevailing winds. The cost was about twenty dollars, and anyone who could afford it made the trip.

Entire families simply walked off their farms. They walked along the roads into town, begging for food, but no one had any food. Those who died were left beside the hawthorn hedges because no one had the strength to bury the dead. Luckier Irish reached the seaports to crowd on the ships leaving for other countries.

Not all of those who left by ship reached another shore. Many Irish died at sea, and others lived only long enough to



Irish immigrants arriving in New York in the 1840's

reach the promised land. Then they too died of hunger, or of diseases they had picked up on the crowded vessels. When these ships, laden with the sick and the dead, reached Boston, New York, or Philadelphia, they were called the "coffin ships."

Since the Irish were willing to work with their hands or to wield a pick and shovel, they found jobs. Irishmen became roustabouts and construction workers. Crews of men were hired to build roads, canals, and railroads. From east to west, down along the Mississippi River, and even into Mexico the Irish traveled. They did not fear hard work as long as the memory of hunger was behind them. Never too certain of what they might find in this new land, they knew only that there were jobs and food and a chance to improve their status. For the roving unmarried Irishman who did not settle in the east, a whole new world was his for the taking.

Although the Irish had been farmers at home, they had no money to buy land in America. And unlike the immigrant Germans who dared to settle in remote areas, the Irish did not want to isolate themselves on lonely farms in the wilderness. The

Irish liked to talk, and since they already spoke English, they did not have a language problem like the Germans who came at the same time. So, many Irish remained in the seaports where they landed, and the Germans moved westward.

Boston, the seaport nearest the Old World, became a home for many Irish. The Yankee families did not like this intrusion and considered the Irish coarse foreigners, useful only as servants or laborers. Crowded together, the Irish gathered in the poorer sections of the city—the only area they could afford—which soon became known as "Little Ireland," "Paddy's Camp," or "Irishtown." The men worked as laborers, as dock hands, in textile mills, shoe factories, and stone quarries. Women and girls who did not work in the factories "hired out" as cooks, housemaids, or nursemaids.

The port of arrival for most of the Irish was New York City, and many of them stayed there. Unskilled as they were upon arrival, they built the railroads, laid pipes for the gas mains, drove the horsedrawn wagons, and worked at the docks loading and unloading the freight from foreign ships. Some of the Irish moved out to Brooklyn, then a country area, and it became an Irish community. Those who had no relatives lived in boarding houses, and there around the big dining table, they talked to one another about their jobs and their happier memories of Ireland. In the active, bustling life of the boarding house they forgot the rebuffs they had encountered during the day from the already-established Americans who did not welcome them. The Irish were not singled out for this disfavor; the Jews, Italians, Germans, and Swedes were also considered intruders.

By 1850 the Irish made up 42.8 per cent of the foreign-born population of the United States. And by 1910 over eighty per cent of the American-Irish lived in urban communities—New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, and St. Louis. As the Irish immigrants labored, they learned, and they saved their money in order to open small businesses. From the digging of canals and laying of rails, many of these workmen

eventually became bosses themselves. Those who became financially successful often opened saloons. For some of them this was only a step away from entering local politics. Little by little the Irish improved their financial situation.

Many an affluent family can trace its beginning back to a healthy, hard-working, pick-swinging relative who worked hard for long hours with little pay to eke out a living in a strange land which neither welcomed him nor encouraged him.

Among the successful Irish of the business world was William R. Grace, founder of the Grace Steamship Line. He was also the first Catholic mayor of New York City in 1880. When a twenty-year-old youth, James Butler, came to America and organized the first chain store, his system was to sweep across the country. Again from Ireland came a boy of only fourteen years; his name was Michael Cudahy, and he took a job in a meat-packing plant in Milwaukee. He developed a process for curing meat under refrigeration and became the head of the Cudahy Packing Company. A dry-goods merchant, whose Irish parents lived in Baltimore, became a banker in Washington, D.C.; he built and gave to the nation's capital the Corcoran Gallery of Art, named for him.

Behind many inventions are the talents of the Irish. Robert Fulton, whose tailor-father came over from Kilkenny, made steam navigation a reality. A son of another Irish emigrant was Cyrus Hall McCormick, who invented a farm implement which developed the West—a mechanical reaper.

Rubber heels were invented by Humphrey O'Sullivan. The hurricane lamp, used by railroad men, was the invention of Michael Hicks. And from Rockcorry, Ireland, came young John Robert Gregg, whose system of shorthand notation is now used the world over.

Education is a passion with the Irish, and they have always had a tremendous desire for learning. This goes back to the anti-Irish legislation of 1695 by England which denied all educational facilities to the Catholic Irish. Foolishly the English

Robert Fulton

believed that if the Irish were kept in ignorance, they would obey without questioning the English regulations. Schools were closed down at that time, and if the schoolmasters tried to teach (as they often did at secret meetings under thick hedges), they were sent to the West Indies or to America. Traveling Irish schoolmasters taught the children of the eighteenth century American colonists, when it became impossible to send those children abroad for an education. So through a process of education, the Irish continued toward success and often helped the cause of higher education. Colleges and universities like Notre Dame, Fordham, and other Catholic colleges owe a great deal to devoted Irishmen. Not everyone knows that Princeton University owes its start to the Irish Presbyterians and that two of

its earliest presidents were born in Ireland—William Tennent and Samuel Finley. In Washington, D.C., a cousin of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, John Carroll, founded Georgetown University, and he was also the first Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States.

Many Irishmen became lawyers. Being highly dramatic and favored with oratorical prowess, many young men used this talent well. Before the days of law schools a young man might "read" the law with a judge. From a background of education and the law came many of our political leaders. Ten of our early Presidents—Jackson, Polk, Grant, Wilson, Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, Arthur, Cleveland, Harrison, and McKinley—were of Protestant Northern Irish descent.

But for a long time prejudice against the Catholic Irish acted as a barrier to their arrival at the highest offices in our country, either in public life or in private activities. The memory of the poverty and ignorance of the early Irish immigrants served as a barrier to them or their children in their efforts to reach the top. This was clearly evident a generation ago when Alfred E. Smith, who had been a very successful governor of New York State found his religion and his Irish background an obstacle on his road to the presidency.

Governor Alfred E. Smith

In 1929 Governor Smith threw his hat into the presidential ring and, with his big, black cigar and an East Side accent, campaigned for the presidency. The big issue before the country was prohibition. Mr. Smith wanted to repeal it; his Republican opponent, Herbert Hoover, did not. And when the smoke was cleared from the battle ring, Mr. Smith had lost—not on the apparent issue of prohibition but because of the anti-Catholic vote. For America was not ready in 1928 to accept something quite so foreign to her early puritanical beginnings.

By 1960 these prejudices were much weakened. In that year, a Roman Catholic, great-grandson of an Irish immigrant, was elected to the highest office in the United States. The election of John Fitzgerald Kennedy to the presidency was a major turning point in the history of the Irish in America, not only because he was elected, but especially for the great reputation he established in that office.

A man to whom wealth was accepted without thought, and a war hero, he had been trained in some of our country's best

President Kennedy, on his visit to Ireland in June 1963, was entertained by a cousin, Mrs. Mary Ryan, in Dunganstown.

Mr. Kennedy was welcomed enthusiastically in New Ross.

educational establishments. As President he captured the imagination of the American people and of most of the world because of his great courage, outstanding vigor, and high ideals. In his work he showed a trained mind, a quick sense of humor, broad culture, and a spirit of self-sacrifice which showed the world that the Irish in America were fully able and willing to repay the country that had provided their ancestors with refuge.

Less than a century ago, the "Help Wanted" columns of newspapers ran advertisements which specified: "No blacks or Irish need apply," or "Anyone but a Catholic," or simply, "No Irish." But prejudices, emotional reactions, and times change. The image of the immigrant has been supplanted in the eyes of the citizens of the United States. And with the election of John F. Kennedy as President, the Irish, like other immigrants from all parts of the world, proved that they had become Americans.

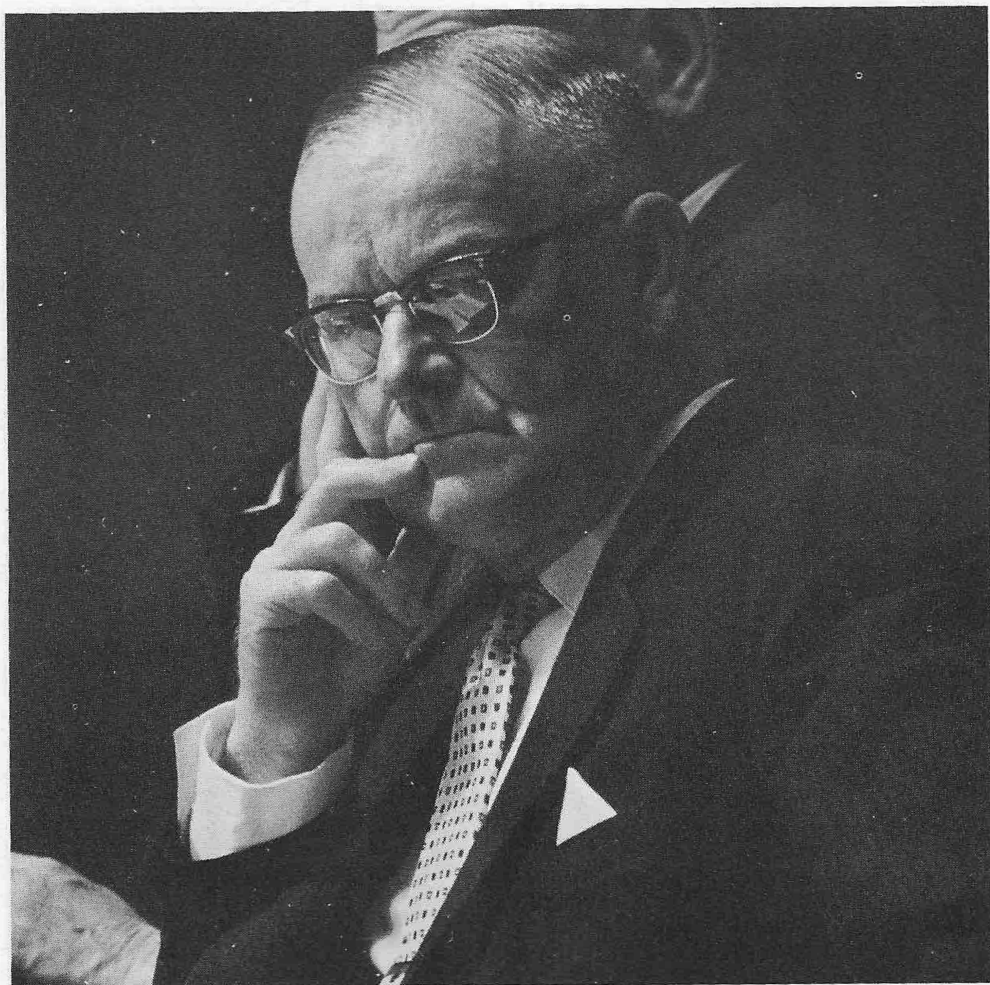
XI

A LOOK AHEAD

IRELAND has been taking its place in world politics. It was admitted to the United Nations on December 14, 1955, and has constantly advocated a strong United Nations as the best way to safeguard the interest of small nations. The Irish representative at the United Nations, Frederick H. Boland, was elected President of the General Assembly on September 20, 1960. Two battalions of Irish troops were sent to the Congo under United Nations command in the summer of 1960, and in November nine Irish soldiers were killed in ambush by Baluba tribesmen. A new contingent left for the Congo in May, 1963, to replace the battalions already there. About five hundred Irish officers and soldiers are still serving in Africa.

However, when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was founded in 1949, Ireland refused to join because, by doing so, it would publicly recognize the partition of the Six Counties. Ireland has never accepted the independence of the North and and considers the Six Counties as part of the Republic.

Since Seán Lemass became Ireland's Prime Minister in 1959, he has worked for the reunification of divided Ireland. But Lord Brookeborough, Prime Minister of Northern Ireland for nineteen years, was never amenable to any discussion that would bring together the two sections of Ireland. In fact, since Ireland was divided in 1921, Lord Brookeborough refused to cross the border, although he lived only a few miles from it. His successor, Terence M. O'Neill, has been less rigid. Since his installation as Prime Minister, there has been growing hope that Northern Ireland and the Republic may be able to discuss their problems amicably.



Frederick H. Boland was President of the United Nations General Assembly from September 1960 to September 1961.

Time works many changes, and it is possible that the new generation, inspired by the conciliatory spirit of the late Pope John XXIII and the practicality of mutual economic benefits, may be able to work toward some common solution of Ireland's problem as a whole. From these efforts an atmosphere of understanding may eventually lead to a hopeful outlook for the future of both Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Ireland's prospects for the years to come should be of continuous growth, and much will depend upon international trade. In neighboring Great Britain, there is a market of over fifty million persons; three-quarters of Ireland's exports are sold there.

Since Ireland is economically dependent upon Britain, it is likely that the fortunes of the economy of Britain will be reflected in that of Ireland. More especially, if Britain enters the European Economic Community the prospects for Irish growth will improve.

With the aid of foreign capital Ireland must establish new industries, increase investment in new equipment, and expand its exports. With new kinds of productivity, including high-quality meat and animal products, and aided by its inexpensive labor, Ireland should capture part of the new African and Asian markets.

Irish people possess a native intelligence, learn quickly, and adapt readily to modern ideas. Certainly, with its present awareness of the potential world market, this awakened country can plunge ahead. Ireland has a great opportunity to reach out and play a significant part in the modern world.

Irish members of the United Nations Force in the Congo, 1960

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