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In Search of Cork's Collecting Traditions: From Kilcrea's Library to the Boole Library of Today

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A MATTER OF SCOPE AND DESIGN

The objective of this essay is not a description of the presently unresearched, unstated and unquantified tradition of collectors, collecting and collectables in Cork; it is rather one of signposting what survives in terms of influences which coalesced into what became the bibliographical and museological resources of the Queen's College and ultimately University College, Cork (UCC).

The motivation to collect either privately or institutionally can result from a variety of perspectives. Within the ranks of collectors one finds professionals and amateurs, scholars and connoisseurs, pedestrians and artists. Cork collectors of earlier times formed an intellectual architecture which embroidered the gentry, aristocracy, professionals of the law and church, the merchant and the naval officer into a network of knowledge interchange. One could call it an invisible college.

There are many types of collection, e.g. that which seeks to illustrate principles and concepts, that which seeks to dramatize, to educate, to decorate, that which seeks prestige or acts as an investment. Within each collection is a statement about its maker and about objectives. This essay is about collecting and its dimensions in space and time. It is about collections private and institutional. It is about what they mean as historical artefacts.

SEARCHES FOR A BEGINNING.

In a random choice of locations the scriptorium at Kilcrea Friary, Co. Cork, is one possible site for a beginning. What type of activity should one imagine there? Who was scribe, illuminator, parchmentor or, binder there? Where were its products stored and how? What, if any, printed volumes stood beside them? What inks were made and goose quills sharpened? What satchels, panniers or hands brought volumes to and from? How much of this story lies in the Gaelic translation of The Travels of Sir John Mandeville now surviving in Rennes and written for the Franciscans of Kilcrea? Did examples of early printed books arrive as happened at Battle Abbey in Hastings, England, where a monk, John Henfeld, inscribed his name on a copy of the Bible, which had commentary by Nicholas De Lyra and was printed in Basle in 1498? At Kilcrea were the sons of wealthy merchant families similarly provided? What volumes did medieval merchants bring to the city and its hinterland in their barques, and from what ports? One is reminded of a catalogue of a collection at a collegiate school at St Mary's Cathedral in Youghal and one must ask if a college attached to Christ Church at Cork was similarly supplied? As yet local scholarship lacks answers to these questions.

From about the time of the dissolution of the monasteries — which created chaos for

manuscript libraries and their attendant scholarship — a document of 1582 was known to Richard Caulfield. In it were recorded the names of 39 parishioners of Christ Church, Cork, 'the elite of the city at that time', which included the Mayor, Patrick Gallwey; James Creagh and Adam Goold; the Recorder, Andrew Skiddy; the churchwarden, James Hore; the schoolmaster, Robert Tyrry; and the physician, Charles Field. One is curious about the levels of literacy, the sources of education and the presence of supporting printed resources.

Across a field or two from Kilcrea Friary westwards is a tower-house of the MacCarthys, also founders of the Friary. What level of literacy was possessed by its occupants through the centuries and what manuscripts and printed works would have been perused there? In the period 1587 to 1598 the poet Edmund Spenser resided at a similar tower-house at Kilcolman in north Cork. While there he produced several works, including three books of his great poem *The Faerie Queen*, all bound for English printing presses. What works accompanied him to Kilcolman? What size of collection did he possess there?

The library of Trinity College is founded near the end of the sixteenth century. James Ussher goes abroad to buy books for it. James Ware, his colleague, talks to Gaelic scholarship, making its *monumenta* his collectables and beginning the antiquarian tradition, a perspective of recorded culture which is with us today. As all of this happened, what volumes occupied the home of Sir Walter Raleigh at Youghal? Surely more than copies of Spenser's *Faerie Queen*?

THE FIRST SIGNPOST.

Continuing with a Muskerry topography, a short distance from Kilcrea is Kilnaglory, the site of an old parish church and graveyard. The Chapter Book of St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork, under 4 Nov. 1627 records that Richard Owen, Prebendary of Kilnaglory, 'presented towards the erection of a library in the Cathedral church £20 and said Richard to have the use of the library during his life and at his death to remain for the use of the Prebendaries'. Richard Caulfield, from whom this reference is taken, understood this to mean that books were acquired with the sum involved.

Those collections built up during the seventeenth century had a historical context — social, technological and commercial. It is a history of the movement of people, of materials, of ideas and of needs. Out of this emerged the tradition and siting of a Cork centre of printing and bookselling which had its *floruit* during the eighteenth century, only to be scattered gradually as the promenades of the canals of Patrick Street and the South Mall became streets. Here is a signpost to literary history and collecting traditions as yet untapped.

What local demand or political expediency was responsible for the introduction of a printing press to Cork? Where was it located? On what date did its first imprint appear? How did the market-place respond? We find snippets of evidence for the seventeenth century which refer to Cromwellian proclamations and sermons. Whatever the original intention we can presume that influence and demand quickly put this hand-press's potential to further uses. The tradition of the pamphlet or tract as a means of short, incisive publication of one's view had its origins in that century. The opportunity to broadly air one's views or to challenge those of others was not wasted. Good sermons could be given a permanency and a breadth of distribution, as was Dean Worth's *A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of Richard Boyle* . . . in 1644.

From the 1680s onwards trade with British America and the Caribbean was of major



OLD LIBRARY, AT ST FIN BARRE'S

importance in the creation of Cork's eighteenth-century prosperity. A little of this prosperity would have been expressed in an increased workload for local printers, in the sale of printed goods, and on the bookshelves of the homes of those who were literate. English ships sailing for the colonies would call to Cork for provisions. In the business of provisioning perhaps bookstock is also implied. It is tempting to seek channels here for the flow of bibliographic material into Cork, and even from Cork to the New World. One reads of the exploits of John Dunton, the entrepreneur London bookseller (1659-1733). According to William West, in 1685-6 he sailed with two ships and a cargo of books to Boston, lost one of the ships on the way and on arrival opened a warehouse for the sale of books. One wonders if his ships provisioned at Cork and if he sought a market there. He was certainly in Ireland in 1698 when he advertised an auction of books in Dublin as follows:

> . . . but the good acceptance the way of sale by Auction has met with from all lovers of Books that encouraged me to bring to this Kingdom of Ireland a general collection of the most valuable pieces in Divinity, History, Philosophy, Law, Physick, Mathematick, Horsemanship, Merchandize, Limning, Military discipline, Heraldry, Music, Fortification, Fireworks, Husbandry, Gardening, Romances, Novels, Poems, Plays, Bibles and School-Books that have been printed in England since the Great Fire in London in 1666 to the present time.

This catalogue is a potential library suited to any gentlemen familiar with Francis Bacon's structure of knowledge. This pool from which many individual collections could be enhanced is perhaps not the complete

picture of the imprints available from Dunton, who may also have travelled to fairs such as those at Leipzig where printers and booksellers swopped wares. One is curious about the opportunities for Cork printers to travel to England or the Continent to acquire copies of new works which on return to Cork they reset and printed.

OF GHOST COLLECTIONS.

These are collections of which traces survive in later collections. Their provenances provide rich chronologies. To use a convenient springboard from which to sample these, one could mention that Dunton's Dublin sale-list includes bibles. A few years earlier in 1685 Bedell's bible had been posthumously published, a work of scholarship from which an Irish version of the Old Testament resulted as well as a new type-font for the Irish language. Dr Andrew Sall, a Jesuit who had embraced the reformed church was responsible for its preparation and final production. According to Edward Lynam, Sall while at Douai must have been familiar with books in Irish from Louvain, and he suggests that Sall provided the manufacturer of a new Irish type-face, financed by Robert Boyle, with designs based on the Louvain model. Sall's amanuensis, according to Richard Caulfield, was John Crow, a graduate of Queen's College, Oxford, and regarded as one of the ablest scholars of his day. In time Crow became Bishop of Cloyne and of his library Caulfield says:

> a close examination . . . has led to the conclusion that many of the books, as well as from their controversial nature as from the towns in which they were printed, had once been in Sall's possession.

Bishop Crow died in 1727 and his widow sold his library to St Fin Barre's Cathedral where it joined with some of the books of Bishop Peter Browne's library, possibly the books of Richard Owen, and Pomeroy's



Portrait of Peter Browne in the Bishop's Palace, Cork

donation, to become what we now know as the Library of St Fin Barre's Cathedral. And there the *Biblia Sacra* once owned by John Henfeld became a valued part of the collection.

A SECOND SIGNPOST.

It is Peter Browne who was responsible for the erection of what is today perhaps the oldest library building in Cork city. Browne, a noted scholar and preacher of his day, was Provost of Trinity College, Dublin (TCD). This was the Dublin of Archbishop Narcissus Marsh (1638-1713) who began the building of his library adjacent to St Patrick's Cathedral about 1701. He intended it to be used as a 'public library'. In it a gift from Andrew Sall acknowledges Marsh's involvement in the production of Bedell's bible. Today the library exists as one of the great monuments to eighteenth-century Irish book-collecting and scholarship. Marsh was also Provost of

TCD until his promotion to Archbishop in 1694. In 1692 Browne became a Fellow at TCD and Provost in 1699, remaining so until his appointment as Bishop of Cork and Ross in 1709/1710. Browne was responsible for the creation of a 'Publick library' in the grounds of St Fin Barre's Cathedral to which Archdeacon Pomeroy (d. 1725) beqeathed £60 worth of his own books 'to found a parish library' and £100 towards building or supporting a charity school. The result under Browne's direction was a dual-purpose building. Browne 'bequeathed to Elizabeth Russell, sister to the Archdeacon, £3000, which bequest, if she died without marriage or issue, was to revert to the library of St Finbarry to purchase books, to purchase an annuity for the keeper of the library and the final third for the benefit of the widows of clergymen'. This reveals elements of a story about the value placed upon bibliographic resources. Here we find the second signpost, pointing to the intellectual life of eighteenth-century Cork.

The Cathedral Library did not receive all of Browne's collection. Two references to its dispersal occur in Caulfield's notes to the 1893 edition of Smith's *Cork:*

> Many of his books were in the library at Riverstown. I presume they were removed there from Bishops-town by Bp. Jemmet Browne . . . Capt. Edwd. F. Browne gave me all the MSS of Bp. Peter Browne remaining in the library at Bishops-town, Jan. 5, 1875.

Jemmet Browne was a successor and relative of Peter Browne. More or less contemporaneous with Browne's building, another 'Publick Library' was formed on the north outskirts of Cork city. In a wing of the Green Coat Hospital a library was created, an account and catalogue of which appears in a work published in 1721 entitled *Pietas Corcagiensis.* The catalogue contains approximately 275 titles, a large number of which are seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century imprints with a few sixteenth-century examples. Helping to cast a little light on private collecting by individuals other than members of the clergy, we find that donors'/benefactors' names are given. The main body of the collection comes from the Hon. Brigadier General Stearne, the Rev. the Incumbent of the Parish (Henry Maule, Rector of St Mary's Shandon), Captain Charles Maule, Sheriff Croker, Sheriff Austin, Henry Sheares (Banker) and some other non-titled individuals. The Green Coat Hospital functioned as a charitable institution and school.

THE CURIOSITY CABINET JOINS THE BOOKCASE.

I have already alluded to Cork's eighteenth-century trade with North America. It also had close associations with the wine trade and France. Some of the families involved created great fortunes and invested to an extent in art and culture. This was an era of Palladian houses, of discovery, of 'enlightenment', of entrepreneurs like Pike and Penrose, of tall ships and varied cargoes such as imported furs and lumber at city yards, of slavery, of West Indies trade and rum, of children sent to Europe to be educated, of institutions to encourage literacy and the literature of 'culture', of a pre-empire focus on identity and social orientations, which looked to parts of the Atlantic seaboard other than Britain for the *gastronomique* of the mind as well as that of the palate. These are the settings for a tradition of collecting which expanded and enriched, superseded and paralleled the bibliographic one. The origins of this tradition can be picked up in antiquarian works, in herbals and floras, in geological works imported and influencing the creation of specimen collections. During the century, works which reflect the fruits of this collecting activity make their

appearance. Interest in botanical knowledge shows forth in a market for John *Keogh's Botanaelogia Universalis Hibernica* . . . printed in Cork in 1735, in the reprinting of the Natural History of Ireland by Gerard Boate in 1726, in Walter Harris's edition of the Works of Sir James Ware. These works place markers which reflect the beginnings of a recording tradition, of classification, of descriptive cataloguing and the illustration of specimens. Of special note for the social and landscape histories of the Munster region are Charles Smith's topographical works, which in origin reflect to some extent the philosophy of eighteenth-century medicine. This sought to understand illness through a knowledge of topography. For Cork city Dr Joseph Rogers's *An Essay On Epidemic Diseases*, published in Cork 1734, comes to mind, and his theory that the reason why bronchial ailments were so common among the population was because the city was on marshland. Collecting examples to gaze upon, to discuss, to illustrate, to catalogue, spread itself into collections of fine art, arts and crafts such as decorative shell and featherwork, landscape gardening and horticulture, a panorama of interests from the glasshouse to the picture gallery.

These interests, when linked to the travels and experiences of military, naval and merchant families throughout the county, created an archive of souvenirs, of personal memorabilia, which formed the nucleus of specimens for Natural History and ethnographic collections when donated to found public institutions. When not donated, some ultimately became the treasure trove of auctioneers and antique dealers in later times when oriental carved chairs and Mogul tapestries accompanied them into unrecorded dispersals. Many other kinds of collecting took place as polite hobbyists led leisurely lives in parlours and drawing-rooms. Included in these must be numismatics and philately and one is reminded of John Lindsay of Blackrock, Cork, his cabinet and his famous books on numismatics. This provides an example of specimen-collecting creating bibliographical collectables and vice-versa. But the home libraries and drawing-rooms provided much more than the temptation of serious intellectual endeavour. Novels, dramas, comic opera, poetry in English and continental languages made an appearance. Local versions, editions and modifications of popular Dublin and London plays were sought in bookshops as playhouse bills were posted for Cork's eighteenth-century theatres. And drawing-room conversations echoed shrill-voiced accounts of these performances during evenings of song, story and harpsichord melodies amidst a paraphernalia of collectables and collections, yearnings for civility.

CUTTING A DASH IN THE LANDSCAPE

The newspapers of the day enhanced the reading material of gentry houses, citizens' houses and the whispering gossip of coffee-houses. In the coffee-houses pamphleteers combined wit, creative talent and intellectual skullduggery, mixed the clever with the defamatory and held court in jester style. Of this pen-rattling to prevent, or pre-empt, sabre-rattling, of these paper bullets aimed at silhouetted *nomes-de-plumes*, none is perhaps more entertaining than Alexander the Coppersmith whose *Remarks Upon the Religion, Trade, Government, Police, Customs, Manners, and Maladys, of the City of Corke* was published in 1737. In reply William Boles in *A Critical Review of the Foregoing Work* . . . concludes the elusive Alexander to be 'a most flagrant malignant, Jesuitical Papist'. Alexander promised further to publish his voyages to Heaven, Hell and Purgatory. Whether he did or not he was eventually pricked by an adversary's foil in *Alexander Fed with his own Spoon.* This was



'The Exchange and Castle St., Cork'. A conjectural drawing by John Fitzgerald, said to be based on an early 19th-century illustration.
(*Courtesy Cork Public Museum*)

Castle Street, a small enclave of littérateurs intermingling, where the fashionable set from the Marsh, with its Mansion House, Bowling Green and property developments in continental style, met in a maelstrom of hubris and genteelisms. Gay popinjays, perhaps recounted stories of 'De Groves of de Pool' where industrialization, the Kiln River and a picturesque valley blended together, stories of 'De Ugly Club' and exploits in the vicinity of Blackrock, stories of yacht races and of mischievous poems published as broadsides. One pictures them walking past sedan chairs and beneath shop signs on a winter's evening. From it all comes a plethora of printed communication, chance-selected relics which survive as collectables to build histories upon.

Of London shop signs William West's tavern anecdotes recall that:

> before 1766 signs were large, finely gilt and very absurd; gold periwigs, saws, axes, razors, trees, lancets, knives, cheese, salmon, blacks' heads with gilt hair, half-moons, sugarloaves and Westphalia hams were repeated, unmercifully from Whitechapel to Piccadilly. One perambulating the streets must have felt rather unpleasant during a high wind when hundreds of signs were swinging on rusty hinges above him, threatening a descent; and pent-houses and spouts pouring cascades upon his luckless head'.

This Hogarthian imagery can be translated easily to the medieval lanes off Cork's Main Street, to the maritime ethos of Grogan's marsh city, a mid-century prospect of red-brick, ashlar, curvilinear gables and tall masts. A city for which Richard Caulfield's imagination could conjure:

> Attired in the wig, powdered hair, three-cocked hat, huge waistcoat with lappets and frills, long

stockings with silver or jewelled knee and shoe buckles of the period, we may contemplate the respectable citizen of Cork sitting down to read the 'editorial in the Medley', at home or in the coffee houses in Castle Street, at the sign of the Grand Turk about the year 1738.

One might add to this a teasing reference found in E. R. McClintock Dix's listing of seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century Cork-printed books, where a 1754 publication entitled *Chinese Tales; or stories told in China* . . . has the imprint 'at the Sign of the Naked-Man with a Bunch of Keys in his Pocket, near the Bridge'. One wonders if the mood behind the reference is a 'serio-jocular' one! To refer to Dix a little further, the importance of Castle Street shows through in the following imprints:

c. 1748 M. Pilkington, Castle St.,
1758 Eugene Swiney, Near the Exchange,
1761 " " " "
c. 1766 Phineas and George Bagnell, Castle Street.
1782 J. Sullivan, opposite the Exchange.
1792 Anthony Edwards, 6 Castle Street.
1797 Jno. Haly, King's Arms, Exchange.

A shopfront topography emerges from a bibliographer's list, a parade of collectables. Among others, a social history awaits writing here, a tribute to the collecting habits of bibliophiles.

Of cargoes of books imported for sale, for distribution to country towns and surrounding counties, of the London or Paris origins of these works, of pirating editions and reprints, of markets, of shops and stalls, of merchants, much has yet to be researched. But the importance of Cork as the principal port of the south should not be underestimated in charting the history of its role as a gateway to cultural enrichment as well as commerce, something which may have a history beyond recorded history.



WILLIAM WEST, BOOKSELLER

OF IMPRINTS LEADING TO THE THIRD SIGNPOST.

Which brings us to William West, an Englishman who served his apprenticeship in the hub of London's bookselling tradition at Paternoster Row and who rose to become a shop manager before leaving for Cork and setting up his own business. His London career is captured in his *Fifty Years Recollections of an Old Bookseller* . . . Cork, 1835. These he describes as his *Scrapiana* which was something of a literary tradition when put in the context of James Roche's *The Recollections Of An Octogenarian* and Richard Sainthill's *Olla Podrida* [Spanish Stew]. William West is best remembered in Cork for his directory of 1810, the introduction to which is an interesting topographical description of houses of importance and their owners as viewed from a ship in the channel. Of collectors and collections we find the following as he travels a maritime avenue towards the city:

Lakelands . . . lately the residence of Benjamin Bousfield Esq. A gentleman of considerable literary ability . . . his answer to Mr. Burke's reflections on the French Revolution ranked among the first paper bullets of the day, against that extraordinary luminary . . . Mr. Bousfield has some time since retired from this part of the country and this elegant mansion is now occupied by William Crawford Esq.

According to McNamara, Bousfield's library was the foundation of the Crawford Library, part of which was presented to Queen's College, Cork, during the later part of the nineteenth century.

Following West's tour with the eighteenth-century imagery of Grogan's *Boats at Tivoli* in mind, we read of residences westwards along the ridge from Lota. That of Sir Richard Kellett had 'an excellent library, selected with a chaste and classical taste . . . a fit residence for the gentleman and the scholar'. From there to the residence of Cooper Penrose at Woodhill, 'The Irish Vatican', with its conchological and feather craft displays, its art gallery, its apartments of half-columns and busts, its models of Greek and Roman statuary, copies of French casts. And from there to Summerhill, the home of George Newenham, 'encourager and cultivator of the arts' who was also 'extremely acquainted with mechanics'. West continues his description with references to the inhabitants of Cork city as well-educated, well-informed, polite and hospitable. The polite arts, music, poetry and dancing, are much encouraged as well as amateur drawing and painting. In this context was created the Cork Library Society, containing 'a large and well chosen collection of books which is rapidly increasing.' Founded in 1792, its two printed catalogues in 1801 and 1820 which contained lists of subscribers/members indicated its importance as a major step from circulating libraries and private libraries towards the spirit and ethos of what became the Public Library movement. However, in many ways we should tread with caution in applying this term as it was perhaps much closer in character to the gentlemen's clubs of the time and of subsequent decades. Its librarian and its special collections, along with its sources of regular acquisitions, are all topics for closer scrutiny. For 1801, 151 subscribers are named and this can be read topographically as a landscape of literacy and collections, however small, within the county. One of the ordinary members recorded is Benjamin Bousfield.

It is not appropriate to leave the eighteenth century without noting the non-bibliographic collections which must have accumulated and for which some trace of evidence must survive in auction catalogues, ledgers and travelogues for this century. The provenances of the artefacts and specimens which formed these collections expressed much in terms of Grand Tours and the paraphernalia of intellectual furniture as expressed in home decor. This decor sought the treasures of the gallery as commonplace, portrait painting as genealogical tradition and landscape as a passion of expression both in garden, on canvas and in the colourful detail of estate maps in the style of John Rocque. Not all collections of this period were auctioned locally or indeed easily dispersed, as was the case with the library of Sir Richard Cox sold by auction at Mr Zachary Morris's Great Room in Boland's Lane in 1772. In 1782 on the death of Revd John Forsayeth he desired certain of his books be 'sold in London, as in this kingdom books of this kind bear no price, I believe.' Of the book collections of Catholic clergy, of schoolmasters, of hereditary scholars and poets, much has yet to be learned and evaluated. The above can only offer a temptation to explore the nature and historical implications of a bibliographical heritage. Which brings us to the third signpost and the beginning of an empire culture.

THE THIRD SIGNPOST AND THE AGE OF EMPIRE.

Strollers from the Cork Library to the gentlemen's clubs in the early decades of the nineteenth century, must have occasionally mentioned progress in the establishment and development of the Royal Cork Institution. This was the physical expression of a wish among certain citizens for an institution of higher learning. We are fortunate today that along with a printed catalogue of its library, the manuscript Book of Presents has survived. This Institution's library of what would amount to five or six thousand volumes and a significant patents collection joined a landscape which included what has been mentioned above in terms of private and 'public' collections. One can add in passing that of the Mechanics' Institute, while the Cork Library is taken as a collection of around 9,000 volumes.

The Book of Presents contains entries from 1809 to 1869 and it also acted as a Visitors' Book from 1842 to 1868. Its entries record a wide variety of bibliographic donations along with a most varied assortment of natural history, ethnographic and archaeological specimens. The following are selected from entries which number over 800. Between the lines is a wealth of lost history about a society and its traditions, about education and resource building. The selection below, however inadequately, tries to illustrate some of the facets of experience and intellectual endeavour which underlie the collecting activity. As a separate study, the provenances and the collectors could be the subject of a rich exposition on the geographical and societal aspects of Cork's nineteenth-century maritime history.

A traditional ballad sung by some English folk-groups during the 1970s was called Lord Franklin. It speaks, in three-part harmony, of the loss of Sir John Franklin and his crew in searching for a Northwest Passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The desire to go north around the American continent and reach the Orient had a long history. The search for the elusive passage bred tales of tragedy and heroism. John Franklin and his expedition of 1845-7 found a passage but also vanished without trace until recently. Indicating a Cork connexion with earlier nineteenth-century voyages in search of it, the Book of Presents gives us the following. April 2, 1821 they received: 'The head of a musk bull. The horns . . . of a musk cow from the Artic Regions'. These were donated by Mr W. Dealy through the Earl of Bantry. Again on 4 June 1821 'Two sketches of a musk bull and cow' received through the Earl. Then in an entry for the early part of 1844, unsigned, which comes after the signature of J. L. Somerville there is:

> Wm. J. Dealy Lieut R.N. (Bantry) who shot the musk ox, the head of which is now in the Cork Institution whilst serving in the Hecla, Capt. Parry Killed in Melville Island at 80 N & 67 W.

The connexion with the Northwest Passage is revealed more clearly when one discovers that Sir William Edward Parry led expeditions in search of the passage in 1819, 1821 and 1824. On the first one of these he discovered Melville Island.

The next interesting combination is of references to China. To balance their trade with it, European merchants during the early 1800s started to bring opium there. This was outlawed by the Chinese government. In March 1839 Chinese officials tried to stop the illegal trade by seizing 20,000 chests of opium from British merchants in Canton. An opium war broke out between China and Great Britain. Britain was victorious and hostilities ended with the Treaty of Nan-Ching in 1842. This treaty gave control of the island of Hong Kong to Great Britain and opened five Chinese ports to British residents and trade. Signalling a Cork connexion

with all of this we find in the Book of Presents two entries which record Abraham Abell, the Cork antiquary and polymath, acting as intermediary in depositing 6 Chinese joss sticks and a Chinese mercantile certificate on 22 May 1835, while on 18 May he deposited in similar fashion 'passport of the Emperor of China to the ship Standard (?) Capt. Peil (?) — being the first ship which traded direct between this port and Canton.'

In 1844 we find three deposits per Major J. Somerville. They seem to speak of military activity in the following entries:

Feb. 14 1844: A stone . . . taken from a Chinese temple or Jos house in the city of Tuighai Chusan, it is used for holding incense burners'

March 20 1844 — A Chinese Guitar, a Chinese sword, Chinese pipe . . . clothes brush. These are described as 'Taken at Chusan'.

April 8 1844: Chinese . . . paper, 3 Chinese Books, 2 candles of vegetable tallow . . .

There are a few examples of Irish prehistoric artefacts recorded:

1823: A bronze celt found in a bog at Fanlobbus Parish near Bandon.

1824: 'Six brass celts' found in Ireland per A. Abell.

1852: Ancient spears found near Capwell.

In 1845, we find William Beamish depositing the 'Heads of three mummies from Thebes in Upper Egypt, also mummies of several small crocodiles'. What was the source of these items? They were not the first donations with an Egyptian association. For 11 August 1814 we find M. Jacquottin, Cork, depositing:

An account of the Grottoes at Thebes, with exact copies of the rolls of Papyrus found in them. An Egyptian Almanac published by the French when at Egypt.

This reminds us of the monumental scholarly event which was Napoleon's campaign in Egypt. The historical context for these references is perhaps as follows, Cork receiving tokens of both French and British explorations there. Of the French we can summarize Gillispie. In 1798 Napoleon landed an invasion force at Alexandria and for the next three years they controlled and explored Egypt until in 1801 they were expelled by the British. Accompanying Bonaparte's force was a large group of scientists, engineers, medical men and scholars. The army paused longest at Thebes. While in Egypt they recorded scientific, technical and sociological information about Egypt, ancient and modern. This was published between 1809 and 1828 in a multipart work of multitudinous texts and copperplate engravings. Entitled *La Description de L'Egypte* this work is acknowledged as being directly responsible for first bringing the depth and scope of ancient Egyptian civilization to the awareness and imagination of European society. One is reminded of Verdi's *Aida* (1871), its libretto penned by an Egyptologist. Of the British in Egypt and Cork collectors a story is yet to be told. These references in the Book of Presents along with other references to Egyptology in the Transactions of the Royal Cork Institution place tantalizing pointers to areas of awaited biographical research and to colourful tales of travels in exotic lands.

Of the natural history specimens deposited we can quickly summarize them as seeds from North America and Canada, geological specimens from Britain, volcanic specimens from Sicily, Etna and Stromboli, sandstone from Brazil, volcanic ash from the Barbados vicinity, specimens of diamond from Brazil, fragments of rubies from Ceylon, skin of a snake, skin of an emu, feathers of a bird of paradise, a shark, the rattle of a rattlesnake along with a wasp's nest, a white heron and

a collection of insects from the vicinity of Cork. These represent to a large extent the voyages of ships and one is tempted to imagine those nineteenth-century topographical prints by W. H. Bartlett among others, showing the Cove of Cork crowded with shipping.

Perhaps not for the taxidermist's needle however but rather more for the gourmand's pot was the following from R. Newenham Esq. on 23 June 1825:

> a fine woodcock, fat and appears to have been in good health when shot at Maryborough, yesterday.

There are many interesting biographies implied by the above donations to which one could further add those which lie behind 'a cowskin or negro whip', artefacts from India, 'specimen of cloth made from the bark of a tree at Otaheite', American Indian artefacts and a chest of minerals collected in one of the Faroe Islands. From 1844 onwards the Book of Presents becomes largely a list of bibliographical donation. Prior to this date the collectables of foreign travel prevail. However, in the post-1844 period there were a few significant collections of material acquired.

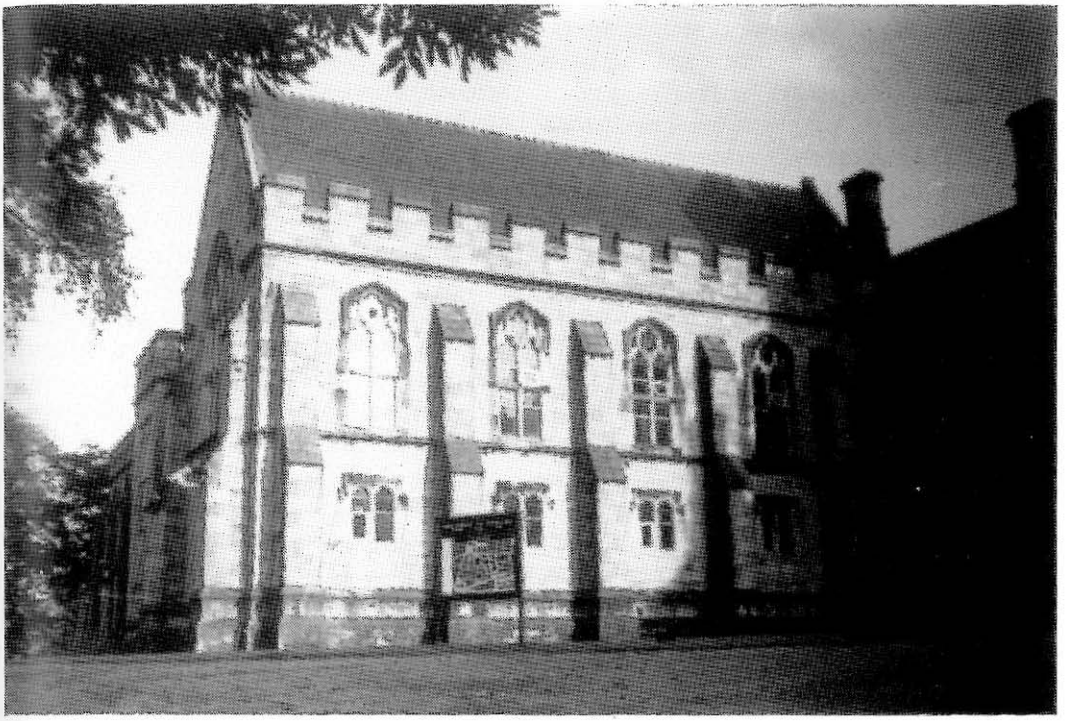
Of the visitors to the Royal Cork Institution many are from ships (officers in the naval service), Cork gentry, merchants, society ladies, schoolmistresses and their charges, government figures, aristocracy, notable scholars. Places of origin for these people include Britain, Ireland, Mexico, St Petersburg and Europe. All speak of the culture and language of collectors and collecting. In this context one thinks of librarians and curators, particularly at the Institution, such as John Humphreys and Richard Caulfield. From Caulfield's memories one visualizes Humphreys tending the flowerbeds fronting Nelson's Place as visitors enter the building.

QUEEN VICTORIA STOPS AT THE FOURTH SIGNPOST

For all that it was a beginning when Queen Victoria viewed its 'towers' from her carriage halted on the Western Road, the establishment of the Queen's College, Cork, in 1845 and its opening in 1849 led to an institution which soon eclipsed the Royal Cork Institution and set in motion a dispersal of collections, some of which, though ill-documented, were channelled into the creation of the College's museums and library. The early professors of the College were closely involved with the Cork Institution and probably drew directly specimens from one location to another, without the need for a rigorously-documented transfer. Up to the 1950s the College had a variety of museums, e.g. Ethnographical, Archaeological, Geological, Zoological, and Botanical, which originated as part of the plan of infrastructural development for the Queen's College and which echoed continuity from the collections of the Royal Cork Institution. In a recent survey of ethnographic artefacts surviving in storage at UCC, Mr Michael O'Fallon noted Tibetan and Indian material from Col. Sexton's Anglo-Indian display, Australian Aboriginal artefacts from Canon Patrick Power (Archaeology Professor), and items from the South Seas. Providing a sense of tradition is an entry which reads:

> Hippopotamus hide shield, Sudan, as carried by the armies of the Madhi 1888-1899 Presented by Lt. Boyle Somerville R.N. Prob. Naval Brigade, Relief of Khartoum or Battle of Omdurman.

And one is reminded again of references to the Chinese artefacts 'taken at Chusan' by Major J. Somerville. But all of this requires a more specialized writer, as one thinks for example of arboretums, of splendid shrubberies, of glasshouses, of botanizing the bohereens of Co. Cork. Of claims during the



AULA MAXIMA, ADJOINING OLD LIBRARY BUILDING, QCC

1940s that the Indian Elephant, the Irish Elk and the Giraffe were occupying too much floor space in the Zoology museum there is as much folklore as there is museological history. Here therefore is a good place for another signpost.

THE LIBRARY OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE CORK

The museums were in time dismantled and the collections put into storage leaving the library as the core collector of intellectual resources for the College. It is in the library that the traditions of collecting are preserved and it is in the library that a history of bibliographic collecting in Cork can be found either as special collections, in the General Collection or as bookplates, signatures and spine stamps scattered throughout it.

The Library of the Queen's College epitomized the hopes and aspirations of nineteenth-century Cork society both in terms of a cultural education and in terms of providing for the professions. It is in an analysis of its subject divisions and strengths that we see this history reflected. In it also is a statement about the history of scholarship and professional education in the College.

The Library of Queen's College, Cork, was established through a parliamentary grant with which the academic staff and the Librarian strove to acquire the best editions of the best works available on all divisions of knowledge. They succeeded in doing this within a reasonably short period of time as will be seen below. Its first Librarian was Henry Hennessy who practised as Assistant Engineer on the Midland Great Western and

Waterford and Kilkenny Railways and also with the Board of Works during their operations in 1846-7. He does not appear to have been intent on staying in the position of Librarian for too long as is evidenced by a letter of 1853 addressed to the members of the Science Division of the Faculty of Arts in which he expresses his interest in the 'provisional management' of the School of Engineering. By 1855 he had vacated the position of Librarian.

The original manuscript catalogue prepared by Hennessy has survived, the headings in which indicate the composition and scope of the collection as it was on 1 Feb. 1851. This catalogue is a fascinating statement on the breadth of knowledge as understood by nineteenth-century scholarship. The starting collection the previous year was 4,300 volumes. From the catalogue we can reconstruct a picture of the scope and structure from which the core of today's UCC library began as a teaching and research collection.

The 'Disciplines' into which subjects are broadly divided are: Sciences, Material Sciences, Biological Sciences, Medical Sciences, Mental Moral and Political Ethics, Literature. The scope of these disciplines is surprising when compared to today's definitions of curriculum. Under Material Sciences we find Astronomy, General Physics, Chemistry and Mineralogy, Geology and Geography, Engineering and Architecture, Agriculture. Under Mental, Moral and Political Ethics we find Sociology, History, Theology, Logic, Metaphysics and Philosophy of the Sciences, Ethnography. And under Literature, apart from Philology and Classical Languages, we find under Modern Languages: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Northern Languages, Slavonic, Oriental and Celtic.

In 1860 a printed edition of this 'classified' catalogue appeared, published by the Government printer Alexander Thom, Dublin. By now, however there were changes in the discipline structure. We find Pure Science, Physical Sciences, Natural Science, Medical Sciences, Mental Moral and Political Science, Philology, Criticism and Literary History, Literature, History, Biography, Antiquities, Art. A supplement was added while the volume was in the press and 30 interleaved copies were prepared for the Librarian and academic staff to keep updates. This need very quickly proved the futility of this method of stock inventory as the rapidly-growing quantity of stock forced them to look to the Aula Maxima for additional shelving space. This led to the use of guardbooks and in time a card catalogue system which was to provide a medium of collection access up to 1977. But this synopis is to progress too quickly and to lose some of the context of the collection's growth and usage.

The Queen's College, Cork, commenced its business on 30 Oct. 1849 and on 7 Nov. the 'several faculties and schools were opened for the courses of instruction of the professors'. In what seems like a crisis frame of mind, it is said in the *President's Report* that the professors had been appointed at so late a period in the Autumn that for the most part they only first arrived in Cork at the opening of the College, whilst from the very unfinished condition of the building, the 'Libraries, Museums, Laboratories etc., had still to be organised'. One's mind's eye sees hands being clapped in the frosty morning air, the inauguration of Sir Robert Kane in a full to capacity Aula Maxima and one thinks of prisoners in the gaol nearby. Of these first professors, the forebears of our local academic traditions, the first President, Sir Robert Kane, says that they were obliged for the period of the Session to conduct their classes under very disadvantageous circumstances and 'the entire of the past session must be considered as occupied

principally by mere works of arrangement and organisation of the several departments and furnishing the material aids so indispensable to illustrate the lectures . . .'.

An important source of historical information, the early 'correspondence books' of the Library, provide an interesting insight into the context in which the collection was managed. On 22 May 1851 'a new system of accounts for books received and lent out in the library was now in operation'. On 14 Nov. 1851 it was requested that the Council of QCC apply for a copy of 'every Parliamentary Report or other work issued at the public expense having either literary or scientific importance'. Hennessy's successor Mathias O'Keefe took over the Library in 1855 and began to complain of student behaviour. He desired to ban the wearing of silk and 'Jim Crow felt hats' by students. By 1860 the Librarian was complaining about lack of space and the idea of a new library was a matter of private chat. Censorship crept into the record when in March 1861 he refused to lend to some junior students 'certain volumes of the works of Daniel de Foe, among others the *Fortunate Mistress* and *History of the Devil*'. His reason for the refusal was given as 'that the perusal of such books tends to pervert the morals of the applicant's age . . .'. Cloth bindings were recommended to replace the major expense of full, half and quarter leather, but only for the Gallery where they were least noticeable and where less-used books were kept. Under O'Keefe's direction the Library by 1870 had grown to a size of 19,138 volumes of which Medical Sciences had 2,208 and History, Antiquities, etc. had 2,564.

In 1876 Richard Caulfield replaced O'Keefe. Caulfield's biography appears elsewhere in this *Journal* (1987). Writing in the *President's Report* for his first year of office, he acknowledged with great enthusiasm what would be the first part of a very valuable donation from the most generous of all College benefactors, i.e. William Crawford. During the period 1876 to 1880 the major part of the donation arrived, estimated as a little over 2,000 volumes, to be followed in subsequent years by a few tailpieces. As an enhancement of what was primarily the working collection of a group of scholars and their students, it was significant in changing the character of the collection, enriching both its depth and scope in many ways. However, it also enhanced the space problem.

A brief analysis of 350 titles from the collection reveals that 2 were pre-1500, 10 were sixteenth-century, 21 were seventeenth-century, 88 were eighteenth-century and the rest nineteenth-century. Imprints were predominantly London followed by Paris. However, for the eighteenth century and earlier, continental printings were more common. Subject coverage was very wide, some of its strengths being History, Botany, Antiquities, Travel, Topography, Drama, Palaeography. It also had material relating to India including official publications and manuscript material. By the 1876-7 session of the College, Sanscrit had appeared in the collection (14 volumes) and along with many other donations from official sources abroad were bibliographic gifts from the Secretary of State and the Governor-General of India. These must have complemented well the publications of the Oriental Translation Fund in the Crawford Donation. Writing of the second part of the donation Caulfield states:

> It consisted chiefly of costly historical books such as every Collegiate library should possess and especially one destined to serve as a library of reference for the South of Ireland, a function which it to some extent already performs . . .

A storage location was eventually found for the collection which in accordance with Crawford's wish was kept together. It was placed in the Aula Maxima, in a number of

cases labelled the 'Crawford Library'. It may on future analysis prove to be the library of several individual collectors or the cumulative results of the interests of several family members. Within, probably, are the interests of the Bousfields as well as of the Crawfords.

Over the ensuing years the College's collection continued to grow with its thousand or so standard accessions per year. Donations came regularly from the Trustees of the British Museum, from the Smithsonian Institute, from the College staff or associates of theirs. The professors continued to supply lists of additions to the Librarian. Caulfield was replaced, after his death in office, by Owen O'Regan and the custom and practice of collecting went on to 1908 when the National University of Ireland was established and the President under this new structure, Sir Bertram Windle, wrote in 1911 for the UCC *Official Gazette*. He divided the collection, which consisted of approximately 50,000 volumes at that time, into a General Collection and three Special Collections which were the Crawford Library, the Sexton Anglo-Indian Library and the Irish Library.

Lieut.-Col. Sexton, a graduate and surgeon in the Indian Medical Service, donated many gifts to the College from about 1889 onwards. The bibliographic side of the donation amounted to over 1,000 items dealing mostly with India but also with adjacent countries. His reasoning behind the gift was to offer opportunities for study to students intent on similar careers. The collection contained manuscripts as well as printed material. This period of empire, of colonial service, is reflected elsewhere in the College's story, in the biographies of staff, and in the museums. It also echoes, silently, the lives of Corkmen who served as Lancers in the Indian Army.

The Irish Library, the catalogue of which was published in 1914, was a statement of prestige as well as identity within a very limited national perspective. Of the manuscript material housed within it one notes seven folio volumes of seventeenth-century Kinsale manorial papers, within the covers of which is a whisper of the mammoth auctioneering venture, which over many years, resulted in the dispersal of the manuscript collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps 'the greatest collector of manuscripts the world has ever known'.

Windle gave us a snapshot of what the Victorian Library of Queen's College grew to be as it attempted to service the needs and reflect the scope of intellectual enquiry of staff and students. Further additions would include Revd Canon Power's local printings collection; the library of D'Arbois de Jubainville, a great Celtic scholar and French librarian; the maps of Edward Lynam, a graduate and Superintendent of the British Library's Map Room; a collection of eighteenth-century Cork newspapers; and in time Sperrin-Johnson's collection of early botanical printings. It is here that we begin the period of Alfred O'Rahilly, polymath and College President, Librarian and legend of a new Ireland. It is here that the language of scientific scholarship changes from German to French to English with attendant geographical changes in the sources of scholarship and printing. But the present author is ill-equipped to deal with this multifaceted diamond.

THE FIFTH SIGNPOST: TOWARDS A CORNUCOPIA UNTOUCHED

Of the O'Rahilly Library, the second phase in what could be described as a collection-building activity which began with the Victorian Library and which is now in its third (Boole Library) phase, there is an interesting opening comment which comes from O'Rahilly's pen. In 1931 he writes of the Library:

It is notorious that for years it was sadly neglected; the number of annual accessions was about 230 (now it is 4,000-5,000), the classification was a farce, there was no subject catalogue, the periodicals were few and in a chaotic condition — no one even knew the gaps and lacunae; the most obvious books — even those published in Cork and books on Irish History were missing.

What happened to the Irish Library of 1914? What effect did the Great War have on the acquisition of material? What were the economic consequences of the foundation of the State? The answers to these questions can be read in the collection and its folklore.

O'Rahilly became a member of the Library Committee in 1921 and Honorary Librarian in 1924. From there he carried out a complete reorganization of the Library, a card catalogue was begun, new sections including a History Library were set up, periodical gaps were filled. 'I cannot even estimate our total number of books but it is certainly over 100,000' he wrote to R.I. Best of the National Library in 1928.

Also in 1928 he was receiving contributions from the Standing Committee of Bishops to buy books to create a Catholic Library. And also in this year the work of regrouping and reclassifying the entire library began. His model for a classification system came from the Widener Library at Harvard with which he was familiar. As time went by the Finance Committee accepted his 'drastic proposal' to take over the Geology museum, as library expansion was considered more important. A case made for a separate museum building was unsuccessful. Writing in 1931 he says in a memo: 'The Library is the Laboratory of the majority of the staff . . .' and he also says: 'Without such extensive second-hand buying, it would be impossible to keep up on our own small grant a University Library such as ours'. By 1953 he had chosen and purchased 46,970 books, mostly second-hand, thereby accomplishing a feat of collecting which gave a significant robustness to the collection's research value. By 1953 sectional libraries existed for Economics, Chemistry, Dairy Science and Medicine.

This 1950s library, with its core and its subject/faculty-oriented satellites, continued to spread and grow until the appointment in 1973 of Patrick Quigg as Librarian and the subsequent developments and revisions which led to the establishment of today's Boole Library named for George Boole, first Mathematics professor and a member of the first Library Committee. Today the collection consists of over three quarters of a million volumes. There is an important national history, yet to be written, within it.

THE LAST SIGNPOST: TOWARDS A MUSEOLOGY OF COLLECTABLES

A short period after its official opening in 1984 the Boole Library acquired the library of St Fin Barre's Cathedral and once again the value of the Crawford Collection, by then long dispersed, began to show through as a Stock Revision project created a pre-1851 imprints collection. In a Munster context the Kilcrea copy of Mandeville's Travels and Henfeld's *Biblia Sacra* and the two incunabula from the Crawford collection form a beginning from which, in an impending age of electronic libraries, we can now begin to evaluate the history and the social value of local bibliographic collecting. The Special Collections of the Boole Library are a rich part of this. The whole print collection which we refer to as the Boole Library is today a statement on the history of intellectualism in the Munster region. It is a more than significant statement on the contribution of unwitting Cork collectors and the addiction of collecting, to the creation of a bibliographic heritage. This heritage provides depth and breadth to scholarly research. It is unfortunate that the same

cannot be said about the non-bibliographic collections of the Queen's College, Cork, some of which lie in repose, with their stories, in corners beneath archival dust-plumes. At this point my 'Scrapiana', in the tradition of West, Roche and Sainthill, ends in the hope of a future which will appreciate the richness of Cork traditions and their contribution to a national heritage of intellectual tradition. It is to be hoped that the many signposts in this essay will direct further research and lead to many more tales, as paradigms of intellectual expression shift from printed to electronic media. It is here that the last signpost may be placed, as our print collections and the intellectual creativity they encapsulate become the artefacts of a passing technology, an archive of structured thought.

THE SOURCES.

The source material which forms the core of this essay is work experience with the Boole Library collection over a period of 15 years during which I have had a continuous interest in the historical dimension. In the composition of this essay I have found the following to be of assistance, apart from those works cited within the text.

1 Truxes, Thomas M. *Irish-American Trade 1660-1783* (Cambridge, 1989).

2 Gillispie, Charles C. 'The Scientific Importance of Napoleon's Egyptian Campaign' in *Scientific American*, Sept. 1994, pp 64-71.

3 Material concerning Dr O'Rahilly in UCC Archives.

4 Manuscript Correspondence Books of QCC Library (Boole Library).

5 Presents to the Cork Institution. Boole Library Manuscripts Collection.

6 The President's Reports of the Queen's College, Cork.

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8 Dix, E.R. McC. 'List of Books, etc. Printed at Cork in the 17th & 18th centuries' in *JCHAS* 1905, pp. 24-26.

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14 The World Book Encyclopedia for information on Captain Parry and on the North-West Passage. Also for details of the Opium Wars.

15 Lynam, E.W. *The Irish character in print 1571-1923* (Shannon, 1969).

(Finally, I wish to acknowledge those who provided advice and encouragement at various times during the research period. My thanks to my wife for photographs and typing.)