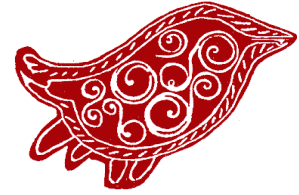


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The Churches of The Church of Ireland in Cork City.

(Plates I, 2 ; II, 1 ; V, 1, 2).

By JOHN J. O'SHEA.

The Cathedral of St. Fin Barre. (Pl. V, 2).

We have very little information available concerning the many earlier cathedrals which were erected on this site, but it is recorded that one was built between 1671 and 1676. This was so severely injured during the siege of Cork (1690), that it had to be taken down some years later, and the foundation-stone of another was laid in 1735. This church (Pl. V, 1) was taken down in 1865 to make room for the present splendid structure.

The story of the present cathedral may be told in brief : In 1861, the Chapter being free from debt, it was decided to apply any surplus income to the repair or rebuilding of the cathedral. With this end in view, several meetings were held and it was resolved to rebuild, and to procure plans and designs. In January, 1863, the plan of Mr. William Burges was approved, and two years later a start was made by demolishing the old building, Mr. Robert Walker being the contractor. He, however, resigned the contract in 1866. On March 13th, 1867, the contract of Messrs. Gilbert Cockburne & Sons, Dublin, was accepted, and in August of that year the new contractors commenced work. The church was consecrated on November 30th, 1870. On the 16th August, 1876, Mr. Delany, Cork, was appointed contractor for the building of the towers. Two prominent citizens gave munificent gifts towards the completion of the edifice : Mr. Francis Wise, £20,000, and Mr. W. H. Crawford, £10,000. The latter gave a further £8,300 to complete the carving of the west front, including the statuary in the three portals. On the 6th April, 1878, Right Rev. John Gregg, D.D., the then Lord Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, laid the topmost stones of the western towers and spires.

The erection of the new cathedral has been mainly due to the exertions of Bishop John Gregg. He was a man of strong and remarkable personality, great force of character, and one of the most popular preachers of his day. He died on May 26th, 1878. His successor, Bishop Robert Samuel Gregg, laid the topmost stone of the central tower in October, 1879, thus practically completing the great work of building the Cathedral of St. Fin Barre.

Architect—William Burges, A.R.A., F.R.I.B.A., b. 1827, d. 1881.

Style—French Early Pointed Gothic.

Cost—Over £100,000.

Stonework—The exterior of the cathedral is built of local limestone. The interior arches and columns, with the exception of the red marble columns from which the apse arches spring, are of bathstone. The great piers are of Stourton stone.



2.—St. Fin Barre's Cathedral



1.—Old St. Fin Barre's
(taken down in 1865)

Some Measurements of the Cathedral :

| | | <i>Towers and Spires.</i> | | ft. | ins. |
|-------------------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|-----|------|
| Height of central Tower and Spire | | | | 240 | 0 |
| Height of western Towers and Spires | | | | 180 | 0 |

| | | <i>Interior.</i> | | ft. | ins. |
|---------------------------------------|------|------------------|------|-----|------|
| Total length of Cathedral (inside) | | | | 162 | 6 |
| Width of Cathedral | | | | 56 | 6 |
| Width between Transepts | | | | 81 | 6 |
| Height of Lantern over floor of Choir | | | | 101 | 0 |
| Height of Nave roof | | | | 68 | 4 |

Christ Church, or Holy Trinity.

According to the Charter of James I, the whole city—between the walls—contained but two small parishes. One of these was Holy Trinity, and the other was that of St. Peter. Holy Trinity was also known as the “King’s Chapel,” and when the Corporation was exclusively Protestant was chosen by them as their official church.

Many churches had formerly been built on the site. During the siege of Cork, in 1690, many Protestants took refuge within the walls of Christ Church, and the building received so much damage that it had to be taken down about 1716, and a new church was erected in 1726. Coltsman was the architect. This church had at the western end a tower 136 feet high, which leaned over to such an extent, owing to the failure of the foundation, that it had to be taken down gradually, and was completely removed when the building was renovated. Steps were taken to rebuild and on 11th January, 1825, the design submitted by Mr. George Pain was approved. The scheme had, however, to be abandoned owing to the expense, and a sum of £3,500 was levied on the parish, which sum was devoted to building the west front and repairing the church.

It stands on the east side of South Main Street. So far as its exterior goes, it is an unprepossessing structure of oblong form, 115 feet long by 60 feet wide. The ceiling, supported by twelve Ionic pillars of Scagliola, is handsomely panelled. Its churchyard contains some very interesting old tombstones marking the resting places of many of Cork’s former notabilities. Edmund Spenser, the poet, is said to have been married here.

St. Peter’s Church.

This church stands on the west side of North Main Street and is the second of the parish churches within the walls. It is situated in a very poor locality, and, in appearance, is not very prepossessing. The entrance is lined with many memorials and tablets belonging to former buildings erected on the same site. The original church, erected in the 13th or 14th century, was a more extensive and pretentious building, and contained several chapels or small oratories.

In 1782 the existing church was taken down, and the present one, started

in 1783, was completed in 1788. During the rebuilding the congregation made use of Christ Church for the services. A tower and spire were added but the latter was subsequently taken down. The copper weathercock, made by James Mangan, which surmounted this spire, may still be seen attached to the railings of the Deane monument. The northern porch has the appearance of a small chapel and in it is placed the Deane monument, which represents Sir Matthew Deane and his wife in the attitude of prayer on either side of an altar tomb. The monument bears the inscription: "Sr. Mattw. Deane, Knight, Baronet, 1710." and has the armorial bearings on the base. The font, which belonged to the older church, has, cut in relief on one side of the bowl, what appears to be the initials of the churchwardens of the time, but is without ornamentation. The inscription is:

R W . I N
1664.

The church is not orientated and the Holy Table stands at the west end.

St. Paul's Church.

One of the churches built in 1723 when the city had spread beyond the old walls. It is erected on ground presented to Bishop Peter Browne by the Corporation, and contributions were also made by that body. A remarkable feature is the number of seafaring men who have been interred in the churchyard. This is due to the fact that the Mayor, etc., by presenting an extra plot of ground, were given the right of granting free burial to any stranger dying in this parish, which was then the centre of the local shipping.

The building is Grecian in style and is not very attractive externally, but the interior is really beautiful. The stucco-work on the ceiling is worthy of notice: it is said to be the work of Italian prisoners taken during the Napoleonic wars. The stained glass in the east window depicting the Last Supper is a gem of its kind. The old parish stocks are preserved in the vestry.

St. Mary Shandon. (Pl. II, 1).

This church is the third of its name. The first Church of St. Mary Shandon occupied the site of the present St. Anne's Shandon, and was destroyed during the siege of Cork. The second, which stood near the foot of Shandon Street (east side), was taken down in 1879. The present church was consecrated in 1879 by Bishop John Gregg, and is situated at Sunday's Well.

The church is a cruciform building of Gothic style of architecture, after the design of the late Mr. W. H. Hill, B.E. Mr. Francis Wise contributed £3,750 towards the building of this church, as well as an additional £2,500 for the tower and spire. The well-proportioned spire is a conspicuous landmark amid the picturesque surroundings of Sunday's Well. The interior of the church bears witness to the fostering care of Rev. Dacre Powell, afterwards Archdeacon of Cork, during whose incumbency it received many gifts from devoted friends.

Dominick Terry, Rector of old St. Mary's, was, in 1536, made the first Protestant Bishop of Cork.

St. Luke's.

The building of St. Patrick's Bridge and the laying out of new roads (such as the Ballyhooly Road, etc.) made the eastern part of the parish of St. Anne's Shandon a very desirable residential neighbourhood. The population had increased to such an extent that it was considered necessary to erect a chapel-of-ease in that district. The site chosen was on the boundary of the old parish of St. Brandon.¹

A chapel was consecrated by Bishop Kyle in 1837 with a dedication to St. Luke. The architects were Messrs. J. and G. R. Pain. It was a beautiful little Gothic building of white limestone with two porches on either side of a slender spire. It lay east and west, where the transepts of the present edifice stand. In 1872 this chapel was raised to the rank of a parish church, and the parish of St. Luke's was carved out of the east end of St. Anne's parish, just as St. Anne's had been carved out of St. Mary's.

Rev. Mervyn Archdall, afterwards Bishop of Killaloe, was the first incumbent of the newly-formed parish, and in the early years of his incumbency a new church, more suitable for the church population of the parish, was raised on the same site. This church was consecrated on January 14th, 1875, and was destroyed by fire on February 9th, 1887.

The present church, designed by the late W. H. Hill, Esq., was built through the generosity and devotion of the parishioners. Its re-dedication took place on February 8th, 1889.

St. John's, or the Episcopal Free Church.

This church is situated in a central position within the present parish of St. Nicholas, and a little to the north-east of where the old Church of St. John stood. Naturally, the dedication given to the modern building is the same as that borne by the ancient one, and the title "St. John's Church" is more frequently used than formerly in distinguishing this church.

The site of the new church and adjacent clergy widow-houses was presented by Mr. W. H. W. Newenham, of Coolmore. The church was licensed for worship on 8th July, 1840, and its first chaplain was Rev. Thomas H. C. Finney, who presented the Communion plate still used in the church.

St. John's is a very plain building, and has in the arrangement of its pulpit, prayer desk, and Holy Table something that resembles the old "three-deckers" of the eighteenth century.

No district is assigned to the church, which does not come under the Diocesan scheme for sustentation purposes. Appointments to the chaplaincy are made by a Board of Trustees, who nominate to the Bishop of the Diocese.

St. Anne's Shandon. (Pl. I, 2).

This church, built in 1722, has endeared itself to all Corkmen at home and abroad. It stands on Shandon Hill and occupies the site of the old Church of Our Lady, or St. Mary Shandon, which was destroyed on the burning of the city suburbs at the siege of 1690.

¹ Remains of the ancient church of St. Brandon's Parish are found in the grounds of "Vosterburg," "Carrigmore," and "Ennismore."

The building itself has nothing to recommend it as a specimen of architecture, except it be its eccentricities of design. Its steeple, 170 feet high, has been likened to a pepper-castor; two of its sides (the south, and west) are built with limestone, the other two (the north, and east) being of red sandstone. Some authorities say that the stones used were taken from the ruined Shandon Castle, and from the Grey (Franciscan) Friary, both of which buildings were situated in this district.

The bells, eight in number, were cast by Abel Rudhall, of Gloucester, and were set up in 1750. These have been immortalised by "Father Prout" (Rev. Francis Mahony) in the well-known poem, *The Bells of Shandon*. The clock in the church tower has four dials, each fourteen feet in diameter, and was erected in 1847, during the mayoralty of Andrew Francis Roche, Esq., by the Corporation for the benefit of their fellow citizens. The inscription concludes with the words: "Passenger, measure your time, for time is the measure of your being—James Mangan, Fecit."

The interior of the church has been greatly improved during recent years. The interesting old font bears an inscription, some letters of which have been obliterated. It may be read thus:

WALTER ELINTON (AND)
WILLIAM (D)RING
1629
MADE THIS PANT
AT THEIR CHARGES

A metal bowl with wide flanges was inserted at a later date in the bowl of the font, and is inscribed:

ST. ANN'S PARISH CORK 1773.
THE REV. ARTHUR HYDE, RECTOR.
EDWD. ALLIN & RICH. EXHAM, CHURCHWARDENS.

In 1796, the fine old trees, which from time immemorial had overshadowed the burying ground, were cut down and sold by the then rector, Mr. Hyde. This rector, whose tombstone may be seen at the base of the tower, was an ancestor of the present (1943) President of Eire, Dr. Douglas Hyde. Nearby is the altar-tomb of "Father Prout." Also in the churchyard is the Green Coat Hospital, erected in 1720 and supported by (1) a bequest of £24 left by Stephen Skiddy, vintner, of London, in 1584; (2) a grant from the Corporation; (3) another bequest under the will of Roger Brettridge, made in 1683.

St. Nicholas's Church.

The present Church of St. Nicholas was consecrated March 21st, 1850, and is the finest parish church in the city.

It is situated in the south side, to the east of the Protestant Cathedral and near the South Gate Bridge, and stands on or near the site of the ancient Church of St. Sepulchre. The locality had lost much of its popularity as a residential quarter, and at the middle of the eighteenth century there was no provision for the support of a clergyman. The adjoining parishes of St. Bridget, St. John of Jerusalem, St. Stephen, St. Mary (de Narde), and

St. Dominick were united to, and consolidated with, the parish of St. Nicholas, and made the *corps* of the Chancellorship of St. Fin Barre.

The church contains a beautiful example of the sculptor's art in what is familiarly known as the Tracton monument. This is the work of John Bacon, R.A., amongst whose works are the monument to Pitt in Westminster Abbey, and those to Dr. Johnson and to Howard in St. Paul's Cathedral.

St. Nicholas's Church has a peal of bells, eight in number and weighing three-and-a-quarter tons, cast in 1869 by J. Murphy, Dublin.

The Non-Conformist Communities of Cork City.

By JOHN J. O'SHEA.

Amongst the most prominent and successful citizens of Cork are to be found many members of the Non-Conformist bodies, whose integrity and personality have made them outstanding figures in the life of our city. It is considered that this is an opportune moment to give a very brief account of their history as it concerns us locally. In compiling such, only the main or essential details are noted. Mention will be made of the first definite record we possess of their advent; any churches or meeting-houses erected; and any persons or events of particular interest.

I must thank those who so readily and so willingly have helped me in the preparation of this paper. Without such help many important and interesting details would have been overlooked. In particular, I should like to thank the following: Pastor Frederick W. Gracey, for his kindness in furnishing me with the essential material for the article on the Baptist Church; Rev. John A. Kells, for the many facilities given me in compiling the account of the Methodist Church; and Rev. Andrew Gibson, M.C., B.A., D.D., for providing extracts from the Minute Book of Trinity Church. For the history of the Quakers in Cork I have abstracted much information from Miss Isabel Grubb's admirable book, *The Quakers in Ireland*. Other sources are acknowledged in the text.

The Baptist Church in Cork.

It is to be regretted that the earliest Minute Books and records of the local Baptist church are not available. They were destroyed by fire in the early part of the eighteenth century. The existing records date from the year 1729. We are indebted to a Mr. Joseph Fowke, who gathered with great care many particulars of the early days of the church and recorded them in the Minute Book, which is still in the possession of the church. This book also contains, in addition to the roll of membership through the