Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

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Title: Review: "A history of Mallow", by Evelyn Bolster (Cork: Cork Historical Guides Committee, 1971)

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Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 1971, Vol. 76, No. 223, page(s) 92-93

Published by the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

Digital file created: July 23, 2016

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The Modest Men of Christ Church, Cork. By Rev. Terence J. McKenna and Charles V. Moore. The Leinster Leader, Naas, Ireland, 1970. 4/-

Holy Trinity Christ Church, one of the two parochial churches which served the denizens of the old walled city of Cork deserves better than has been done for it in this disappointing publication. From its inelegent cover-design and permissive-age title right through to the two-page bibliography at the end, the 50-page booklet is a hotch-potch of erroneous statements, grammatical errors false deductions and mispellings. Indeed a more appropriate designation for the miscalled medley would be the "Which-what-why of Christ Church," for a perusal of its pages provokes the questions : Which of the two authors was responsible for what chapters ? What exactly did they set out to write about ? Why was the work not properly edited before being submitted to the public ?

Absence of a clearly defined intention when the work was being planned was the root from which emerged the subsequent entanglement of confusions. Although we are entitled to be acquainted with and informed about the "Modest Men" ("modest" in this context I take to mean "lacking in fame") yet apart from one chapter wherein the names of several dozen are recounted we find ourselves learning less about them than about the "immodest" antics of the Rev. Neptune Blood and Sir Henry Brown Hayes.

In the intervals when both the modest and the immodest are retired to the wings we are entertained with snippets from the history of the Church. In presenting these snippets the authors lose rather than gain our confidence as historians. Their assessment of church growth in the early Norman period is not in accordance with the generally accepted facts (assuming, of course, that I have rightly interpreted what they attempt to convey in their involved reference to the Synods of Rathbeasal (*sic*) and Kells), and they seem lost in crossing the bridge which links the Norman church with that of the post-Reformation period.

There is a rather involved style of writing by one of the authors. What is one to make of a sentence such as this ? "Like the Parish Register, they [the Parish Accounts] cover a period that was vital in History, as vital to Irish History as was the late eighteenth century in France, a period marred to the rest of time by civil strife and the accompanying intolerance of the age." This only helps to make an abundance of confusion more confounded. Misnomers such as 'town' for 'city,' and mispelled place names, often repeated several times, such as 'Barrick,' 'Ringrove,' 'Sidney' and 'Canturbury' contribute to the nearly one hundred errors of every description which needlessly mar what could have been with more care and better direction a worthwhile exercise in ecclesiastical history.

R. Henchion.

A History of Mallow. By Evelyn Bolster. Cork Historical Guides Committee, 18 Dyke Parade, Cork. 1971. 102 pp. 25p.

Here we have a notable addition to the company of Co. Cork towns and villages whose stories have been compiled and published through the good offices of the Cork Historical Guides Committee. For some it was their first full-length history published, as in the case of Mallow, whose neglect in this respect has now been remedied by this detailed and well-researched work of Sister Angela's.

Mallow's history is essentially that of a town, and as towns had no place in the ancient Gaelic polity it is hardly surprising that not more than three pages are devoted to the area's early history, up to 1169. From there on the story develops. Like most inland towns, Mallow's growth commenced around a feudal castle, but it is not until the advent of the comparatively peaceful 18th century that it blossomed out, and it is this century and its successor which take up the main section of Sister Angela's book. She traces the origins of its churches and chapels, its barracks and bath-houses, with meticulous care and with obvious appreciation of her native heath.

"No town in Ireland," she proudly claims, "has been more prolific of outstanding personalities than Mallow of the nineteenth century," and her long list of notabilities is headed by Thomas Davis, Sir Edward Sullivan, Canon Sheehan and Willian O'Brien, to each of whom a page of text is allotted. It is rather a pity that the exigencies of space did not allow a somewhat less condensed account of Davis whose writings had such a powerful influence on nationalist thought (on Arthur Griffith for instance) around the turn of the century.

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Sister Angela relates many authentic details of the war of independence period, as given by local participants, and amongst the many interesting illustrations is one of the town after its burning by British military and Black-and-Tans, and another of a bottle of ale which survived the burning ! The neat cover design, incorporating a map of Mallow district, is by Michael Mulcahy. All in all, this history of Mallow constitutes essential reading for anyone even remotely connected with the banks of the Blackwater.

Diarmuid Ó Murchadha

Spanish Knights of Irish Origin: Documents from Continental Archives. Vol. III. Edited by Micheline Walsh. Irish University Press for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1970. £3.50.

Volume III of this work follows the same pattern as the earlier volumes and consists of a list of genealogies, birth certificates and other documents presented by thirty-three persons of Irish ancestry who successfully sought admission to the Order of Calatrava between the years 1663 and 1878. Volume I dealt entirely with the Order of Santiago, and Volume II mainly with the latter order and in part with Calatrava. Mrs. Walsh has not as yet published any documents on the Order of Alcántara.

The three Spanish knightly orders were founded in the twelfth century after the example of the military orders already established for the defence of the Holy Land. Their purpose was to protect the Christian territories of Spain from the Moors and to guard the pilgrim route of St. James (*Santiago*). They escaped the grim fate of their forerunners, the Templars, and by the fifteenth century had become powerful organizations constituting a danger to royal authority. The problem was solved by Ferdinand the Catholic, who incorporated the grand masterships of the orders in the Crown. Thenceforth admission was simply an honour granted to those whose rank and services to the new Spanish state were adjudged worthy.

As in the preceding volumes, the applicants of Irish ancestry provide varying interest and the casual reader's attention will naturally be drawn to names such as Hugo O Neill, grandson of Eoghan Roe (*General que fué del Ejercito Catolico de Irlanda*), Joaquín Blake, the noted Spanish general in the Peninsular War, whose father was born in the archdiocese of Tuam, and Pedro Fitzjames Stuart, whose grandmother was Honora Burke, the widow of Patrick Sarsfield.

The number of documents with respect to each applicant also varies. In the case of Hugo O Neill, there is little more than a genealogy and a statement from him that he could provide almost no family papers, owing to the 'persecution maintained by heretics' (*la opresion de los hereges*). On the other hand, the application of Joaquín Blake provides a whole sheaf of documents, including the baptismal certificates of his parents, their marriage certificate, certificates from the Archbishop of Tuam, and even a paternal burial certificate.

When it is remembered that all these documents, with one exception, are presented in the form of translations into Spanish, without any accompanying English translation, it will be seen that this is not a book for the general reader but for the serious historian and genealogist. As such it is a monument to patient research in the Archivo Histórico Nacional of Madrid. The presentation of the documents is very clear and there is an admirable index.

N. J. Ware

Gravestone Inscriptions. Vol. 5 ; Co. Down. Compiled by R. S. J. Clarke. Ulster-Scot Historical Foundation, Belfast. 141 pp. Price 15/-.

Tenacity and determination are qualities that rarely go unrewarded and for Dr. Clarke they have brought him to the pitch where he can now view with satisfaction the completion of part one of his mammoth undertaking to record all the gravestone inscriptions of Co. Down.

In 1966 he began publication with the inscriptions from the first ten of the 41 graveyards located within the baronial confines of Upper and Lower Castlereagh, two of the most populous baronies in the county, and continued the work in the succeeding years until with the issue of the current number he has reached his first definite milestone on the road to success. Rather than rest on his laurels at this stage, as a fieldman of lesser calibre and weaker enthusiasm might be inclined to do, he intends to advance his labours into Dufferin and his next publication will include inscriptions from the graveyards of Killaresy, Killinchy and Killyleagh in that barony.

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