Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

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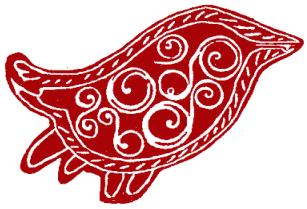

Title: Review: "Memoirs of the Reverend Jaques Fontaine 1658-1728", edited by Dianne W. Ressinger (London: Huguenot Society, 1992)

Author: St Leger, Alicia

Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, 1994, Vol. 99, page(s) 159

Published by the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society

Digital file created: July 15, 2017

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period, and includes good *comparanda* and much technical detail. There are generous colour plates (17) and b/w photographs which enable the reader to match the technical descriptions with the actual working of the artefacts.

Muiris O'Sullivan in *Megalithic Art in Ireland* provides a clear and competent introduction to his subject. He outlines concisely the sequence of development of the styles of megalithic art and describes in detail some of the most important stones from major monuments. John Scarry's photographs are impressive and highlight the sculptural and artistic properties of the stones.

Michael Ryan ably reviews *Metal Craftmanship in Early Ireland.* Information on the Derrynaflan hoard and on metal-working finds from Moynagh Lough (excavated in the 1980s) is incorporated with more familiar pieces. Interesting details of construction techniques are given (the letters and symbols used by craftsmen to assemble the Derrynaflan paten can still be seen). The history of metal craftsmanship is set out clearly and the social context filled in. This book gives an enjoyable overview of the range of exquisite artefacts produced in early medieval Ireland.

Elizabeth W. Heckett

Memoirs of the Reverend Jaques Fontaine 1658-1728. Ed. by Dianne W. Ressinger. Huguenot Society, London, 1992. Pp. 246. Stg£25.

Jaques Fontaine's life was filled with adventure, beginning with his early life in France, his escape from persecution to the safety of England and finally his move to Ireland. He completed an account of his life in 1722, an abridged version of which appeared in 1838, followed by other editions. This new edition will allow a much greater number of people to have access to his remarkable story.

Fontaine was born in 1658 into a Huguenot family which had already suffered persecution for its adherence to the reformed religion of Calvin. He was attracted to religion at an early age and was soon caught up in the activities of Huguenots in the Saintonge area of south-west France. The late 17th century was a time of persecution for Huguenots, and Fontaine was arrested and imprisoned for his activities. By 1685 conditions worsened with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and Fontaine realized that 'it was necessary either to die or to leave France'. That same year he fled to England.

A nerve-wracking escape from France on board an English ship brought Fontaine and some of his family to Somerset. In 1694 he moved to Cork as Minister to the small Huguenot community there. His description of the five years in which he lived in the city provides a fascinating glimpse into the life of the growing French community of Cork. The French Church had not yet been built in the street which now bears its name and so worship was held in a variety of locations: Christ Church, the county courtroom and Fontaine's own house. Fontaine was not a paid Minister and supported his growing family by manufacturing broadcloth. In 1698 he resigned from the Cork church following a dispute with one of his congregation. At about the same time the prohibition on the export of Irish woollens ruined his business and the death of his son in Cork in 1699 made him determined to leave: 'I had even less affection for Cork after this sad and fatal blow'.

Fontaine's *Memoirs* describe his move to Bearhaven where he failed in his efforts to establish a fishing industry. The hostility of his Irish neighbours and attacks by French privateers made his stay in west Cork far from easy. In 1708 Fontaine was captured by a French privateer and his property destroyed. His wife organized his ransom and the family moved to the relative safety of Dublin where he died in 1728.

Fontaine's devotion to his religion is clear throughout his account of his life. Despite his many difficulties, he never despaired and instead tried to learn lessons from his sorrows. His memoirs were written for his children whose descendants now live mainly in the United States, where a Fontaine/Maury Society flourishes. His descendants are proud of the bravery and resourcefulness of their ancestor.

In this new edition of Fontaine's memoirs, Dianne Ressinger has corrected errors in earlier translations and has reinstated any text omitted in previous versions. She has also provided useful references for each chapter, enlarging on some of Fontaine's references to people and events. Illustrations and a good bibliography further complement the text of this well-produced and entertaining book.

Alicia St. Leger

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