THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

IRISH HAND-WEAVING AND TAPESTRY-MAKING

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Ireland has a long history of weaving with evidence of its existence dating back to Neolithic times. Weaving was very much intermixed with the political and social history of the country. In early Irish society, sheep were regarded as one of the main sources of wealth and provided both food and raw materials for weaving. Records of woven materials and dyes being offered to kings as tribute gives us an insight into the political structure in ancient Irish Society. As time progressed and settled society developed, and thus, specialisation, woven goods were manufactured for the export market. The woollen trade prospered up to the end of the 17th Century until political strategies came into play. The result was the near destruction of the woollen trade. In chapter one of this study I intend giving a brief history of Irish weaving to the 19th Century, incorporating examples from this period.

No examples of tapestry-making have been found dating from before the 18th Century, however the earliest specific reference dates from about 1525. Chapter two deals with this evidence and looks at the earliest known examples of Irish tapestry-making, which are now to be found in the Bank of Ireland, Dame Street. Between 1768 and the early 20th Century no evidence of tapestry-making has been found.

A revival of the hand-weaving industry took place in the late 19th Century and organisations were set up in order to improve both the woven cloth and the living conditions of the people at the time. Other attempts were made in the mid-twentieth Century with a view to the further revitalisation of the hand-weaving industry and to prevent the continued outflow of population from Irish-speaking distructs. However the machine proved to be more efficient. In the final chapter, I intend to trace the development of tapestry-making and hand-weaving from the 19th Century to the present and to consider the position of the craftsman/designer today. I shall also refer to artists like Louis le Brocquy and Patrick Scott who have used tapestry as an art form.

CHAPTER I

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WEAVING IN IRELAND - FROM NEOLITHIC TIMES TO THE 19th CENTURY

In early Ireland, society was family dominated, rural and virtually nomadic. Cattle and sheep were the two main sources of wealth and these provided not only food but also the raw materials for leather goods and for weaving. Weaving was an everyday task and it held as much importance as did farming.

The earliest recorded evidence of sheep in Ireland was found on Dalkey Island in Dublin Bay.[1] Here, sheep bones have been found dating from the Mesolithic period (5000 BC). No record of spinning exists, however, from this time, due to the fact that spindles were made of wood. Spinning was certainly practiced in Neolithic times because there is clear evidence of woven material as early as 1600 BC. This evidence comes in the form of an imprint of a woven material on the rim of a pottery food vessel found at Fourknocks in Co. Meath. It may have been moulded in a cloth sack or the material may have been used to create a form of decoration. This bowl may be found in the National Museum of Ireland.

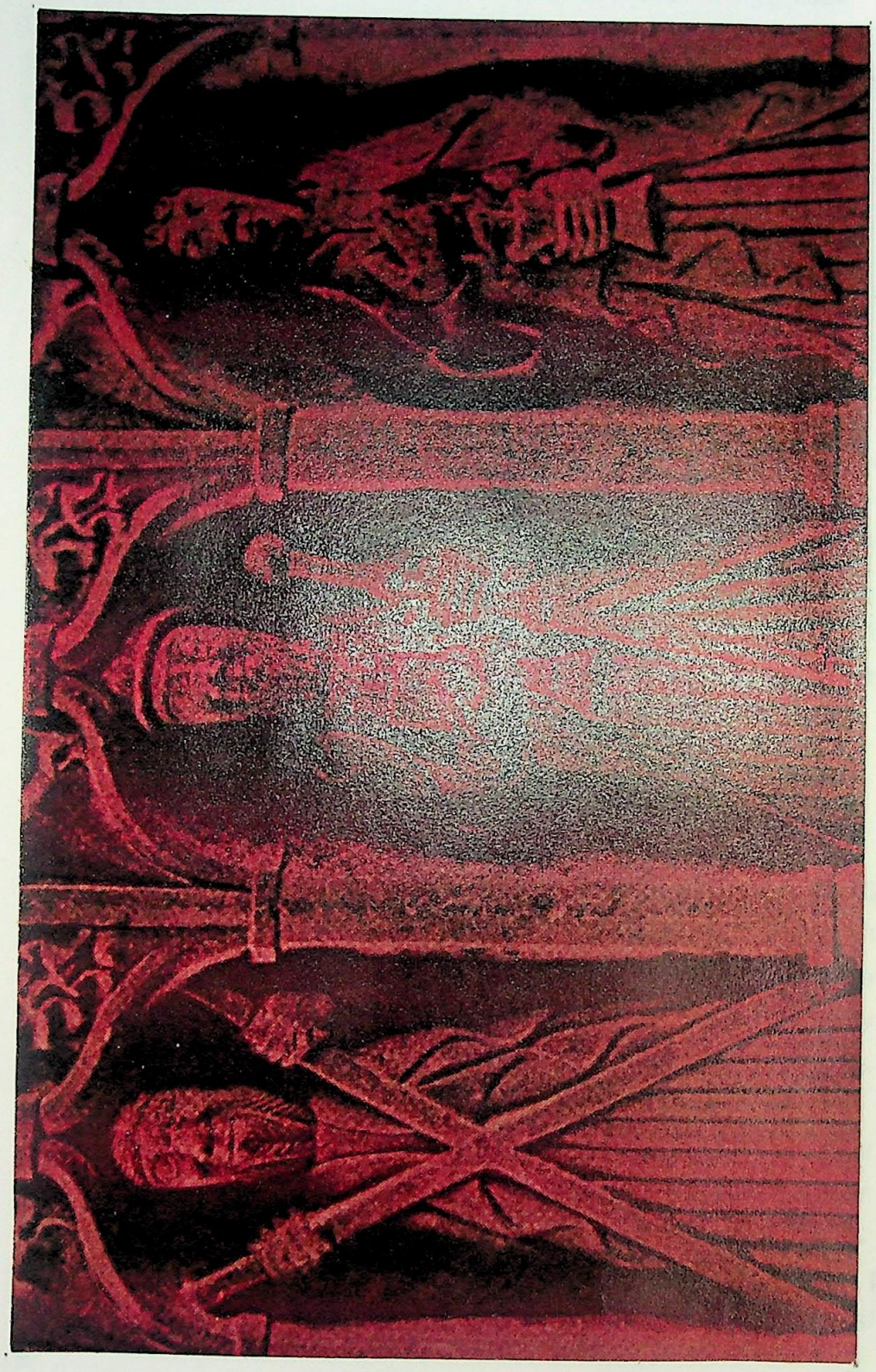
The oldest known piece of cloth actually in existence dates from the Late Bronze Age. It was found in 1904 in a bog at Armoy, Co. Antrim, and it was used to wrap a small metal hoard consisting of a socketed axe head, a disc headed pin and a bifidtype razor. The finding is dated to some time between 900 and 600 BC. The cloth is in very poor condition and when found it was caked with mud. The cloth is in fact two pieces sewn together. It measures 37 inches by 28 inches. It is the only example of an early textile complete enough to give any indication of the method used in its manufacture. It is thought that it was woven on an 18½ inch loom. An error in the warp of this cloth is of interest because it shows that a form of haddle was used at this period. One of the pieces has three selvedges, two side selvedges and one on the top. There was possibly another on the fourth side of the piece. To modern weavers this would appear unusual, but it seems to have been a common practice with ancient and primitive weavers. This fact is also seen in Danish and Swiss materials. It is economical in that it saves yarn at the beginning and end of the warp as well as minimising the cutting and sewing in the making of the final article.

A tasselled horse-hair belt was also found. "The skill with which this horse-hair ornament is made is beyond praise and throws an interesting light on the textile arts of the period. The weaving of the horse-hair is very even and is worked in a chevron pattern. The fringe is formed by branches of horse-hair closely wound round for a short distance, then separated into lesser branches also wound, which are again separated into branches wound as before, about one and a half inches long and terminating in neatly made pellets". Extra threads were inserted to make this false fringe. The two tasselled fringes are a decorative way of finishing off the beginning and end of the woven fabric.[2] Both the Armoy Cloth and belt are to be found in the National Museum.

Spindles and whorls from the lake dwellings or crannogs have been found, as has evidence of tablet weaving. One such finding was made at Lough Gara in Co. Roscommon. Other evidence of weaving is to be found in the works of the scribes and illuminators, the stonemasons and the metalsmiths of the 8th, 9th and later centuries. They depict folds of garments (See illustration 1).

References to the teasing, carding and other processes by which the wool was prepared and to the spinning, weaving and dyeing of the cloth, occur in the Brehon Laws. These activities were carried out by the women of the tribes. The Laws lay down very precisely the divisions of the raw material and of the cloth, in different stages of its manufacture, which a woman should be entitled to take with her in case of separation from her husband. The proportions being adjusted evidently by an estimate of the amount of labour expended by the wife on the wool or on the fabric. Mention was mde of the dye stuffs used. These were home grown and great attention was devoted to the attaining of pure colours in a variety of shades. "The first part of the process of wool dyeing is called in Irish "ruamadh", and this is effected by steeping and boiling the wool with the twigs or burshwood of the alder tree, to which they gave the name of "ruaim or Rime". This process produces a good reddish brown colour, and forms the ground for black, blue or red. If the colour is to be a black, after the wood is "rimed" it is again put down with a black sediment, which is taken up from the bottom of certain pools, ponds and holes, in the bogs and boggy borders of lakes".[3] Fabric was not only woven for the everyday clothing of the tribe but also for the mantles of the Kings and chiefs of the area. "These

ILLUSTRATION I



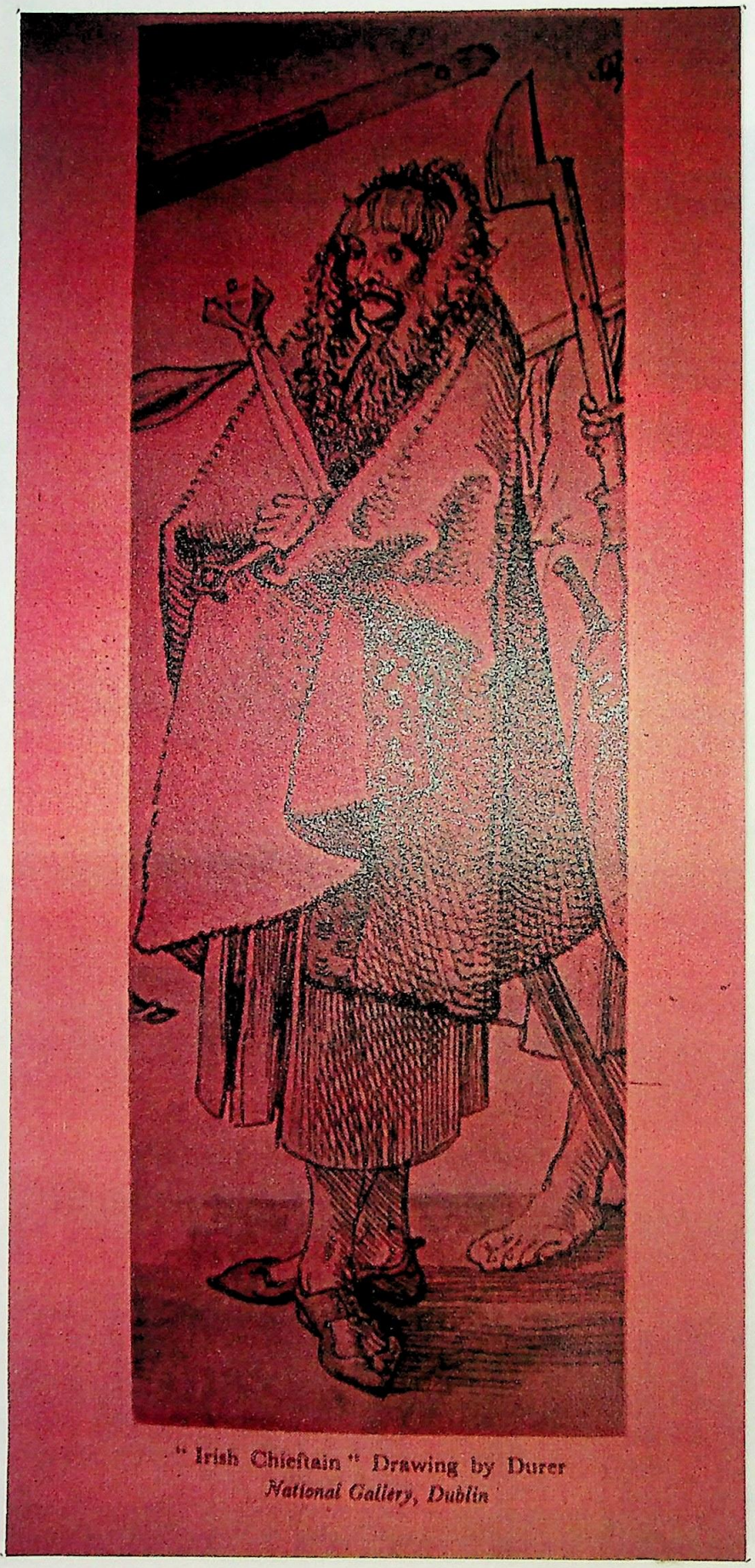
mantles were considered princely presents when offered by one great man to another; and the provincial Kings took them in the form of tribute from their subordinate chiefs. In fact, as a means of revenue, manufactured cloth appears to have ranked next to live stock".[4] The following is recorded in the Book of Rights:

> "Two hundred wethers from the host were given;
> An hundred hogs in statute tribute;
> An hundred cows that enriched the farmer's dairy;
> An hundred green mantles from the men of Ara."

The above were the tributes paid to the King of Caiseal from Ara. Dyes were also given as tribute as can be seen from the following extract: "The burnishing, and renewing, and washing and cleaning of his court was performed by the Cocarts of the lower order of the people; and the supply of his court with crimson thread and crimson dye, and red and light blue thread, and white, and blay, and yellow and "bi.n.dean wool", from the better class of Cocarts."[5]

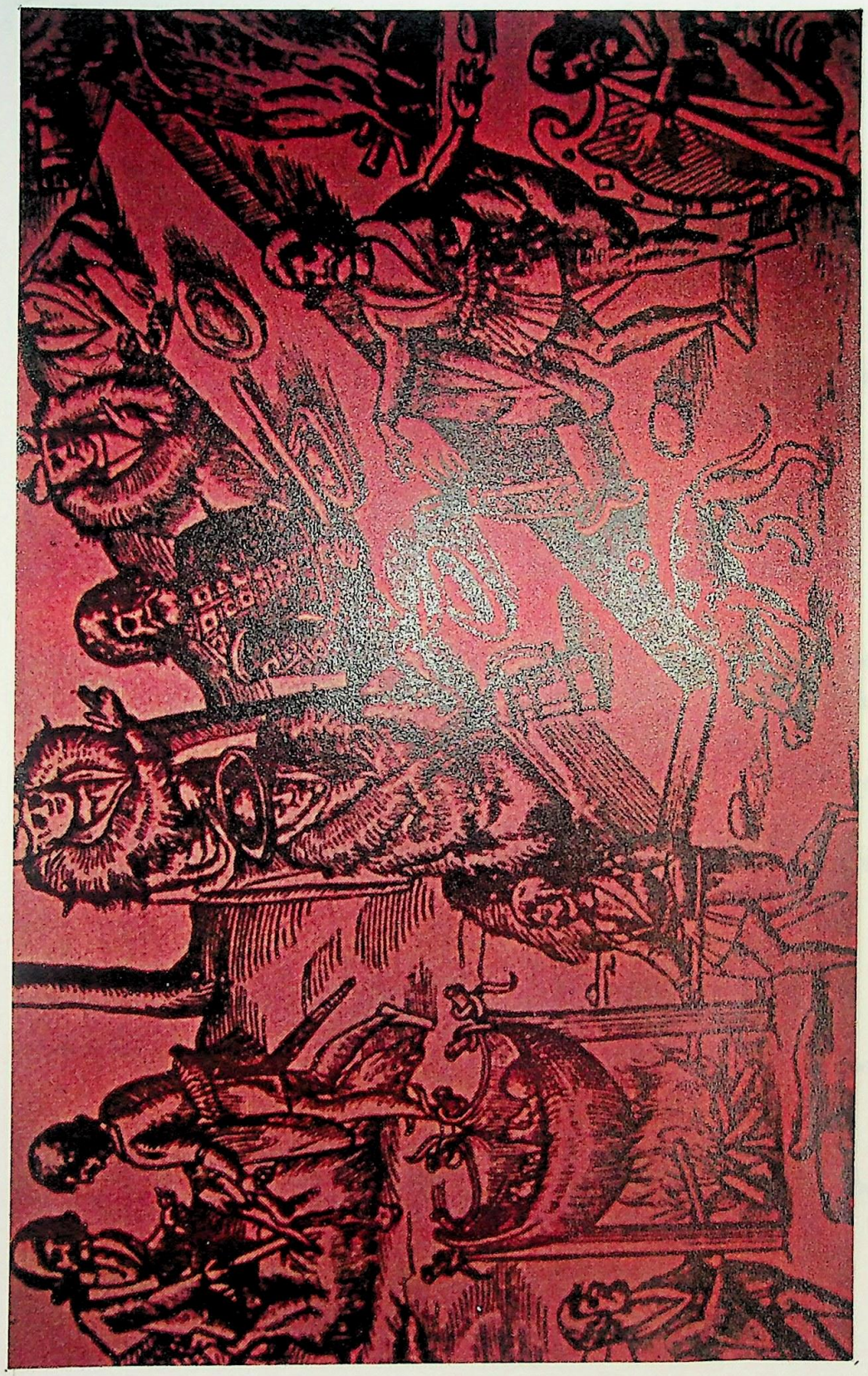
Linen was also woven from an early period and impressions of flax seeds may be found on Late Bronze Age pottery. The Brehon Laws provide instructions for the cultivation of flax. The linen "leine", was one of the main garments worn by people of importance in Ireland. It was a smock or shirt of varying length worn by men and women. It had wide hanging sleeves and was usually dyed yellow, with saffron, extracted from the stigmate and styles of Autumn Crocus (Crocus sativus) (See Illustration 2). Other such plants used were weld, madder and lickens. Over the leine another garment was usually worn. This was called the shag rug or cloak and is a well-known part of old Irish Dress (See illustration 3). Saint Brigid's shag

ILLUSTRATION 2



"Irish Chieftain" Drawing by Durer
National Gallery, Dublin

ILLUSTRATION 3



cloak is an example of this. It is simply a rectangular piece of woollen cloth measuring about twenty-one inches by twenty-five inches of a dark crimson colour and covered all over on its face with tufts of curly wool resembling the fleece of a sheep. The first mention of the cloak was made in 1347, in a list of Church property belonging to the Cathedral of Saint Donaas or Donatien at Bruges.[6] A later record of the shag rug is to be found in "The Image of Ireland, written in 1581 by an Englishman named John Derricke, who accompanied the Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney on some of his Irish campaigns. It contains a picture showing a dinner scene in an Irish Castle at which the chieftain is wearing such a mantle with the shaggy side worn on the outside. Also in the picture are some of his guests, also wearing cloaks but with the shaggy side worn inwards (See illustration 3).

Before the thirteenth century all cloth was woven and finished domestically but with the thirteenth century came the introduction of the tuckmills . This innovation was probably due to the development and expansion of towns and the flourishing of trade promoted by the Anglo-Norman invasions. From the thirteenth century to the seventeenth century the export trade of woollen cloth flourished. Fazio degli Uberti, an Italian writer, in 1357, claimed that Irish stuffs of that time were brought to such perfection that they were exported to Italy and the Continent. From an early period trade was carried on at the local fair and records show that cloth was sold at such gatherings. Merchants from the Continent attended these fairs regularly. Mention of Irish cloths being sold at Chester in 1290 and in Bristol and Canterbury in 1382 have also been recorded.[7] Edward III

(1327 - 1377) made law that "no man nor woman, great nor small, (except the King himself and a few privileged persons), shall wear no cloth other than is made in England, Ireland, Wales or Scotland".[8] Prices of cloth were fixed by edict and certain fabrics were specified which should be worn by the various classes of the community. Duty was paid on every sack of wool exported and this was collected at places or ports called "staples". Markets were established at Calais,Bruges, Brussels, Louvain and Mechlin during Edward's reign.
In 1522 an Act was passed, by the Irish Parliament against the shipping of wool out of Ireland. It was thought that the large exports of wool would endanger the cloth industry. A further Act of Parliament of 1532 prohibited the import of wool to England and in 1569 a statute was aimed at encouraging the making of cloth by imposing duties on the export of raw materials. These actions were to no avail, for exports of cloth from Ireland to England were down and hides and wool up. These trends continued into the seventeenth century. The Lord Deputy of Ireland at the time, Thomas Wentworth, realised that if the Irish manufactured sufficient quantities of clothing for export they could undersell the English traders in foreign markets because of the abundance of wool in Ireland. He therefore set himself the task of discouraging the woollen trade in Ireland and instead encouraged the linen industry. Wentworth's successor, Ormond, encouraged the setting up of woollen factories, the wool however to be used for home consumption. He established a woollen factory at Clonmel and he brought over 500 Walloon

families from the neighbourhood of Canterbury to carry it on. Other factories were established at Kilkenny and Carrick-on-Suir. In 1672 it was estimated that there were four million sheep in Ireland and the owners had three alternative means of disposing of the wool. One was to send it to England and to pay the high duties imposed on the export of raw materials. The second was to convert it into cloth,and the third was to smuggle it abroad. At the end of the seventeenth century exports of the woollen trade had increased and this was a reason for worry in the House of Lords in England. Its members wrote to King William III stating that the good price combined with the cheapness of labour and low price of provisions has enticed many artisans to leave England and settle in Ireland[9] and they requested that His Majesty alter this situation by promoting the linen industry and discouraging the woollen trade (See Appendix 1). The result of this request was the enactment of a Bill prohibiting the export from Ireland of "wool, soolfels, shortlings, mortlings, woolflocks, worsteds, woollen yarn, cloth, serges, bags, jerseys, caps, friezes, druggets, shalloons, or any other drapery stuffs or woollen manufacture whatsoever".[10] (See Appendix 2). This Act of 1699 did much to destroy the woollen industry in Ireland. The wool trade began to fail due to the glut of wool on the market. Severe penalties were imposed on all who took part in conveying the raw material or the manufactured articles out of the country. Such commodities found on board any ship were forfeited. The ship itself was also forfeited according to the statute. The master of the vessel, every sailor on board and every person knowing of the transaction was fined £40 each. Ships patrolled the coast with power to enter and search any vessel suspected of carrying wool and woollen fabrics intended for foreign markets. Despite these efforts some smuggling continued.

Caves and coves along the coast were used for this purpose. The wool was mainly exported to France where the woollen trade was flourishing and establishing itself as a formidable rival of the English export trade. Sir James Caldwell wrote, "the exportation of raw wool became the business not of the few, but of the many: it was no man's interest merely as a native of Ireland to prevent it; it was, therefore, not only connived at but encouraged; and those who did not unlawfully export raw wool for a pecuniary advantage to themselves were well pleased to see it done by others, from a principle of resentment and indignation against those who had subjected them to what they could not but consider as a cruel and oppressive law, which had not only impoverished many individuals whose wealth was a common benefit, but cut off the bread from the mouths of innumerable industrious poor, and consequently produced national impotence and poverty."[11]

In 1685, King Louis XIV of France signed a decree revoking the Edict of Nantes. This resulted in many Huguenots leaving their native land, taking with them their crafts. About 10,000 Huguenots reached Ireland and the majority settled in and around large towns. Those who came to Dublin settled in Castle Street, Weaver's Square, Pimlico, Sweeney's Lane, the Coombe (the Valley of the Poddle) up to Dolphin's Barn. This was the oldest part of the city known as the Liberty of the Early of Meath. During this time of strife for the woollen trade the Huguenots set about revitalising silk weaving in Ireland with some success. They also introduced the technique of poplin weaving into Ireland. Thus was a method of weaving using a silk warp and a woollen weft.[12]

It was in 1708 that the destruction of the Irish woollen trade was first brought before the English Parliament and measures to relieve the situation were debated, however to no avail. The Irish Volunteer Movement demanded free trade and around the necks of their cannons hung labels with such inscriptions as Free Trade or This! Free Trade or Speedy Revolution! This opposition continued until 1779, when the Act of 1699 was repealed. It has been said that the freedom of trade fought for and obtained did little to help the woollen trade and the only positive result was an end to smuggling.[13]

The Act of Union of 1800 brought about the removal of disabilities which the repeal of 1779 had not dealt with and it placed Ireland on an equal footing with England. The outcome however, was not a positive one. The scale of production was small and therefore unable to compete with the more concentrated English woollen industry. The introduction of the machine worked loom brought with it a decline of the hand weaving industry. Where before, six weavers were employed, now only one could get work.[14]

FOOTNOTES

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2. Lillias Mitchell, Irish Spinning, Dyeing and Weaving
3. O'Curry, The Ancient Irish, Manners and Customs, Vol. 3 1873
4. Atkinson, Irish Wool and Woollens, Essays, 1896
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6. Lillias Mitchell, Irish Spinning, Dyeing and Weaving
7. Atkinson, Irish Wool and Woollens, Essays 1896
8. Longman, History of the life and times of Edward III, Vol. I, 1869
9. Mary Campion, An Old Dublin Industry - Poplin, Dublin Historical Record
10. Atkinson, Irish Wool and Woollens, Essays, 1896
11. An inquiry concerning the Restrictions laid on the Trade of Ireland (1766)
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14. B. Butler, "Thomas Pleasants and the Stove Tenter House - 1815 - 1944. Dublin Historical Record

CHAPTER 2

IRISH TAPESTRY-MAKING - FROM 1525 to the 19th CENTURY

Many fine examples of tapestry-making dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are to be found on the Continent. Ireland, however, differs in that no evidence of tapestry-making has been found before the year 1525. An account from this year tells of how Piers Butler, second Earl of Ormond and his wife, Margaret, daughter of the Earl of Kildare, brought artisans from Flanders and the neighbouring provinces and employed them at Kilkenny to make "diapers, tappestries, Turkish carpets, cushions, and other like works".[1] No evidence of work executed by these men survives or if it does it has not been accredited to them.

In the interval between 1525 and the late seventeenth century only one brief snippet of information remains and this is to be found in an entry in the index to wills of the diocese of Dublin. The following is recorded, "John Pearson, Oxmantown, Dublin, tapestry-maker" died intestate in the year 1670.[2] Seven years later Charles II is recorded as having established a

tapestry workshop on an ambitious scale in Ireland. In July, 1677 Christopher Lovett, an alderman and linen manufacturer of the City Dublin received yards at Chapelizod as well as stocks, looms, yarn and a loan of £1,200 to be returned on expiry of the twenty-one years' lease. He was also given permission to "graze and Depasture in his Majestie's Park called the Phoenix Park the number of five cows and five horses and twenty sheep every year without any Denial, disturbance or interruption". This was to enable him "at his owne proper costs and charges to keep up twenty looms at least, to be employed in Linnen manufacture in the Bleaching yard aforesaid, besides what he shall keep and imploy in working and makeing Tapestry".[3] Despite these privileges the enterprise suffered financial difficulties. However, documentary evidence shows that a number of tapestries were actually completed at Chapelizod. In 1689, John Lovett, presumably a son of Christopher Lovett's presented a petition to the Lords Commissioners of the English Treasury stating "That your Petitioner being forced by the Troubles out of Ireland and for the safety of some of his fortune, brought into this kingdom 38 pieces of Tapistry Hanginge of their Majestie's manufacture of Ireland, which are now in their Majestie's Custome House in London and were never designed for a Foreign Markett. And that soe great a Duty is laid on them which is impossible for them to beare. Rather then pay the same your Petitioner must be forced to lett them lye till they can be returned to Dublin."[4] Lovett requested that the tapestries be given to him duty free. His petition was granted and nothing more was ever heard of the 38 tapestries. No knowledge of the workers, designers or even the subject matter has been recorded. They may even still be in existence in either England or Ireland.

The eighteenth century is considerably more fruitful than the previous centuries. Two fully authenticated examples of tapestry-making have survived and in addition, there is also documentary evidence. In 1727 Robert Baillie presented a petition to the Irish House of Lords stating that "for some years past, considerable sums of money have been sent out of this Kingdom for Tapestry, which was not to be had but for a very high price, either from London, Brussels or Flanders".[5] He had himself "at great Expense, brought into this Kingdom from Great Britain, France and Flanders, a sufficient number of exceeding good Tapestry - Weavers, who, since their Arrival, have made several suits of Tapestry, excelling any that have yet been imported into this Kingdom, and at a lower price, as by specimens, ready to be produced, may appear. That the Petitioner, understanding a new Parliament House is to be built, is emboldened, from the Encouragement this most Honourable House has always given to the Manufacturers of this Kingdom, to offer his service for perpetuating the Particulars of the late glorious Revolution, and the remarkable ancidents in the Wars of Ireland, by preparing suits of tapestry for such Parts of the House of Lords as shall be thought proper, containing their History; which the Petitioner will give sufficient security, shall be executed in the best manner".

Baille suggested that there be six tapestries to represent the following subjects:

1. The valiant Defence of LondonDerry
2. The Landing of King William and his Army at Carrickfergus
3. The glorious Battle and Victory of the Boyne
4. The splendid and joyful Entry of King William into Dublin
5. The Battle of Aughrim
6. The taking of Cork and Kinsale by the late victorious Duke of Marlborough.

A Committee was appointed to look into this request and also to consider other furnishings for the new Irish House of Lords. In 1728, Baillie received an order for only two of the six tapestries, the two being The Defence of Londonderry and The Battle of the Boyne (See Illustrations 4 & 5). Baillie agreed to have the tapestries completed within four years. This he did and was paid the sum of £436.6s.3d. It was recorded in the Dublin Evening Post for the 11th September, 1733 that "yesterday two pieces of fine Irish Tapestry made by Mr. Baillie, Upholder in Abbey - st., the one representing the glorious Victory obtained at the Boyne, by our Valiant Defender, King William of Immortal Memory, and the other the Valiant Defence of Londonderry, were hung up in the Parliament House for their Excellencies the Lord Justices, and the Hon. Privy Council to view, and they were by them approved of, and thought to be equal to those made at Brussels in Honour of the late Duke of Marlborough's Battles".

The Parliament House was acquired by the Bank of Ireland in 1802 and the two tapestries remained part of the property. Today the tapestries are in relatively good condition, having been extensively repaired in 1913. The colour, however, has inevitably faded over the years. The main fighting episodes form a background on a small scale, while the large mounted groups of the commanders occupy the foreground. The borders contain effigies of the leaders, mottos in medallions and elaborate portrayals of trophies of war and victory (See illustration 6). In the Battle of the Boyne, King William appears in the most prominent position. There are three medallions containing the busts of King William, Schomberg and Gintel. Two other medallions show scenes of "Drogheda surrendered" and "King William Heads ye Inis Killiners". The Defence of Londonderry shows James II and the other mounted leaders, however, they hold not so prominent a position. The border includes medallions containing the portraits of Major Bater, Doctor Walker and Captain Dartmouth.

ILLUSTRATION 4

ILLUSTRATION 5

ILLUSTRATION 6

There is little to suggest these tapestries as being distinctively Irish. Similar tapestries were woven all over Europe to the same format, with the commander in the foreground in a prominent position, very often mounted on a white horse and the battle surging in the background e.g. "The Battles of the Great Elector. The Capture of Stralsund", tapestry made by Pierre Mercier in Berlin, 1693. (See illustration 7). If it were not for the mottos and persons depicted in the tapestries it would be difficult to tell their place of origin. The reason for this near uniformity in design may be in the fact that Baillie brought his workers to Ireland from France and Flanders in order to set up his industry. At the time France and Flanders were the great tapestry-making countries and it is therefore not surprising to find such a similarity between Irish tapestries and those found on the Continent.

The designer of the tapestries was Johann Van der Hagen.[6] He was a native of the Hague. He concentrated mainly on landscape and marine painting. In the early part of the eighteenth century he travelled to London and then to Ireland. Here he was employed by Robert Baillie in 1728 to make sketches of the places to be represented in the tapestries which Baillie was commissioned to make for the House of Lords.[7]

On a label attached to the tapestries there is an inscription "Jo^{n} Van Beaver R.B.D. 1732). It is thought that Van Beaver was probably the main weaver involved in the making of the tapestries.

ILLUSTRATION 7

Another example of Van Beaver's work is now in the possession of Messrs. Atkinson. The tapestry consists of a bust portrait of George II and is very similar in style to the medallion found on both The Battle of the Boyne and The Defence of Londonderry tapestries (See illustration 8). The following is written on its gilt wood frame:-

> "The workmanship of John Van Beaver,
> Ye famous Tapistry Weaver,
> Alex.^{r} Riky, Master, Richard Whelling,
> William Beasley, Wardens, A.D. 1738".

This tapestry was presented to the Weaver's Guild in 1738, when the Master was directed to buy this frame. It was subsequently purchased by Mr. Richard Atkinson.

Between the years 1743 and 1754 the Dublin Society offered tapestry premiums to entries of a high standard, with the intention of promoting tapestry-making in Ireland. In 1743 the first premium was offered. The response was poor with the total number of entries numbering three and all three entries being the work of the same man, Mr. Van Beaver. They comprised "The feast of Bacchus and two small pieces of flowers".[8] He received an award of £10 for his entry "The feast of Bacchus". Certain conditions were laid down for future awards and it was decided that the winner of the last premium be excluded from the next competition and that competitors should not include journeymen. Details of the entries and premiums offered

ILLUSTRATION 8

between 1743 and 1754 may be seen in Diagram I. The following was recorded in the Dublin Courant of 1747, "We find by experience that the manufacture of Tapestry improves every year, owing to the Encouragement given in Premiums".[9] With reference to the entries of 1748, Faulkner's Dublin Journal writes "It appeared that the Tapistry Weavers have greatly improved in their manufacture and can execute any Design with great Skill and good Shadowing."[10] It must be noted however, that although accounts prove that the quality of tapestry-making improved over these years, the number of competitors never exceeded four. Two of the competitors, Daniel Feyly and Richard Pawlet actually worked under Mr. Van Beaver and it was discovered in 1754 that Philip Troye was a journeyman to Richard Pawlet and thus not eligible for a premium. In 1753 no entries appeared for the premium offered. The awarding of premiums ceased in 1754 due to lack of interest and the absence of any real competition. It is very likely that some of the tapestries woven for the premiums still survive. A further reference to tapestry-making was made in 1768, in the Dublin Society Minutes, when Richard Pawlet stated that he had won many premiums but that now "for want of sufficient stock to carry on the Business, he is at present confined to making small Pieces , which deprives him of an Opportunity of fully showing his skill in the Art and praying Aid."[11] The Dublin Society however, did not concede to his plea. It is thought possible that the Mulliner panel came from Pawlet's workshop. The panel represents the royal arms of George III, complete with cipher, erest, motto and supporters with side trophies, all on a brown ground and having a border of foliated scrolls.

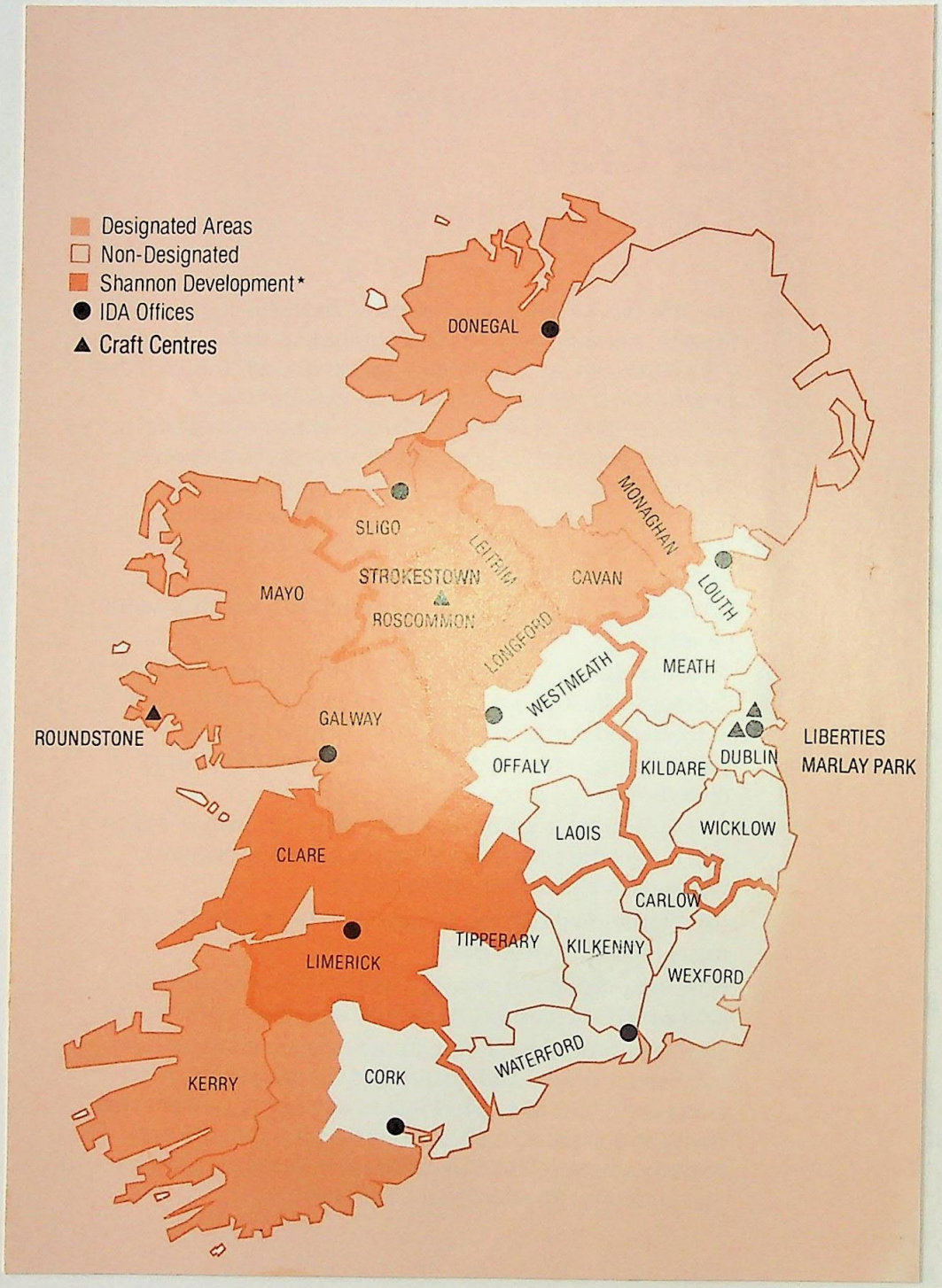
DIAGRAM I

Year of Award	John Van Beaver	Richard Pawlet	Daniel Reyly	Philip Troye
1743	Flowers and "Feast of Bacchus". £10 prize			
1745		A settee bottom. £10 prize	A small piece. Special award of 30/-.	
1746	Head of Duke of Cumberland. No prize given as no proof that it had been made within the year.		Landscape. Special award of £3 "to get a better Drawing for the Future".	
1747		Two settee pieces. £10 prize	Landscape and piece with flowers. Small special award.	
1748	Settee back "Meleager and killing of the Boar". £6 prize.	Flower and figure piece. £5 prize.	Six flower pieces fit for chairs. £4 prize.	
1749		Entry not described. £8 prize.	Entry not described. £4 prize.	
1751		"Flowerpiece, a Neptune and a Trophy". £10 prize.		Two fire-screens and head of George II. Special award of £5.
1752		Piece with Falstaff. £4 prize.		Woman milking a cow. £6 prize.

1753	NO ENTRIES	
1754	Entry not described	Entry not described.

No awards made because Troye was found to be still a Journeyman to Pawlet and not a real competitor. Premiums not offered again. Two real competitors were required to award a full premium.

DIAGRAM 2


Designated Areas
Non-Designated
Shannon Development*
IDA Offices
Craft Centres
DONEGAL
SLIGO
LEITRIM
MONAGHAN
MAYO
STROKESTOWN
CAVAN
LOUTH
ROSCOMMON
LONGFORD
WESTMEATH
MEATH
ROUNDSTONE
GALWAY
OFFALY
KILDARE
DUBLIN
LIBERTIES
MARLAY PARK
LAOIS
WICKLOW
CLARE
CARLOW
TIPPERARY
KILKENNY
LIMERICK
WEXFORD
WATERFORD
KERRY
CORK

The tapestry measures 8 ft. by 8½ ft. (See illustration 9). It was bought by the Earl of Granard at the Mulliner Sale at Christie's in July 1924 and it was then thought to be an example of Irish weaving and to date from about 1760. It now hangs at Forbes House in London.

Some small finds have been made in this century. Mr. Louis Nordell discovered two pieces both measuring 22½" x 25½", one being a view of the City of Londonderry and the other a flower and landscape scene.[12] Neither piece displays its maker's mark nor do they tally with the descriptions of the premium entries. However, it is thought that the Londonderry view was woven by Mr. Van Beaver and the other scene by one of his apprentices. Such speculation is corroborated by the fact that Van Beaver, and the artist Johann Van der Hagen previously mentioned were both employed by Baillie in the House of Lords tapestry commission. Van der Hagen made many sketches of Londonderry for the tapestry "Defense of Londonderry" and it is very likely that one such sketch came into the possession of Van Beaver. Other factors also point to Van Beaver as being the maker. The Londonderry scene exhibits the same selection of pale tones and shaded effects for the sky, as those seen in the relevant portions of the "Defence of Londonderry". A method of gradually blending shades by the use of two differently coloured threads is also seen in both tapestries. The second tapestry, depicting a rustic scene is typical of small eighteen centry pieces of English, Dutch and French origin. However, the piece shows technical similarities both to the Londonderry scene and the head of George II, already noted as being the work of Van Beaver. It is known from accounts of the Dublin Society premiums[13] and has been mentioned previously in this essay that both Daniel Reyly and Richard Pawlet served their time under Van Beaver and that Philip Troye was a journeyman of Pawlet's. Thus, all three would have learnt the skills and techniques of Van Beaver and

ILLUSTRATION 9

since the quality of design in this landscape does not measure up to the quality of Van Beaver's usual work, it is quite possible that htis tapestry was executed by one of the above. Both tapestries are now in the possession of Senator E.A. McGuire.

Another find was made by Mr. John Hunt of Lough Gur. Again it consists of two small pieces, "one shaped to fit the seat of a chair and measuring approximately 20 inches by 27 inches, the other 20 inches by 23 inches."[14] Both pieces are well preserved and have been mounted in frames, however some holes near the edges have been caused by rusting nails in the frames. One of the tapestries was copies from a Mezzotint engraving made about 1712 by John Faber, the elder. The engraving was made from a portrait of John Duns Scotus, the famous theologian, and is now hanging in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. It is thought that the tapestry was probably made about 1740 - 1750, so Faber's prints had ample time to come on the market in Ireland. One main difference between the engraving and the tapestry is that the figure has been reversed in the tapestry. As in the former small tapestries discussed there is a similarity in the technique of shading, which resembles that of Van Beaver and his apprentices. Since the lay-out of the design suggests an apprentice's effort it is quite likely that the tapestries were woven by either Richard Pawlett or Daniel Reyley as experimental or premium pieces.

After 1768 and throughout the whole of the nineteenth century no evidence has been found of tapestry-making at all in Ireland.

FOOTNOTES

1. Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep., App. to second Report (MSS of O'Conor Don) pp. 224-5
2. Index to wills of the diocese of Dublin up to the year 1810
3. State papers, Domestic. Signet office, 12. p 473
4. Treasury papers, Vol. VI, 1689, 16 Nov.
5. Journals of the Irish House of Lords, Vol. III, 6 Feb. 1727
6. Ada Longfield, Irish Tapestries in the Bank of Ireland, Miscellanea. J.R.S.A.I. Vol. LXIX
7. W.G. Strickland, Dictionary of Irish Artists, Vol. II, pp. 473-476
8. Dublin Society Minutes, 22 Ap. 1743
9. Dublin Courant, 24 Nov. 1747
10. Faulkner's Dublin Journal, 15 Nov. 1748
11. Dublin Society Minutes, Nov. 1768
12. Ada Longfield, History of Tapestry-Making in Ireland in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. Vol. LXVIII. Part I.
13. Dublin Society Minutes , May 4th 1745
14. Ada Longfield, Further 18th Century Dublin Tapestries Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. Vol. LXXXI Part I

CHAPTER 3

HAND-WEAVING AND TAPESTRY-MAKING IN IRELAND IN 19th & 20th CENTURIES

Handweaving still survives in some parts of the West of Ireland. A Donegal man in 1897, gave an account of hand-weaving, during his life time, in the local area, "Homespuns have been manufactured in these mountain districts extending from Ardara to Glenhead from time immemorial. In my childhood's days, the peasantry made their own blankets, flannels, etc. principally white and grey, for home wear, and above all they manufactured blue cloth for mens' wear, which for durability and being impervious to rain has never been surpassed. This last description of cloth was dyed to the shade of blue required by a regular dyer, "dyster", as he was called, who lived in Ardara, and this was a technical, skilled trade, and some 60 years ago, very remunerative. Besides the "dyster", there were several men called "clothiers", who had small mills called "tuck mills", run by water power. The clothier was a skilled tradesman also, and required to serve an apprenticeship. In this mill the goods spun and woven by the peasants were cleaned, dressed and finished at prices from 2d. to 6d. per yard according to the quality of finishing required. For many years, from 1854, white and grey flannels only were made, brought into the Ardara fairs for sale, as now, by

the cottagers.[1] Weaving formed part of the income of people in the poorer areas where fishing and farming were not sufficient to support a family (See illustration 10). The apalling conditions in rural Ireland were mainly a result of the Plantations and the landlord system. Many of the landlords lived in England and paid little or no attention to the conditions of their tenants. The land was poor and tenants found it difficult to pay the rent. They found themselves in a stalemate position whereby if they made improvements to the land so as to increase output, the rent was likewise increased and the tenant was no better off than before. In 1881 and 1891 long term loans were made available in order to enable tenants to purchase liable holdings from landlords. Also in 1891 the British Conservative Administration recognised the need for development in rural Ireland and the result was the establishment of the congested Districts Board. It was set up in order to better the living conditions of those living in the poorest districts of Ireland. The areas considered most congested were mainly in the West of Connacht, parts of Cork, Clare, Donegal and Kerry. The regions under consideration measured about 3½ million acres and its population numbered about 500,000 . The problem therefore, lay not in the amount of land per capita but in the quality of land. The Board set about increasing the size of the holdings by the purchasing of good land and it also sought to develop suitable industries. In the first report of the Congested Districts Board, issued in 1893, it was stated that a "scheme for developing the very promising manufacture of home-spun tweeds was then under consideration, but that the difficulties in the way of giving wise and effective help were very great".[2]

ILLUSTRATION IO

In the same year the Irish Industries Association and the Congested Districts Board combined their efforts in this area. One project they undertook was to help the homespun industry of South Donegal. The industry was carried on in the districts lying west of an imaginary line drawn from Glenties to Killybegs. "It is a wild and barren region of bog and mountain. But for the local industries the dwellers in the interior of this region would have a hard task, to make a living since the Board and the Association began to co-operate in the development of the weaving industry, emigration from this district has almost entirely ceased".[3]

They were faced with problems such as unevenness in width of cloth, bars or streaks arising from imperfect mixing of different colours in the weft, looseness of texture and want of novelty in design. The antiquated hand looms did not lend themselves to rapidly and well woven cloth and this was one of the main reasons for the decline of the industry. To overcome these problems the Board and the Irish Industries Association set about a course of action. Firstly, the supply of improved looms which would be capable of doing about five times the work of the old, and doing it better and more easily; secondly, the establishment of a teaching centre where a qualified practical instructor would give free instruction in the use of the new looms and in all other departments of the process; thirdly, a system of inspection to be held at the monthly fairs of Ardara and Carrick, where the cloth was sold to dealers who attended for that purpose, every web that would come up to a certain standard of excellence being stamped with a

mark which would carry with it a small money prize; fourthly, a trading establishment, through which webs could be bought from the people and sold to London wholescale houses and others".[4] A necessary feature in the scheme was to ensure that well-made cloth should not fail to be given a fair price. A report on the woollen industry in Ireland in 1902 stated that "It may surprise many to learn that the hand-loom and the spinning wheel are still capable of holding their own against steam machinery in any quarter of the United Kingdom, but such is the case in some districts. Handspun and handwoven cloth, dyed with the lupens and plants which the Irish peasant has understood how to use from time immemorial, is not only a peculiarly pleasant material to wear, but has a certain artistic character of its own - one which is so well recognised by the trade, that attempts, more or less unsuccessful, are constantly being made to imitate by machinery the effects of genuine homespun, and power loom cloths are sometimes even fumigated by peat smoke to further the illusion that they have been produced in a peasant's cottage".[5]

Tapestry-making was not neglected. In 1902, Evelyn Gleeson on returning from London to Dublin established a group of industries for the training and employment of Irish girls. The industries comprised originally of embroidery on Irish Linen, the weaving of tapestry and carpets and the printing of books by hand. She was aided in her task by Elizabeth and Susan Yeats (Sisters of W.B. Yeats). They aimed to contribute in some practical way to the Irish Revival. "Everything as far as possible is Irish, the paper of the books, the linen of the embroidery and the work of the tapestry and carpets. The designs are also of the spirit and tradition of the country."[6]

The revival experienced in the closing decade of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century in the handwoven area took on a new life in the years between the world wars. In 1927, three sisters, the Wynne sisters, started a small handspun, hand-dyed, hand-woven industry in Avoca, Co. Wicklow. They used dyes made from the flora found on the mountains in the area. They produced rugs, stoles and some tweeds. Their work was a very high quality in terms of both colour and the lightness of material.

The Irish Homespun Society was formed in 1936. Its primary aim was to develop the homespun industry, especially in Irish-speaking areas. It was closely linked with the "Country Workers". This began as a sales depot in Dublin, set up to help weavers in isolated areas sell their work, and it was established prior to the Irish Homespun Society. A report made in 1948 tells of the position of hand-weaving immediately after the Second World War. It stated that the three most important homespun producing districts in Ireland at the time were Dunleavey, Co. Donegal, Newport, Co . Mayo, and Erris, Co. Mayo. "In Dunleavey there are thirty households engaged on spinning for tweed and five weavers. Both spinning and weaving are part-time occupations with farming and household work. The usual size of a farm is 5½ acres arable land with 15½ mountain and bog".[7] Each family kept sheep and additional wool if required was bought at the Creeslough market. The Congested Districts Board tried to improve the quality of the wool by the introduction of the Cheriot ram. The climate however proved to be too harsh for the Cheviots in the area and many died. The wool to be used for spinning was first sorted and the roughest parts were discarded and sold. Dyeing was

done in the wool and the only vegetable dye used in any great quantity was the licken Parmelia Saxatilis (Crottle). This grew on rocks and was not very popular with the spinners as they had to go far into the mountains to get it in any quantity. Lily roots (yellow flag iris) were used with logswood and copperas in order to attain a black colour. The older spinners in the area had a knowledge of dyeing with indigo fixed with urine in the traditional manner. Aniline dyes were usually bought in Dungloe but since the war, all dyes were found to be unreliable. Before spinning, the wool must be teased, mixed, broken and carded. In Dunleavey the traditional "carding parties" were still being held and these formed the social life of the neighbourhood. Due to the war, oil for spinning was very scarce and margarine and parafin (sic) were often substituted. Spinning was carried out on the "Small" (treadle) wheel and this was used throughout Donegal. All weaving was done on shuttle looms. All five weavers in the Dunleavey area had their looms in a specially built outhouse and weaving conditions were good. The woven material was scoured with hot water and soap rinsed and then put out to dry. Due to the war-time soap shortage most of the scouring and finishing was done at Bates' mill in Dublin. Since 1943 all Donegal homespun, except that under licence, was sold through Gaeltarra Eireann, by Government order. The main aim of the Organisation was to provide employment in Irish-speaking districts and to prevent natives from leaving the area. They provided aid in the areas of marketing, organisation and design. Officials attended markets in the Dunleavey hall and the tweed was brought there to be weighed, measured and inspected. The price was then settled upon.

Most of Dunleavey tweed was in plain weave and brightly coloured. Dr. Gahan in her report stated that the production of genuine homespun had steadily declined owing to lack of incentive. The same price was given for homespun as for handwoven tweed with homespun weft and mill warp even though it took far longer to complete the former . Other factors, such as the tedium in preparing the wool for spinning and the preference weavers had for millspun warp as it was less likely to break, and being smoother it allowed the weft to be well beaten back, helped bring about the decline of the homespun industry in Dunleavey. Gaeltarra Eireann tried to overcome the problem of time involved in wool preparation by providing the spinners with ready rolls of wool for spinning for which the spinners pay 4/6 a lb. However, this was to no avail. They did not consider the financial rewards great enough for the work being done.

"The Newport spinning district stretches about ten miles westwards from Glenbest on the Newport river, and includes the villages of Buckagh, Shramore, Ardagh, Shraloggy. It runs along the foothills of the Nephin mountain range and much of it is marginal mountain. There are only ten households spinning for tweed in this area, and two weavers".[8] Here, both Blackface and Cheviot flocks were kept, and a small amount of lowland wool such as Border Leicester was bought at the Castlebar or Westport market to mix with the other. Fewer aniline dyes were used here than in Donegal as colours of Mayo tweeds were usually shades of brown and grey. Weavers worked on the fly shuttle type loom. Twill and herringbone were more popular in Mayo than plain weave. The tweed was retailed locally in short lengths. The people of Mayo were generally better off

and therefore not so dependent on earnings from weaving, unlike the Donegal weavers.

Erris, Co. Mayo, "is a district about ten miles square stretching north of Belmullet and Carrowmore lake to the sea. It includes the villages of Inver, Barnatra, Rossport, Stonefield, Caratigue, Porturlin and Portacloy". Most of the sheep here were Scottish Blackface with some Cheviot Blackface cross. The wool was not sorted to any great extent and the result was a coarse thread. Only the "large" wheel was used for spinning. There were seven weavers working in the area and most of them used the old hand-loom. They worked under very poor conditions. Most of the homespun produced was for home use only. No attempt was made to develop the homespun industry in Erris and it flourished only because of the poverty of the people. As well as in North Mayo, Donegal, Galway and Kerry, groups of spinners and weavers were found in other counties, notably in Sligo, Clare, Longford, Leitrim, Roscommon and Cavan. It was suggested that the annual output for sale of handwoven tweed in January 1946 came to 2,500 to 3000 yards of genuine homespun and 12,000 to 13,000 of homespun weft and mill warp. The demand for handwoven tweeds was so great that it was impossible to meet the demands. The handweaver thus gave way to the machine but not entirely.

The Wynne sisters, previously mentioned, paved the way for a new generation of weavers, a generation of craftsmen/designers who have come to light only in the past 30 years. This new movement of weavers learnt their craft, not from traditional transmission, as did their ancestors, but from study, personal experience and most of all experimentation.

Muriel Beckett is one such weaver (See illustration 11). She was born in Dublin. She studied at the Dun Laoire School of Art. Her interest in weaving did not surface until after the completion of her course. She then served an apprenticeship in a Dublin weaving studio. In 1973 she won the Irish Export Board Design Award Scholarship, thus, enabling her to study in Scandinavia. At present she has a studio at Marley Park Craft Centre, Rathfarnham. She weaves tapestries, floor rugs, roller blinds and cushions mainly on a made to order basis. One of her tapestries hangs in the Central Bank, Dame Street. The Marley Park Craft Centre was set up by Dublin County Council in co-operation with the Industrial Development Authority. The two hundred year old buildings have been renovated and in place re-built to provide workshops for various professional craftworkers.

Since 1967 the Industrial Development Authority has been helping handcraft industries, including the hand-weaving industry, to secure finance, suitable buildings and equipment. "The IDA gives special consideration to craft industry because:

(a) Ireland has a long tradition of craft skills which is worth developing;

ILLUSTRATION II

(b) A number of craft products which are produced in a "cottage industry" environment have penetrated world markets and are recognised internationally as Irish products e.g. lace, hand knits , handwoven fabrics and tweeds;

(c) Many of the craft products are distinctly Irish in design and reflect the country's heritage, e.g. Celtic designs in jewellery, stained glass, tapestries etc.

(d) A traditional craft may evolve into large industry with many jobs e.g. crystal glass;

(e) Craft production provides worthwhile and satisfying jobs which are particularly beneficial in the smaller towns".[9]

Other craft centres set up by the IDA are at Strokestown, Co. Roscommon, and Roundstone, Co. Galway, and the IDA continues to carry out investigations into the feasibility of craft centres in other locations. The IDA also give grants of up to 100% to cover:-

(a) the cost of the time spent by the craftsmen and women in training apprentices,

(b) the attendance of apprentices at special courses for crafts which AnCO (The Industrial Training Authority) will organise,

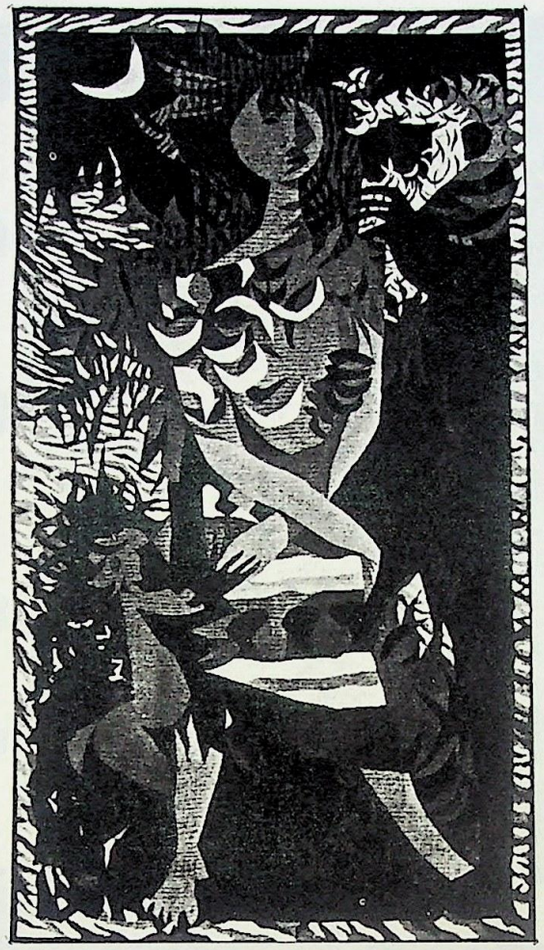
(c) attendance by master craftsmen at courses aimed at up-grading their skills.[10]

Another project set up by the IDA is a post-graduate training centre at Kilworth, Co. Cork, which was officially opened in November 1981. Here, a number of graduates from the Regional Technical Colleges and the National College of Art and Design are placed in a production environment for nine months.[11] The subjects studied include accounts, costing, production methods, marketing, business organisation and other aspects of commerce. The IDA also provides capital grants up to a maximum of 45% (non-designated areas) and 60% (designated areas) towards expenditure on qualifying fixed assets i.e. site, buildings and new equipment (See Diagram 2) Rent subsidy grants towards the reduction of factory rents are also available. Training grants of up to 100% are available where master craftsmen recruit trainees.

The Crafts Council of Ireland is State-aided through the Industrial Development Authority. It was initiated in 1971 by the Royal Dublin Society and it is a voluntary organisation. Its members are organisations of craftsmen and semi-state bodies with a particular craft relevance. Through its members, the Council has close connections with the State Agencies which offer grants or special services of relevance to the craftsmen. The Irish Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers is among its members. Among the services which the Council provides is the organisation of Trade Fairs, seminars, exhibitions and promotions. Among the semi-state bodies whose services are available to craftsmen are Kilkenny Design Workshops, who provide a design and development service.[12] Bord Failte Eireann help in the marketing of craft goods through its publication of Tourist Guides. Coras Trachtala provide services to those who wish to export goods.

In Ireland, during the last thirty years, artists such as Louis le Brocquy and Patrick Scott have developed an interest in tapestry -making. Louis le Brocquy, in an interview with Harriet Cooke told how tapestry was something he had "rather stumbled into by accident".[13] His first contact with tapestry-making came in 1948, when the Edinburgh Tapestry Weavers, invited a number of painters working in London to design tapestries. Among the artists were Jantel Adler, Stanley Spencer, Grahm Sutherland and le Brocquy. Le Brocquy was later to continue his work in the medium . His first tapestry followed the theme of his paintings at the time. It was called "Travellers 1948" (See illustration 12), and was inspired by the travelling people of Ireland. It depicts a woman and a young child with an old faun-like figure of a man. Le Brocquy was very much influenced by Picasso as is seen by the delineation of the figures. Lurcat also made a mark on le Brocquy's work which is suggested by the use of surface patterns of leaves and shadow in "Travellers 1948". His second tapestry "Garlanded Goat" was woven in 1949/50 and is one of his best known (See illustration 13). "The goat is the embodiment of the pagan leering King Puck, hero of the ancient Puck Fair at Killorglin, Co. Kerry."[14] Lurcat's influence is also evident in this work. In 1951, art collector, Mrs. S.H. Stead-Ellis, commissioned three tapestries on the theme of the Garden of Eden, "Adam and Eve in the Garden", "Eden" and "Cherub" suitable for screen, rug and firescreen. The theme was treated in a traditional manner, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil appearing as in traditional French medieval tapestry with birds and butterflies among its leaves but with the addition of a touch of surrealism i.e. the tree of knowledge (See illustration 14). This tapestry relates closely to his

ILLUSTRATION 12



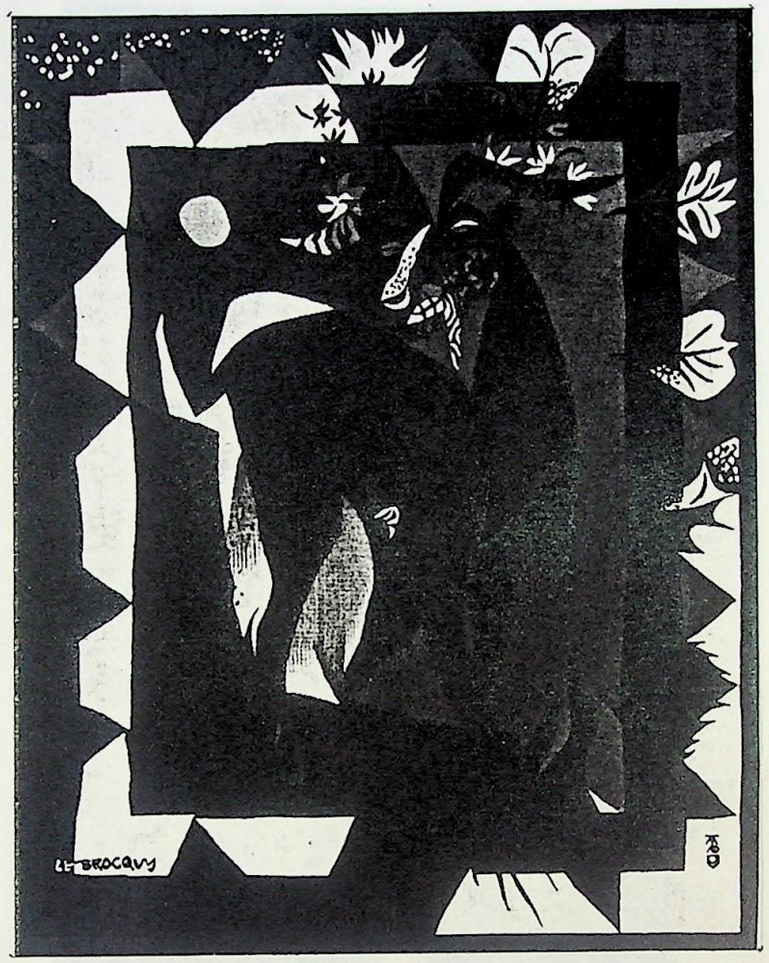
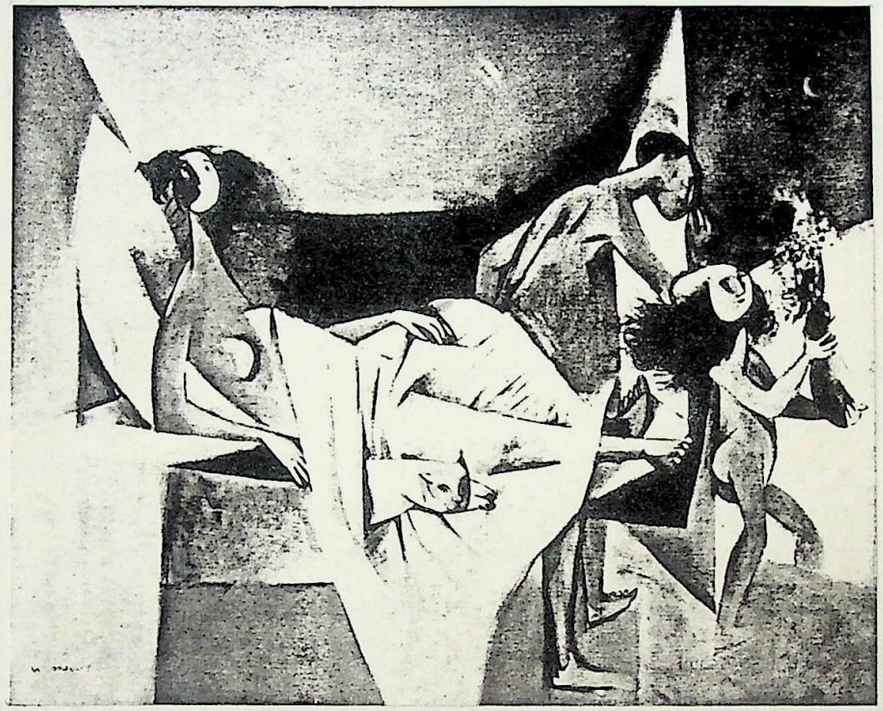

LE BROCQUY
KRD

ILLUSTRATION 14

paintings of the period, in particular those of the figure e.g. Indoors, Outdoors 1951, oil on canvas (See illustration 15). "Eden" is woven in vibrant colours. The leaves of the Tree of Knowledge mingle with the tears of Adam and Eve and the "fatal apple is discarded bitten and segmented".[15] In "Cherub" the smallest of the 3 tapestries, the angle suggests disaster rather than heavenly glory, displaying in its palm a prophetic stigmata. "Sol y sombra", (Sun and shadow), is the last of le Brocquy's earlier tapestries. A visit to Spain and the light and shadows experienced there inspired him to design this tapestry.

In le Brocquy's latter tapestries, the Celtic head image, used throughout Europe and Ireland and extending into the Christian era, is used. "In pre-Christian times the savage aspect of the head-cult was celebrated in epic tales, as the Tain."[16] Le Brocquy's involvement in the work of book illustrations for the Tain gave rise to this new burst of creative activity in the medium of tapestry-making and painting. His feelings and ideas about man's existence centres on the image of the head and the expression of the isolation of early man. The architects Scott, Tallon & Walker commissioned the first Tain tapestry for P.J. Carroll & Co. 's cigarette factory in Dundalk, Co . Louth. Tain, is an Irish word meaning a hosting or gathering of a large crowd for a raid. The tapestry consists of multi-coloured heads facing the spectator. The heads retain the concept of isolation and individuality, each head having no relationship with its neighbour. Le Brocquy has said "In this tapestry I have tried to produce a sort of group or mass emergence of human presence, features uncertain - merely shadowed blobs or patches - but vaguely analogous perhaps in terms of woven colour to the weathered, enduring stone bossheads

ILLUSTRATION 15



of Clonfert or Entremont - or of Dysert O'Dea..... This poses a difficult pictorial problem. Pictorially a mass of individuals, conscious of each other, implies incident - better left to photography perhaps. In Clonfert each individual head is conscious only of the viewer vertically facing it. This I think is the secret of their mass regard. Each head is self-contained, finally a lump of presence. No exchange or incident takes place between their multiplied features".[17]
Le Brocquy designed a series of six smaller Tain tapestries with very similar patterns, consisting of irregular oval heads (See illustration 16). The Tain tapestries were woven in Aubusson, by Tabard Freres et Soeurs, as were the other tapestries previously mentioned. Only two of Le Brocquy's tapestries were woven at the V'soske Joyce hand-looms at Oughterard, Co. Galway.

Patrick Scott has also used tapestry as an art form. In the early sixties tapestry developed concurrently with his painting. He does not translate his style of painting directly to the woven surface but instead uses the sculptural possibilities of relief inherent in the technique. Two of his most spectacular works may be seen in the Bank of Ireland Headquarters in Baggot Street. These were commissioned by the architect Ronald Tallon. Eroica is brilliantly coloured, and the design suggests a portion of something larger which continues beyond the work. This work is closely linked to ancient Irish art as seen by the pre-occupation with the circle and linear surface decoration (See illustration 17). His second tapestry Blaze, 17 ft x 21 ft "combines all the elements of Patrick Scott's art: brilliant colour which changes most

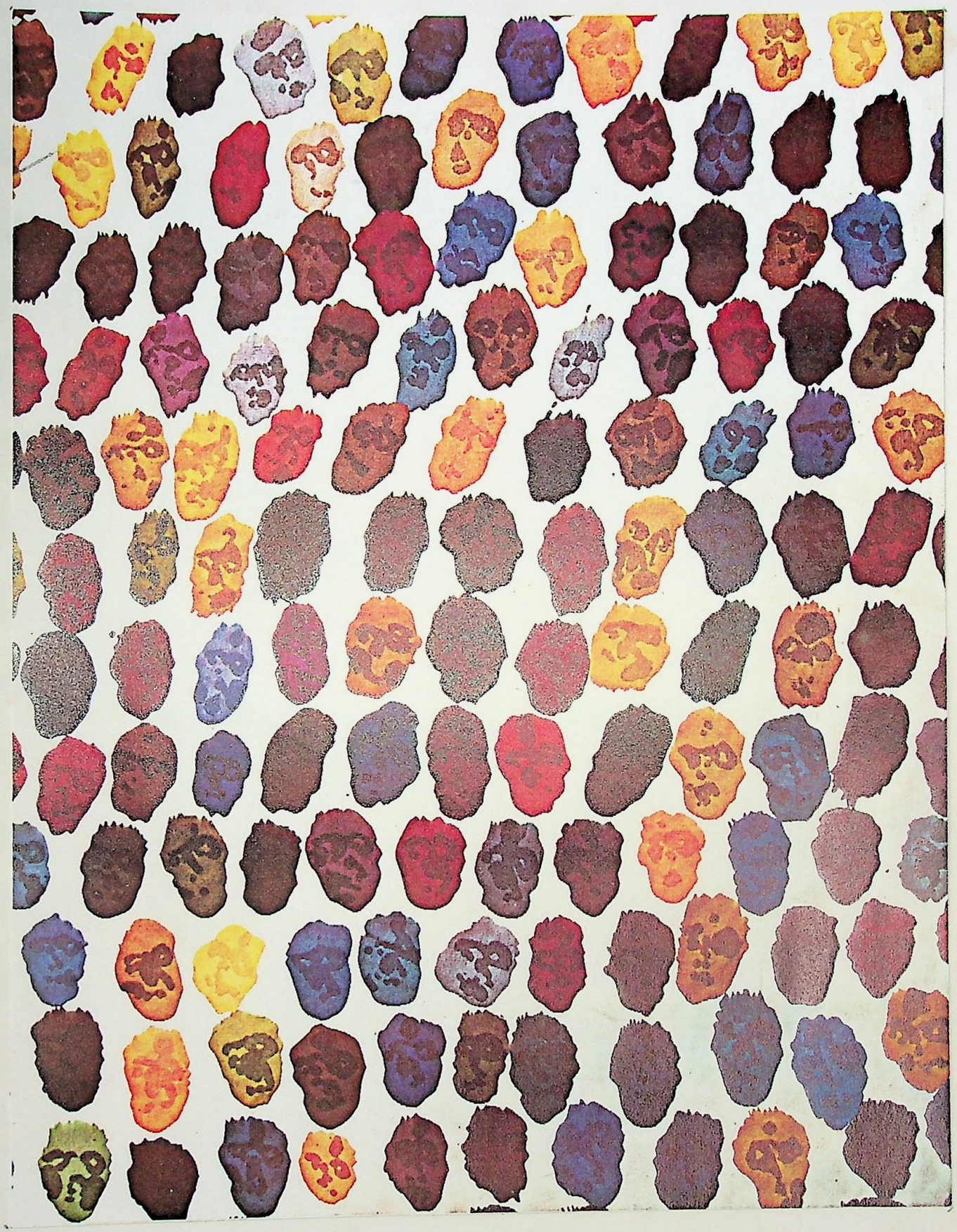
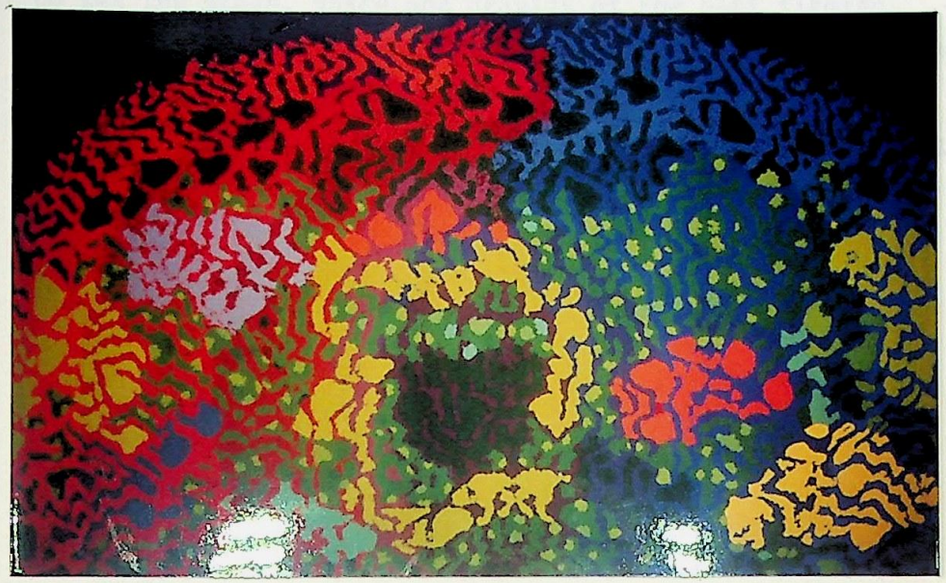
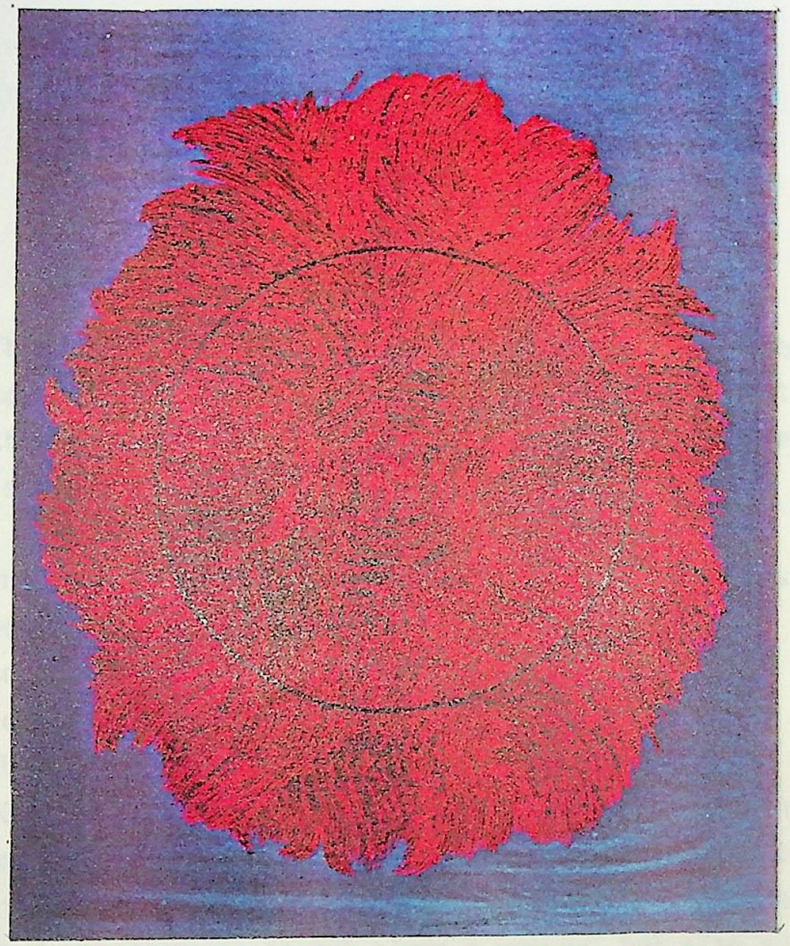


ILLUSTRATION 17



subtly inside the inner circle of his ever-recurring sphere, the sphere contrived by a simple line-break in the weaving to set the scale, space and gravity of the vast flaming sun-device, the whole work as simple, brilliant and dazzling as the sun, with the infinitely complex linear pattern derived from the intimacy of his own skin."[18] (See illustration 18). Both tapestries were woven at Aubusson, France. However, other tapestries by Scott have been woven at the V'soske Joyce carpet handlooms in Co. Galway.

ILLUSTRATION 18



CONCLUSION

Throughout the history of hand-weaving basic techniques have changed little. The looms are more refined but the principle remains the same. All that has changes is the position held by weaving in people's lives.

The importance of weaving in early Irish society has been stressed. The effect of the woollen trade's near-destruction which brought poverty to many has been mentioned as has the attempt at revitalising the hand-weaving industry in the 19th Century and 20th Century in order to ameliorate living conditions in the poorer rural areas. Today however, the position of hand-weaving and tapestry-making has changes. The hand-weaver today is not alone a weaver, but also a craftsman / designer / artist. Weavers like Muriel Beckett have developed further the skills of their

ancestors through experimentation and study. Artists such as Louis le Brocquy and Patrick Scott have recognised the potential of tapestry-making as an art form and have designed many works for the medium. Although they do not weave the works themselves , they are familiar with the techniques involved and exploit them to the fullest. They no longer conform to the traditional format of tapestry-making, seen in the Van Beaver tapestries, but instead they adopt an individual style of personal expression which is a characteristic of other art forms today.

Despite the oscillating success of tapestry-making and hand-weaving in the past, the future definitely seems hopeful.

FOOTNOTES

1. The Irish Homestead, 1897
2. T.W. Rolleston, The South Donegal Hand-weaving Industry The Irish Homestead, 1897
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. The Woollen Industry in Ireland, Report by the Department for Agriculture and Technical Institution in Ireland (1902)
6. Liam Millar, Dun Emer Prospectur, Winter 1903
7. Report by Dr. Gahon, 1948
8. Ibid.
9. A Program for Craft Development. Pub. IDA
10. Ibid.
11. Crafts Council of Ireland, Newsletter, Christmas 1981
12. Design and development services: textiles. Pub. Kilkenny Design Workshops Ltd.
13. Cooke, H. The Irish Times, 25th May 1973
14. Walker, D. "Louis le Brocquy". Pub. Ward River Press, 1981 p. 29
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid. pp 51-52
18. Walker D., Patrick Scott Catalogue. The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College, Dublin.

APPENDIX I

"We the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, in Parliament assembled, do humbly represent to your Majesty that the growing manufacture of cloth in Ireland, both by the cheapness of all sorts of necessities of life and goodness of material for making all manner of cloth, doth invite your Subjects of England, with their families and servants, to leave their habitations and settle there, to the increase of the woollen manufacture in Ireland, which makes your loyal subjects in this Kingdom very apprehensive that the further growth of it may greatly prejudice the said manufacture here by which the trade of this nation and the value of hands will very much decrease and the numbers of your people be much lessened here; wherefore we do most humbly beseech your most sacred Majesty that your Majesty would be pleased in the most public and effectual way that maybe to declare to all your subjects of Ireland that the growth and increase of the woollen manufacture there hath long been and ever will be looked upon with great jealousy by all your subjects of this Kingdom; and, if not timely remedied, may occasion very strict laws, totally to prohibit and suppress the same and on the other hand, if they turn their industry and still to the settling and improving of the linen manufacture, for which generally the lands of that Kingdom are very proper, they shall receive all countenance favour and protection from your Royal influence, for the encouragement and promoting the said linen manufacture to all the advantage and profit that that Kingdom can be capable of".

APPENDIX 2

"After 24th June, 1699 none shall directly or indirectly export , transport, ship etc. or cause to be exported etc. from the Kingdom of Ireland into any foreign realm, states, dominions or places whatever any of the wool, woolfels, shortlings, mortlings, woolflocks, worsteds, woollen yarn, cloth, serges, bags , jerseys, caps, friezes, druggets, shalloons, or any other drapery stuffs or woollen manufacture whatsoever made or mixed up with wool or woolflock or shall directly or indirectly load or cause to be laden upon any horse, cart or any other carriage or load or lay on board in any ship or vessel in any port or ports within or belonging to the said Kingdom of Ireland or out of any other ports etc. or with the intent that any should export the same out of the said Kingdom of Ireland into any other port etc."

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