

GRAPHIC DESIGN IN IRELAND DURING THE CELTIC REVIVAL

-and during the 19th-century revival period.

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Cover illustration- tailpiece from The Dublin Magazine January 1924, probably by Art O'Murnaghan.



1. INTRODUCTION

Ireland in the 19th-century went through a unique cultural rebirth and revival, manifested in both literature and the arts. The great uncovering of the past carried out by the 'antiquarians' and scholars of the early century provided a wealth of new inspiration. This cultural revival was intertwined with a new nationalism, and the two together began to create a new sense of national identity in Ireland which led ultimately to the demand for, and achievement of, political independence. The whole movement was, in fact, a complex mix of nationalism, a growth in the science of archaeology together with dramatic new finds in the mid-19th-century, a Europe-wide 'Gothic' revivalism, and a general look back at Irish History.

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In the arts this rebirth consisted, at first, of a revival of emblems and symbols from the past, together with the generation of new ones consisting of recently revealed historical objects and artifacts. This revivalism led finally to the Celtic Revival, which made use of the decorative style from the ancient manuscripts and the high crosses.

This essay will look at how both parts of this 'rediscovery', the earlier phase and the 'Celtic' one, were manifested in the graphic arts, and especially in popular graphics. What will be revealed is the progression in graphic design of two aspects of the revival. One is the development of an iconography for the expression of national identity, the other a movement in design and decoration.

Under the heading 'graphic design' I include the design of journals,

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books, posters, stamps, advertising, trademarks, type and calligraphy. I am also interested in the illustration of the period. In this discussion I look mainly at the journals, since these are likly to contain examples of many of the items listed above.

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In looking at the graphic arts it must be noted that under this heading fall two separate things. The first of these is design for a popular audience. The second is a more specialised sort of design which may be made for sale in its own right. This distinction isn't absolute and both areas overlap, as will be seen during the revival period.

The period of the Celtic Revival, and of the rediscovery of Ireland's cultural history which led up to it, has been quite well covered by Jeanne Sheehy in The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past-The Celtic Revival 1830-1930. Her survey is augmented by Paul Larmour's Celtic Ornament, which contains material not covered by Sheehy. But these two are the only works available on the period, and much still remains to be done in uncovering this part of the history of design. Neither writer looks in detail at the developments in graphic design which parallel those in the other applied arts of the period.

With Sheehy, I shall separate the revival, which she dates from 1830-1930, into two parts. By the 'early revival' I shall be referring to the ressurgence of Irish national consciousness which began in the early 19th-century and led to the new iconography, or the 'emblems'. By 'Celtic Revival' I am referring to the second phase of the revival, characterised by a return to the decorative style of the 'Golden Age' of Irish Christianity.

The term 'Celtic' is a bit of a misnomer! What was revived during the movements second phase was the early Christian tradition, mainly from the ancient manuscripts like the Book of Kells. Only in the 20th-century did artists and designers refer to earlier 'pagan' artifacts and so perhaps to a truely 'Celtic' tradition, such as the spirals and lozenges of Newgrange.

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In this essay I can't give a completely comprehensive account of what happened in graphic design in Ireland during the revival, but I've tried to form a picture of the progress of the revival, and to point out the interesting questions this throws up.



2 BACKGROUND

Before going on to look at the examples, some background to what appears in the publications is necessary. Three aspects of the revival need a little further explanation. The first of these is the appearance, from about 1830 on, of the new iconography, of the 'emblems'. The second that there was a wealth of scholarly source material around from the mid-century on to inspire, and provide models for, the Celtic Revival. The third is that developments in the other applied arts generally preceded the progress of the revival as seen in the graphic arts.

The new sense of political identity created by such factors as the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829, and the Repeal Movement which arose after the Act of Union in 1801, led to a demand for literature and printed matter such as posters and membership cards. This fact created the need for, or at least <u>an opening</u> for, the adoption or creation of new symbols and images.

Some of the symbols which were adopted had been in use before. Other were objects of an historical nature which were felt to symbolise what was good about Ireland's past. The four most popular were, as Jeanne Sheehy remarks, the shamrock and harp, which had both been in use before, and the wolfhound and round tower, which were newly adopted. A brief account of the background to each will be interesting.

The shamrock first appears in Tudor times and was believedby the English to have been part of the native Irish diet! From an early time it had been worn on St.Patrick's day and had come, without

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historical evidence, to be associated with St.Patrick own activities. By the 1798 uprisings, Liam de Paor notes in a recent article in <u>The Irish Times</u>, the shamrock, together with the colour green, had become firmly established as symbolic of the nation. An 1801 medal to celebrate the union has an oak entwined with shamrockin this case the oak standing for England, though, as we'll see, it was also put forward as a suitable symbol for Ireland, later.

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Another common symbol was the harp. In the 18th-century it was often, says Sheehy, found as a symbol for Ireland - with a female figure representing Erin forming one side. The favourite model for the harp during the 19th-century was 'Brian Boru's' harp in Trinity College. In fact this harp dates from somewhere between the 13th and the 16tcenturies, while Brian Boru died in 1014! At any rate, the harp, as we'll see, was a very popular motif during the revival, and from the 1850's on there was a fashion for brooches in the design.

The wolfhound was one of the newly created symbols. Peculiar to Ireland, but valued throughout Europe, it was a large dog used for hunting wolves and deer, and had been celebrated in the ancient stories of Fionn anf Oisin. In fact, were it not for the revival the breed might have become extinct, for it had almost died out by the early 19th-century and it has been claimed that it did disappear in the mid-century. Shortly after that it was rebred from whatever vestiges remained, and crossed with the Scottish deerhound! The hound appeared as an 'emblem' or symbol often during the revival, not so much on its own, according to Sheehy, but accompanying the figure of Erin, or in a group with other symbols.



Finally, one of the most interesting of the 'emblems', in terms of its background, is the round tower. It too, was peculiar to Ireland, but what really seems to have made it pipular was the fact that it was <u>mysterious</u>! A great debate arose as to its origins and function and numerous explanations were put foreward, from that the towers were of Phoenician construction or built by African sea pirates , to that they might be phallic symbols! It was not until George Petrie presented a paper on the subject to the Royal Irish Academy in 1833 that the towers were given their present identity as the remains of early refuges for monks and their treasures during Viking raids. It's interesting to speculate about the significance the motif must have had for the general public when it was first presented to them as a symbol in the 1830's, for Petries paper was not published till the '40's.

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The second point to bear in mind is that there was a wealth of scholarly reference works from which the Celtic Revival artists could draw, and this is stressed by Paul Larmour, who mentions in particular Henry O'Neill's <u>Fine Arts and Civilization of Ireland</u>, 1863, which, he says, was the first easily available book to concentrate solely on early Irish art. Other works were also available and we must remember that revival artists did not always go back to primary sources for their references. This may partially account for a certain stiffness in some of the work

Our third remark is that the progress of the revival in graphics does not quite indicate just how widespread both phases were in the other applied arts. But we can still get a good picture of the revival's stages from our look at its graphic manifestation. 3. THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL

The Dublin Penny Journal was more-or-less the spark which set off the early revival. It's worth looking at now because in it we can see all the themes of the revival's first phase being laid out. In the immaginative compositions which appeared on the frontispieces to the bound volumes, and occasionally in the journal itself, we see the emblems- the harp and shamrock, wolfhound and round tower- which were to become so popular. Even more theme-setting is the journal's vivid presentation of the various historical objects which were together to form the basis of the new iconography, and to provide many of the motifs used by the applied arts in the mid-19th-century.

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Published in Dublin by the Protestant clergyman Caesar Otway, the journal had regular contributions from the antiquarians George Petrie, John O'Donovan, and Eugene O'Curry. It appeared each Saturday from the 30th June 1832 for four years. A note inside says that it was 'conducted' by P.Dixon Hardy of 3, Cecilia Street. Another, under the masthead, would seem to suggest that the printer was J.S.Fold of 5, Bachelor's Walk. Bound volumes of the year's editions cost "5s. in Twelve Monthly Parts, and 6s.6d. bound in cloth", and, interestingly, were available from wholesalers in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, New York, Philadephia, Boston, and Paris.

The preface to the first year's volume states that the journal aims to bring to "the common people" a taste of the history, biography, poetry, antiquities, natural history, legends, and traditions of the country, without recourse to politics and polemics, of which, it says, the common people had plenty. From this statement of intent, and



from a note at the end of the second issue which says that the first volume had sold 15,000 copies within four days, we must conclude that the magazine did have quite a wide popular market. It was never as popular as that other vehicle for spreading the revival, the Young Irelander's <u>The Nation</u>, ten years later. But it must have had a fair amount of diseminating influence, none-theless.

A note on production by the editor in the first issue vows that the journal will use "Irish paper, Irish printing and Irish woodcuts by the Irishman, Clayton". The format was simple. The pages were slightly longer and narrower than the modern A4 size. The small masthead was set in capitals of a typeface like 'Century', with a comma after 'Journal'. Underneath was an illustration of a notable scene from somewhere in Ireland- usually architectural, occasionally a 'natural wonder'. The illustration and masthead together took up roughly half of the front page, with the size of illustration varying from issue to issue. (illus.l)

Below this the text was divided into two columns, with a thin rule between them. The text was set in a 'Press Roman' style typefacein about 8-point with 2-point leading. There were frequent notes, set smaller at the bottom of the pages. Paragraphs were indented and there were eight pages per issue.

While the journal was pleasantly presented, as we can see from the illustration above, there is no evidence of any conscious 'design' in its typography or layout, let alone any distinctly Irish flavour. I think that it must be viewed as a vehicle for the development

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THE PENN JOURNAL. DUBLIN

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

J. S. FOLDS, 56, GREAT STRAND-STREET.

No. 23. Vol. 1.

THE ROUND TOWER OF SWORDS.

THE ancient town of Swords, situated in the barony of Coolock, about seven miles from the metropolis, though now reduced to an insignificant village, is remarkable for its picturesque features, its ruins, and its historical recollections. Its situation historical reconections. Its situation is pleasing and romantic, being placed on the steep banks of a small and rapid river, and though its general appearance indicates but little of prosperity or happiness, its very ruins and decay, give it, at least to the antiquary and the painter, a no com-mon interest.

Like most of our ancient towns Swords appears to be of ecclesiastical origin. A sumptious monastery was founded here in the year 512, by the great St. Columb, who appointed St. Finian Lobair, or the leper, as its abbot, and to whom he gave a missal, or copy of the gospels, written by him-pelf. St. Finian died before the close of the sixth century. In course of time this monastery became possessed of considerable wealth, and the town rose into much importance. It contained within its precinets, in addi-tion to St. Columb's church, four other chapels, and nine exterior chapels subservient to the mother church. Hence on the institution of the collegiate church of St. Patrick, it ranked as the first of the thirteen canonries attached to that cathedral by archbishop Comin, and was subsequently known by the appellation of "the golden prebend." There was also a nunnery here, the origin of which is unknown. To this monastery the bodies of the

monarch Brian Boru, and his son Morogh, were conveyed in solemn procession by the monks, after the memorable battle of Clontarf, and after remaining a night, were carried to the

abbey of Duleck, and committed to the care of the monks

abbey of Duleek, and committed to the care of the monks of St. Cianan, by whom they were conveyed to Armagh. Swords was burnt and plundered frequently, as well by the native princes, as by the Danes, who set the unholy example. By the latter it was reduced to ashes in the years 1012, and 1016, and by the former in the years 1035 and 1135. On this last occasion the aggressor, Conor O'Melaghlin, king of Meath, was slain by the men of Lusk. Its final calamity of this kind occurred in the event 1166. year 1166. Here it was that the first Irish army of the Pale assem-

bled on the 9th of November, 1641, preparatory to that hightful civil war which caused such calamities to the country; and here they were defeated and put to the rout by the forces under Sir Charles Coote, on the 10th of fanuary following, when he beat them from their fortifications and killed two hundred of them, without any matetal loss, except that of Sir Lorenzo Carey, second son of Lord Falkland, who fell in the engagement. Of the numerous ecclesiastical edifices for which Swords

of the numerous ecclesistical currents for which Swords and anciently distinguished, the only remains now exist-ing are those represented in the prefixed engraving—for the eastle, though said to have been the residence of the schöshop of Dublin can hardly be included under this



DECEMBER 1, 1892.

Lound Jourr-Swords

denomination. These consist of a fine and lofty round tower, coeval with the foundation of the original monastery, and the abbey beliry, a square building of the fourteenth or fitteenth century. The former is seventy-three feet high, fifty-two feet in circumference, and the walls four feet thick. It contained five stories, or floors. Its pre-sent entrance which is level with the ground, is of modern construction, as well as the roof and upper story : what appears to have been the original doorway is twenty feet from the ground, and but four feet high. Respecting the uses of those singular ancient buildings, we deem it improper to express any opinion, till the Royal Irish Acade-my shall have announced its decision on the prize essays on this subject, now under its consideration.

These two towers with the adjacent church, form a picturesque and uncommon architectural group; but the church which is of modern erection, having been completed in the year 1818, though imposing in its general appearance, is but a spurious and jejune imitation of the pointed or gothic style of architecture, and such as might have been expected from minds so wanting in good taste and feeling as those which permitted the removal of the beautiful ruins of the ancient abbey to erect it on their site. Similar acts of wanton destruction are now unfortunat

1. The Dublin Penny Journal Vol.I. p.177 - format and illustration of the round tower at Swords.

THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

month sence, a young lady, Miss Rafferty by name, fell into 1 the same watherfall, and was nigh hand drownded; and indeed would be to this day, but for a young man that jumped in afther her; indeed a smart slip iv a young man he was; he was out o' Francis-street, I hear, and coorted her sence. and they wor married, I'm given te undherstand; and indeed a purty couple they wor.) Well, as I said, afther flutterin over the wood a little bit, to plaze herself, the coose flew down and lit at the fut o' the king, as fresh as a daisy, afther fyin' roun' his dominions, just as if she hadnt flew three perch. Well, my dear, it was a beautiful sight to see the king standia' with his mouth open, lookin' at his poor ould goose flyin' as light as a lark, and betther nor ever she was; and when she lit at his fut, he patted her an' the head, and "ma rourneen,' says he, 'but you are the darlint o' the world."

"" And what do you say to me,' says Saint Kavin, 'for makin' her the like?" 'I say,' says the king, 'that nothin' bates the art o' man barrin' the bees.' And do you say no more nor that?' says St. Kuvin. 'And that I'm behoulden to you,' says the king. . But will you give me all the ground the goose flewn over ?' says St. Kavin. "I will," says King **O'Toole**, 'and you're welkim to it, 'anys he, 'though it's the last arre I have to give.' 'It's well for you, 'says St. Kavin, mighty sharp, 'for if you did'nt say that word, the devil re-cease the bit o' your goose id ever fly again?' says St. Kavin,

" Well, whin the king was as good as his word, St. Kavin was plazed with him, and says he, King O'Toole, you're a decent man, I only came here to they you. You don't know me,' says he, 'I'm deceavin' you all out, I'm not myself at all !" "Blur-an-agers thin," says the king, "if you are not yourself, who are you? ' I'm Saint Kavin,' said the saint, blessin' himself. ' Oh, queen iv heaven,' says the king, makin' the crass betune his eyes, and fallin' down on his knees before the saint, 'is it the great Saint Kavin,' says he, 'that I've been discoorsin' all this time, without knowing it,' says he, all as one as if he was a lump it a gassoon? and so you're a saipt,' says the king. 'I am,' says Saint Kavin, 'the greatest of all the saints!' For Saint Kavin, you must know, Sir,' said Joe, ' is counted the greatest of all the saints, bekase he went to school with the prophet Jeremiah.

"Well, my dear that's the way that the place came all at wanst into the hands of Saint Kavin; for the goose flewn round every individyal acre o' King O'Toole's property, bein' let into the saycret by St. Kavin, who was mighty cute; and the king had his goose as good as new, and the saint supported him, afther he came into his property, until the day av his death; and when he was gone. Saint Kavin gave him an illigant wake and a beautiful berrin;' and more betoken, he said! mass for his soul, an' tuk care av his goose."

IRISH MINSTRELSY.

The Irish are enthusiastically attached to every thing connected with their native land. We believe that many who do not understand the characters of the Irish tongue will yet he glad to see them in our periodical, and if this department of our labours be approved, we will continue, from time to time, to present the most choice of the bardic remains of Ireland to our readers.

The aptitude of the Itish language for lyric poetry has been often observed. The poetry of many of our songs is indeed already music without the aid of a tune. The harmony and cadence of the Scottish dialect of the English tongue have fung peculiar charms round the rural poetry of Scotland, and the language of the Italians has been deservedly celebrated for imparting these qualities to their admired productions. But let the Irish reader compare with any of them the following version of MOLLY A STORE.

maine chuiste.

I Mhappe Chupple! a bhlath na pinne, Zhejz an ojnjeh n-jan on Nain, beul jy bjone ná 'n chuach am bile,

" raz tu me-j a' n-janznooh ban : Nj lejn bamh cojngeal, clan na pujneann.

Ujabh bo mhely Ze, a në bheaz maa: Stajo-bhean mhajjeach. mheuduigh an mainz.

Och! zan d'fallajng ljom zola

Shjabhal me apdach, a'r zo Cjonnerajle, To Oposchead-ajthe, a'r ash asr a hir,

30 Ceatingulach azur zo Oun-Dattpujec,

Sambuji Mhappe nj phacajoh me:

Copposite and an Cachpaph bana,

Manerbluazi zalloa thojo fa'n mnaoj; Má D'imehizh zu, Mhájne, zo bh-rilioh zu rlan,

'S zo n-deanfadh do rzajle rolur zan znjas

'S j Majne zo dejminjn, an jolannda byeazi leinbh,

Ir reimhjohe 'r ir deire d'a bh-ruil 1-Fuzhal;

a pjob man an lile, a ruil man an z-chiordal. il znuadh ir deinze 'na nor d'a bhneazhacht Dochrugnjohe na chujnne, a'r az-chujnnjuzhami ujle.

Ma'n mhon an cumar a z-cun an razhant. Nj ljajzbearradh an appajnz, ata dal tpjes tappad.

deht pojzjn micala o'd bheilin tajr, tlaj2.

TRANSLATION.

Oh! Mary dear! bright peerless flower,

- Pride of the plains of Nair,
- Behold me droop through each dull hour, In soul-consuming care.
- In friends-in wine-where joy was found-
- No joy I now can see ; But still while pleasure reigns around,
- I sigh-and think of thee.

The enckoo's notes Hove to hear,

When summer warms the skies ; When fresh the banks and brakes appear, And flowers around us rise : That blithe bird sings her song so clear, And she sings where the sun-beams shine-

Her voice is sweet-but Mary dear, Not half so sweet as thine.

From town to town I've idly strayed, I've wandered many a mile ; I've met with many a blooming maid, And own'd her charms the while : I've gazed on some that then seem'd fair, But when thy looks I see, I find there's none that can compare, My Mary, dear, with thee !

Hardiman's Irish Minster

-----TO OUR READIRS.

Our First Number is not so varied in its contents as vie wished it to be, and as it is in our power to make it : yet we present it as a specimen of what we can do, leaving it to the public to decide on what we will do. We would not vain boast, neither would we recklessly promise; but we may inpermitted to say this much, that we are neither ashanied of our handiwork, nor afraid of keeping it up. It is an Irish attdertaking altogether-Irish paper-Irish printing, the wood-cut was done expressly for this number by an Irishman Cristian and the tribulation of tribulation of the tribulation of the tribulation of the tribulation of tribulation of the tribulation of tribulation of the tribulation of the tribulation of tribulation CLAYTON -- and we therefore claim Irish support. The experient of producing such a periodical is great; but very moderate profits will suffice us, if our countrymen only second our endeavours to wipe off the stigma which has, we do trust false: been adized to Irish spirit and to Irish literature.

DUBLIN:

Printed and Published by JOHN S. FOLDS, 5, Bachelor's Walls ;

Sold by all Booksellers in Ireland.
In Liverpool by Wilner and Smith; in Manchester by Wheeler; is Birmingham by Abrake; in Ediphurgh by Messrs, Chambers and R. Grant and Son, in Glasgow by Niven, Jun-and in London by Joseph Robius, Bride Court, Fleet-street,

2. The Dublin Penny Journal Vol.I. p.8 - example of a Gaelic typeface.

of the new national consciousness, rather than as an example of early revival design. Indeed, as we'll see later, there seems to have been no conscious development of graphic design, as a whole, in Ireland during the entire revival period. Illumination and illustration were the only branches of the art which got serious attention. It is interesting to contrast this lack of penetration with the great surge of energy which came from the Gothic Revival, the Arts and Crafts movement and the William Morris school in England, over the same period.

But there was one factor at play which by its very nature demanded that typography, at least, be adverted to if not explored. This was the revival of interest in the Irish language. We shall look at this again later, but it's worth looking, in passing, at Irish as it appeared in the Dublin Penny Journal.

Not only had the antiquarians and their contemporaries looked back at Ireland's great archaeological treasures, they had also looked at the music, story-telling and customs of the Irish speaking population. Many had learned Irish, and so it is not surprising that the journal, catering for, and helping to arouse, this new interest, should wish to publish material in the native tongue.

In the very first issue, on page 8, is a short article on 'Irish Minstrelsy'. In it there appears an Irish language version of the ballad 'Molly a Store' - 'Maire Chuisle' (illus.2). The text was, presumably, set in an existing Gaelic typeface. It must be said that the setting actually looks as if it had been specially engraved in an Irish script-hand. The characters look irregular and this effect

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is strengthened by a the fact that they are unevenly aligned, each having been drawn on a different axis. The letter-spacing is also irregular, suggesting that there was no attempt to co-ordinate the sizes of the individual characters.

Still, the general feeling is of a nice enough script-hand, though one which must have been difficult to read due to the long, thin descenders, particularily in the lower case 'i'. The ideosyncratic breaking-up of the characters, especially noticeable in the capital 'N', can't have helped either. Interesting, too, that the 'seimhiu', or 'dot' accent, is replaced here by the lower case 'h', though there is a 'fada'.

This Gaelic typeface was used for all Irish text appearing in the journal's four volumes. If it was representative of the typefaces available for setting of the Irish language during the 19th-century, then clearly there were going to be problems as the revival took hold. And so there were, as we shall see later!

The range of material.

Because the Dublin Penny Journal was so instrumental in spreading the revival, through its content rather than its design, we must look now at this.



The range of material carried in the journal is impressive, especially by modern standards. The first issue had articles on the history of the city of Dublin, the Age of Brass, Agriculture, the Zoological Society of Dublin, Legends and Stories of Ireland, and Irish Minstrelsy. These articles were written by scholars, but in an







THE DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL, FUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY. MARCH 23, 1833.

No. 39, Vol. 1.

J. S. FOLDS, 5, BACHELOR'S WALK.



NEW GRANGE.

If England may justly boast of her Stonehenge as the no. ist monument of its kind now existing, Ireland-can, with real reason, feel proud of the sepalchial tunulus of New Granze-a monument of human Labour only exceeded in

nearly allied in many of its general features and which, in point of antiquity it probably rivals, or even possibly ex-

The tumulus of New Grange, is one of the four great se-pulshral mounds, situate on the banks of the Boyne, between grandear by the tomb of Agamemon, at Myrena, or the grandear by the tomb of Agamemon, at Myrena, or the will not hesitate to say may justly be termed the Pyramids of the Egyptian Kings, to both of which it is so I relaid. It is the only one of the four whose interior is it maintained the very high standard of material set in the first issues.

Vol.I No.6, for instance, contains an article about 'Brian Boroihme's Harp'. One of Moore's melodies, 'Let Erin Remember the Days of Old', appears on the same page. This song suggests Irish independence and, by implication, is 'anti' the Protestant ascendancy, middle-class or not, as it looks back to a time before the 'stranger'. But it was dressed in a careful romanticism which made it acceptable.

Articles appeared on: the origins of the expression 'Cead mile failte'; on the skeletons of the Irish elk in the possession of the Royal Dublin Society; the ancient Irish chair, by Petrie himself; the ancient Irish literature; Romanesque and Gothic architecture, by Petrie again; and so on.

It's noteworthy that not all the historical items described were from the Golden Age of early Irish Christianity. Some of them, like the dolmens, the ancient gold ornaments (illus. 3and 4) and Newgrange (illus.5), dated from pre-Christian times. But despite being described in detail in publications like the Dublin Penny Journal, the Irish Penny Journal, and The Nation, prehistoric patterns like chevrons, spirals and concentric circles did not inspire the revivalist artists much. It's only in this century that artists, like Patrick Ireland, have turned to them for inspiration.

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entertaining and popular way, and together with the many illustrations which accompanied them, must have made Ireland's past seem suddenly very relevant to the readership. Throughout the journal's run it continued its policy of bringing Ireland's history to its people and



Examples of historical remains highlighted in the journal also include the round tower at Swords (<u>illus.1</u>). Many such romantic views of round towers and ruins and high-crosses are to be found throughout the issues.

The illustrations themselves were probably quite influential, but for their subject matter rather than their style. For instance, in the second issue there is an illustration, also reproduced by Jeanne Sheehy, which displays the 'Irish National Emblems'. It's by Clayton, mentioned earlier (<u>illus.6</u>). An Irish <u>oak</u> stands in the foreground, while behind it stands an ivy covered <u>ruin</u>, and a <u>round tower</u> in the right background. Under the tree is an Irish <u>harp</u>, with a <u>crown</u> resting on its rim. Behind sits an Irish <u>wolfhound</u> on a shield, backed by a clump of <u>shamrock</u>. In front of the dog lies a flag standard, and to the left an Irish <u>horn</u>, the trappings of an archer, a rather prehistoric looking <u>axe-head</u>, a <u>sword</u>, and an unidentifiable round object! A Grecian style helmet hangs, unaccountably, from the tree.

Some of these 'emblems' were in use as symbols for Irishness already, others were only now suggested for the role. No doubt their appearance here helped to spread their acceptability. In a 'letter to the editor' in the same issue Terence O'Toole discusses the emblems. The round tower and wolfhound are, he says, exclusively Irish, while the oak, shamrock, harp and crown are not. None-theless, the Irish oak, shamrock and harp are known the world over and so are quite acceptable as symbols! A note follows on the various interpretations of the round tower- an amusing controversy described briefly earlier. Correspondence followed in succeeding







issues and the journal generally kept the whole idea of symbols and emblems alive. In fact it must be given the credit for the popularity many of these were soon to achieve and maintain throughout the 19th-century and into the next. A huge range of objects were presented as suitable choices, many appearing before the public for the first time. One might almost say that it purposely gave birth to a new national iconography.

A brief look at the frontispieces to the bound volumes will help substantiate this claim. These vignettes are, in effect, a distillation of the pictorial content of the weekly issues.

The frontispiece to the first volume (<u>illus.7</u>) is a conventional piece of Gothic-inspired early Victoriana. In the foreground, resting against a rock, is a very heavy looking shield bearing the Dublin city crest. Crossed behind are a sword, and a sceptre and crown. Behind is the sea and a small piece of land to the left. A small sail is seen in the distance.

There is nothing particularily Irish about the design, and not a shamrock is in sight! But one element from the scene which did go on to achieve symbolic status is the sunburst, coming over the sea. It's a rather ambiguous emblem, being readible as either a sunset or dawn according to one's outlook. It's seen quite frequently in combination with other emblems later. The drawing in the vignette is reasonable, but the shadowing on the shield, particularily, is all wrong, giving it an impossible twist.

It's of interest here to look in passing at the artist who made the

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No more to chiefs and ladies bright The bord alone that breaks at hight, Its tale of run tells.

DUBLIN PENNY JOURNAL.

1834-5.

CONDUCTED BY PHILIP DIXON HARDY, M. R. I. A. A DATA OF A SAME AND A DATA MANAGEMENT AND A SAME AND A

Once the harp through the valleys of Erm resounded : Erm ma vourneen, Erm go bragh! The shawnock and laurel luxuriantly crowned at : Erm ma vourneen, Erm go bragh!

Sweet was its tone, when pensively inourning; As bold and as warm, when with gratitude burning. It thrilled for the heroes from battle roturning : Erin ina voirniven, Erin po bragh!

DUBLIN: . PHILIP DIXON HARDY, 3, CECILIA STREET, W. P. WAKEMAN, AND W. CURRY, JUN. & CO.; IN LONDON BY RICHARD GROOMBRIDGE; WILLMER AND SMITH P. WAKEMAN, AND W. CERRY, JUN. & CO., IN TONDON DI KICHARD GROOMBRIDGE; WILLMER AND SMITH LIVERPOOL; AMBURY, MANCHES, ER; GUIST, 91, STEEL HOUSE LANE, EIRMINGHAN; N ROWACK, EDINBURG Proce see in Finite Monthly Parts, and Cs. 6d. bound in Class.

9. The Dublin Penny Journal - frontispiece to Vol. III.

woodcut for the vignette. His name is Clayton and this is the same name as that which appears on many of the illustrations in the Kildare Place Society's well known school books, many of which were published a decade earlier. In fact, 'Clayton' appears to have been a family of woodcutters in Dublin. Illustrations in the journal were signed by Benjamin Clayton Jnr., others by Robt. Clayton- the frontispiece to the second volume is by the latter. Most of the plates were done by the Claytons. Some were cut following the design of another artist, while others are both designed and cut by a Clayton. Their illustrations have an 18th-century feel to them and are reminiscent, in their treatment of foliage and rocks, of Thomas Bewick, the well known English woodcut artist of a little earlier.

Robt. Clayton's frontispiece for the second volume, 1833-34, (illus.8) is a veritable catalogue of Irish emblemary! In the leafy foreground, resting on what looks like the top from a round tower, is the ancient Irish crown. Thrust into a space between the stones of the tower is a Celtic brooch, flanked by a sword and a breast-plate. The whole lot is topped off with a clump of shamrock. Out of the cloud above rises the harp of Brian Boru, crowned, and radiating sunlight. This group was also used on one of the Repeal card designs, dating from the 1840's, so the Clayton's obviously believed in making the most of their work!

The frontispiece for the third volume (illus.9), 1834-35, is another catalogue of former glories. It was drawn by H.Nelson and cut by R.Clayton. In the foreground, to the right, is a bard playing a rather oversized harp. He is bearded, longhaired, dressed in long flowing robes and sandals, and standing under an oak tree! To the

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left foreground is a small <u>Celtic cross</u>. In the centre middle distance is a <u>round tower</u>, and behind this to the right are what look like the remains of <u>dolmens</u>. Behind the tower to the left is the ruin of an <u>Hiberno-Romanesque</u> church and another <u>round tower</u>. In the background, to the right, is what looks like the <u>Giant's</u> <u>Causeway</u>! (It's similiar to an illustration of this elsewhere in the journal). The vignette is accompanied by a romantic verse about harps, shamrocks and old Ireland.

From the foregoing I think we can safely that the <u>Dublin Penny</u> <u>Journal</u> played it's part in promoting the iconography which was shortly afterwards to appear in the applied arts. In the preface to the final volume, 1835-36, Philip Dixon Hardy regretted that the journal had now to be discontinued for financial reasons. He regretted in particular that the woodengravers and writers of stories would find it difficult to get other work. The journal's role was taken over later by <u>The Nation</u> and by Petrie's own <u>Irish Penny</u> <u>Journal</u> in the 1840's.



4. <u>THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY</u>- The Repeal Card, Margaret Stokes, The Catalogues, and Marcus Ward.

We must now look at some publications from themid-19th-century, the period when the iconography just described begins to appear in the applied arts - such as plasterwork and wood-carving- to see if there are any signs of it in the graphic arts. Only a small number of publications could be looked at so we can't make any claims, but some indication of trends should be possible.

The Repeal Card

After the success of the Catholic Emancipation movement nationalists turned their attentions to seeking the repeal of the Act of Union. A Repeal Association was set up and, naturally, membership cards were required. The design of these cards seems to have been organised by the Young Irelanders, and Gavan Duffy felt that they represented a 'blossoming' of poetry and history. Jeanne Sheehy, who describes some of them, feels they are "rather dry"!

One of these cards (<u>illus.10</u>) is shown. It features, in it's centre, the vignette used in 1833 as a frontispiece for the <u>Dublin</u> <u>Penny Journal</u>, described earlier. It has an ornate Gothic frame with historical portraits, of O'Connell and Brian Boru among others, inset. The card dates from the 1840's. One must agree, with Sheehy, that the overall effect is rather unattractive.

Margaret Stokes

At this stage we should look at the work of Margaret Stokes. Her illumination is an early example of the 'Celtic' phase of the





11. Title-page from <u>The Cromlech on Howth</u>, illuminated by Margaret Stokes. (<u>The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past</u> p.25). revival. While the iconography of the revival's first phase was enjoying popularity in the various applied arts, a new trend towards Celticism was beginning.

The Cromlech on Howth, a poem by Samuel Ferguson, was published in 1861, in a lavishly produced edition illuminated by his fellow antiquarian, Margaret Stokes. It was bound in green and gold leather, with interlace tooling and is an example of an early combination of literary and artistic revivals.

Stokes (1832-1900) was the daughter of a well known Dublin physican of revivalist leanings. She herself was a noted authority on early Irish art and her illumination is after the manner of the ancient manuscripts, particularily Kells and Durrow. The title page from the <u>Cromlech</u> (<u>illus.11</u>) combines, as Paul Larmour notes, details from different pages of St.Matthew's Gospel in the Book of Kells, including the zoomorphic letter 'T' from 'Tunc Crucifixerunt'.

The overall effect is quite attractive, if a little stiff, and Stokes's colouring is, I think, extremely faithful to the originals, as can be seen on comparison. Only the overall rigidity of the design and the poor lettering for the other, non-initial, capitals, lets her down. A remark by Douglas Hyde, much later and about modern high-crosses, is relevant here. He felt that since these were. executed with the aid of 'plumb and line' they were poor in comparison to the ancient ones which were done freehand.

One wonders whether Margaret Stokes did more illuminations. Sheehy mentions that she went on to edit a work on Irish



architecture, by Viscount Adare, and that she advised the Irish architect J.F.Fuller when he was designing his Hiberno-Romanesque church, St.Michael and All Angels at Clane, Co.Kildare. This is a beautiful building and it would be nice to think that it had some of Margaret Stokes in it.

The Cromlech on Howth is one of many examples in the Celtic Revival of work done by a gifted and multi-talented amateur who did not, it seems, go on to develop her style beyond it's initial manifestation.

Catalogues- 1872 and 1882.

The next examples of printed material looked at were two exhibition catalogues. The first one was for the Exhibition of Arts, Industries and Manufacture, held in Dublin in 1872. It is a small plain affair without illustration, and in the list of paintings, for instance, there are practically none with titles suggesting an Irish subject matter.

In the catalogue for the Exhibition of Irish Arts and Manufactures, 1882, hewever, held at the Rotunda in Dublin, such paintings as <u>King</u> <u>Cophetua and the Beggar Maid</u> by Daniel Maclise RHA, and <u>O'Connell</u> <u>Addressing the Great Clifden Meeting</u> by Martin Hegarty, are listed, along with many paintings of Irish landscapee scenes, such as Glendalough, Blarney and Connemara.

Furthermore, under theheading of "Illuminations, etc" are listed 12 works by T.J.Lynch, the father of Sr.Concepta Lynch, the Celtic Revival muralist, and himself a noted illuminator in the Celtic style. Nearly all of these were addresses to such dignitaries

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as Cardinal McCabe and Lord Ardilaun. Another work, called "The Harp that Once Through Tara's Halls", is by T.Fitzpatrick. And one called "Irish Illumination" is by J.O.Carroll Robinson.

We might expect that since many of the titles of the items listed in this catalogue suggest a revivalist subject matter or style, the design of the catalogue itself might in some way reflect this fact. This is not the case. It is just as small and plain as the earlier one. However our search is in part rewarded by a look through the advertisments in the 1882 catalogue. First of all, there is one for 'Cafe de Paris' coffee which, interestingly, contains a passage in Irish. Since most of those reading the ad are unlikely to have understood the language we must conclude that it was included in order to evoke an attitude in keeping with the revivalist interests of the reader! It's also interesting, incidentally, that the piece is set in the same Gaelic typeface used in the <u>Dublin Penny Journal</u> 40 years before.

Another ad, for 'Black Silk Irish Poplins' (<u>illus.12</u>) is a delightful piece of early revival iconography. A woman, dressed, no doubt, in the above mentioned poplin, stands admiring her reflection in a mirror, while behind her stands the harp complete with a winged Erin and a crown. Through the window may be seen water and an island on which stands a ruin, a round tower, and a Celtic cross. The whole lot is framed with shamrock.

So while there's evidence of the revival's first phase- of the emblems- in this example of popular graphics, from the content of the catalogue we see that the Celtic Revival had begun in the specialised

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O'REILLY, DUNNE, & CO. Invite special attention & THIS BEAUTIFUL FABRIC being a MATERIAL UNHEARD OF PRIOR ITS PRODUCTION and INTEODUCTION by THEIR FIRM in 1878. Manufactured from PURE SILK WARPS, free from the SLIGHTEST ADULTERATION IN THE DYE, and hence free from the NUMEROUS IMPERFECTIONS ascribed to MODERN Black Silks, SUCH AS GREASE MARKS, COCKLING, &c. WHILST COMBINING SOFTNESS, BRILLIANCY, and DURABILITY, CANNOT BE TOO STRONGLY

Ladies desirous to obtain these GENUINE GOODS, ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO ORDER PATTERNS DIRECT from

O'REILLY, DUNNE, & CO., ROYAL POPLIN FACTORY, 30 COLLEGE-GREEN, DUBLIN. ESTABLISHED NEARLY 100 YEARS

Their coloured Poplins include all the NEW SHADES. Patterns post free, and parcels carriage paid within the United Kingdom.



13. A Christmas card by Marcus Ward and Company, Belfast, circa 1871. (<u>Celtic Ornament</u> illus.9). area. It is likely that in the popular side of graphic design the older trend continued for a while longer, and we'll see more evidence of this shortly.

Marcus Ward and Co.

One example of the Celtic Revival's early showing in the popular graphic arts, however, may be seen in the work of Marcus Ward and Co. the Belfast printing firm. Through the 1860's and 1870's, Paul Larmour writes, the Celtic art revival expanded, encouraged by the publication in 1863 of Henry O'Neill's <u>Fine Arts and Civilization of Ancient</u> <u>Ireland</u>. This work was the first easily available book about early Irish art. While Celtic crosses grew in popularity as headstones, and the public 'lapped up' reproduction jewellery, there appeared in Dublin artists, like Margaret Stokes, who were to specialise in Celtic style illumination. Marcus Ward exploited this trend commercially.

The greeting cards produced by Ward from 1871 combine both Celtic ornament and the popular symbols in an early example of what I would like to call the <u>transitional</u> or <u>combination style</u>. That is, they contain both images of romantic Irish landscapes and ruins, and the emblems or symbols, together with Celtic decoration. The example shown (<u>illus.13</u>) is an ingenious mix of both trends. The lefthand side of the card bears a panel of Celtic interlace in the middle of which is the illuninated initial 'C' with a zoomorphic form. Neatly embedded in the letter is the harp. In the upper righthand corner of the card is a romantic looking scene with a ruined church, and a round tower in the background. As Larmour points out, an interesting aspect of the design is the combination of naturalistic flowers with Celtic ornament- a further addition to an already

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ACCURACE OF

overloaded effect!

The card is very brightly coloured, the tracery being yellow and orange on a gold background, with highlights of red. The romantic view is in full colour. Apparently the firm of Marcus Ward became very well known for this type of product, and for their illuminated addresses, which were very popular mid-century. They also produced book shrines and bindings with Celtic decoration. The firm floundered in the late 1890's- its work was too expensive.



publications broadly connected with the nationalist movement or the literary revival, just as it had shown up in Marcus Ward in the '70's.

crosses to the right. The journal's name appears large across the design, in bold hand-done lettering. The fact that the lettering is The Irish Book Lover in which he says that the title pages of all because the Gaelic type available was "spikey and patchy, lacking

is hand-done. Also note-worthy are the shamrock borders between





For um an Sceire reo ! 'Seat, 'reat, the an Saranac Dall' 7 cartrean Jac rolar Do múcato, 7 an raogal DO CONSDAIL I NDOPCADAR 50 DEUISeann re שראים א דשו.

cpuinniugat ve na Jaevealait Aoncuisce heipeann. 1 DEulac 1. 5Co. an Clain, Dia Dortnais, Meiteath a chip an ficio. Di Seamur peac.

14. A front page from Fainne an Lae Vol.III. No.78, showing masthead and decoration. (reduced)

esconts.

work."

15. A front page from Dublin Penny Journal Vol.II. No.5, showing masthead and format. (trimmed 5mm top and bottom - actual size) (over)

"Fainne an Lae" and to the reverend gentleman who has undertaken this



Riagalcoinio na cipe, oin ni paio Do pérceac na cerrce reo y tá an Riag- cinn.

Do Labain Uilliam O Driain annrain 7

plinceac i nimpipeace Sarana, 7 an Flio and an oceansa rein Da reanad as Luce oroiste na hEineann hac aon cuir muroim na aon cuir occair odinn Deit painceac Le Saranacaio i reilo an Deanla.

ma'r mian tinn reinolr a beanam oo Dia na cornuismir te piosoan à peanam o'an och 7 oan 5com outcairio , che reanad na ceansad oo cus Dia donn Riagaltar plath i Sarana corti rabpatiuit cum ordeacar na noadine to cun cum

altar ats ann anoir. Taio caippeannil tus an Caipomeat opart uaid i pit an Do na tiseannaid talman, 7 ir man seall lae Do taion linn 50' mon. Di re as an an Scainbear rain atsio colleenad le chace an Descainio nat SCatollicead Deart a béanam do na tigeannaid, y nl't. I ocado iolondeacan, y thi in mod', n'an Deart an dit da mó d'fogannad doit na diultuig an Riagattar do reitad na an talam do céannac uata an faid ata ceirce rin, y dubant re guid i a cualinn na Baeoil aoncuiste. - Di an- speim aca ain, 7 é a viol le muintin na pein le para, 510 nat aoncuis moran Daoine Leir, na pait som mait boit beit as pleio aon mion-corres or comain na tus an-opdio uaio as cup i n-iut nan Feire Saranaise na imears na noaone act O Ceallaig, Feirine, Uilliam O Duain, D'féroin Do muintin na hÉineann aon nio Sun ceant Doit gnéane Soi lein Da ceant Harilano De Danc, 7 Labarcoini eile Lait- Do Déanam San aondace do Beit an bun 1 mbun na ceirce moine, vere masterise na hEineann.



OUTSIDE VIEW IN 1792.

GRAIGNEMANACH ABBEY.

From Grose's "Antiquities of Ireland.")

This abbey is situate in the Barony of Govran, on the river Barrow. A few Chercians from Stanley, in Wiltshire, ment of our shires the at first at Loughmeran, near Kilmy, in 1202, then at Athermolt. and "Hed "Duisk," and after Graignemanach, William, Earl Marshal, erected an for them A.D. 1212.

the ground-work of the present arrange-

and at the vale of St. Saviour, anciently year was granted on his surrender of the abbey in 1537. He sat in Parliament in 1744. right of his Church, and annually paid the Bishop for his temporals £4 7s. 6d.

and the second s

In this abbey was lodged an ancient ! Sir Edward Butler, of Lowgrange, in the division made of Ireland by Henry II., and county of Kilkenny, Knight, was seized of completed by his son John. It was, for the possession of this abbey; but by the the times, a tolerably exact survey, on the 9 Elizabeth, they were granted for ever to plan of that of the Doomsday Book, and James Butler, junior, at the annual rent. of £41 Irish money. The building was of great extent, and the architecture and The last abbot was M'Murrogh O'Cava- sculpture, even in its present ruined state, nagh, to whom a pension of ten pounds a excite our admiration. It had a beautiful octagon tower, which fell down in the year

> This view was taken by Lieutenant Daniel Grose, Anno 1792.

the 1920's!

The issue for the 24th of January, 1899, has an advertisment for "new founts of Gaelic type- specially designed and approved by leading Gaelic scholars". These were available from Bernard Doyle, Gaelic Printer, Ormond Quay. The designs, in upper case at least, cannot have been popular with all such scholars. Even though Doyle was the printer of Fainne his typefaces weren't deemed suitable for the headlines, at-any-rate.

Fainne an Lae became An Claidheamh Soluis, or The Sword of Light', around 1903. Its new masthead was the now familiar sword of light, featured on some of the first Irish stamps after independence. In the new magazine cross-heads were typeset, but have initials decorated by hand. Many of the ads in these early issues have used a Gaelic typeface, despite the remarks earlier, for display purposes. This is often the case even where the ad is not in Irish at all. Celtic interlace, decorated or illuminated initials, shamrocks, high crosses, and round towers also feature in the ads.

In 1914 a new masthead appeared, this time with a sword going through the letters. This masthead was printed in colour, unlike the earlier ones, with a different ink for each issue.

Another 'Dublin Penny Journal'- 1902-03 The Dublin Penny Journal title was revived in the early 20thcentury in a magazine which appeared each Saturday from 1902-03. The editorial for Vol.I No.l says that it aims to continue in the tradition of its original and famous namesake. Of late



there has been a'renaissance of interest in subjects connected with Irish Art, archaeology, literature and science, as well as in the development of intellectual and material resources of the country. The new magazine intends to cater to this interest in a "nonpolitical" way.

In content the new journal is similar to the original, though it does contain small advertisments. The format of the rest of the magazine is also quite similar, though the page size is slightly larger. An illustration of an Irish scene spans the width of the front page, and below this are three columns of text, again separated by rules. Headlines are larger than in the earlier journal, which used capitals from the text-type, and now they may sometimes span two columns rather than just one.

Illustrations cover the same themes as the first <u>Dublin Penny</u> <u>Journal</u>- historical and natural scenes. The style of drawing, however, is looser and more draughtsmanlike. But some plates date from the early 19th-century and closely resemble the style of plates in the original. Interestingly, it seems that some of the illustrations from the original have actually been redrawn. For instance, a view of a street in Armagh in the issue of the 6th September 1902 is identical in composition to one in the first journal on 17th January 1835, though drawn in a much freer style.

The masthead is the most interesting aspect of the new journal. It is a good example of what I earlier termed the 'transitional' style in popular revival-influenced graphics: We saw an early appearance of this in the greeting card from Marcus Ward. This style

can be identified in the printed material of nationalist or revivalist sentiment from the late 19th-century into the early days of the 20th-century. It was a style which while still retaining the use of the iconography of Irish identity from the early revival, also incorporated the later vogue among arts and crafts designers for Celtic decoration inspired by the early manuscripts like the Book of Kells. Later a purely Celtic style tended to dominate.

The masthead (<u>illus.15</u>) consists of the title in a Gaelic-style lettering, obviously hand-done since none of the characters are precisely the same. The initials are treated in a rather gross and watered-down Celtic illumination style, with human heads at the extremities of the letters, and shamrocks, hardly a medieval device, featuring in the flourishes. The lettering was clearly done by an artist imitating the finer revival work and who had not studied the originals himself. As a background to the title is a tall round tower in the centre, to the left of a sunburst, and on the right is an ancient ruin. In other words, the design is a mix of old and new revivals, with Celtic flourishes and 'emblems' used equally.

Samhain - 1901 - 08 and 1915-18

<u>Samhain</u> is another publication which should indicate the state of popular graphic art associated with the revival. An occasional literary review containing writing in both Irish and English, it was edited by W.B.Yeats for the National Theatrical Company, or Abbey Theatre. It appears from 1901-08, approximately.

In fact, apart from attractive front and back covers, Yeat's magazine proves to contain no hint of an artistic revival at all. The covers

(<u>illus.16</u>) are printed in black in heavy peat-brown paper. The title is set in capitals from an art-nouveau style typeface and the rest of the setting on the covers and the title page shows quite a similarity to that used by other literary revival publications such as those of the Dun Emer And Cuala presses run by Yeats's sisters. In other words, a handsome roman typeface in a large point size is used, and a column width chosen to give generous margins. The magazine was published by Maunsel and Co. in Dublin, and printed by Sealy, Bryers and Walker in Abbey St. Maunsel was well known at this time for their high quality books.

In view of the interelatedness of the literary and artistic revivals it might seem surprising that <u>Samhain</u> doesn't show much visual sign of revivalism. The covers and title pages are consciously 'designed' but are not 'Celtic' at all. One reason for this might be that the revival's graphic design achievements were confined, more-or-less, to the development of an iconography consisting of symbols and the Celtic decorative style. Development of a worked-out design theory or approach was not achieved, the <u>shapes</u> of things were not altered so much as the patterns and motifs that went on them. This applies to the other crafts, too, I think. So books and literary journals did not bear a revival stamp unless they were illustrated or illuminated. It might also be that Yeats and his friends sometimes found the whole iconography just a little too vulgar!

The inside of <u>Samhain</u> is not 'designed' but is a rather good quality printer's job on heavy cream paper which matches well with the peat brown on the covers. The attractiveness of the covers themselves, incidentally, is marred by rather unsightly ads on the insides for

SAMHAIN An Occasional Review, Edited by W. B. Yeats, containing Hyacinth Halvey by Lady Gregory, and Thoughts upon the Work of the Abbey Theatre, with list of plays produced by the National Theatre Society and its forerunners, . by the Editor. Published in December. 1906, by Maunsel & Co., Ltd., Dublin; and sold for sixpence net.

16. Front and back covers from Samhain, December 1906. (actual size)


An reak siubail.

ORAMA miorbuille on mbaincigeannain gregoine.

An AIC-Circin Tige Dig i mDaile Laoi. Dean ann ir i ag cup an an mbopo, reala, chúrca, agur cláp beag i gcóin fuince.

an fuireann: matain; pairte; rean riubail

páiste Cao oo déangain Leó púo, a mátain?

mátair-Déanfaid mé cirte breat den plúp teal. Cuiptid mé rilini ann. D'éidip 50 ndéanfainn cirte beat it tómur-ra leir. Féadrain é cup ra concán beat an faid do beid an cirte món atá beipbiutad ra concán món.

PÁISCE-Nac é an repupal mo varoi a vert intiste 50 oti an t-aonac vainn i scoin Oroce Samna.

MatalR—Dero an péarta azam an a fon-pan, man ir meara liom-pa Oroce Samna 'na aon oroce eile. Roinnt bliadanta ó foin an an oroce reo ir ead tánaz an otúir zo otí an otiz reo.

páiste-ir occa zo mbein az baint na miar úo ven noporún, ré rin na miara zo bruil na bláta onta; azur beiv tú á zcup an an mboro.

ΜάζαΙR-Deao. Comeoza mé an τις ποια. Τόςταο απαγ πα ξρέιτρε τη τεάρη αξαίπη αξύη cumptao ξας πίο σά τεαθάγ απ απ ποόρο 1 Scummuzao an an éast a tánlaio dam i Scomaineam an Lae reo.

páiste-Capé an t-éact é muo?

 $M \Delta C \Delta IR - Ir amlaid a puaizead mé a cit zo padar im cailín aimripe ann . . .$

paisce-Ca paib an tit reo? Innir Dam man tioll ain.

Máčair [az rube 7 az rine a méine ó bear]—Čall annrúd do bior im comnuide, i doiz reinmeóna duar an Sliad Caddiže i n-aice le Sliad an Oin.

paiste-Strad an Oip an ead! Ni pulain nó ait breas ir ead é rin.

MÁČAIR-Ní haon áit pó-bpeáš é 50 Deimin. Díonn pé lom asur Fuap 50 mait an taca po bliadain. Act do tusad an bótap dam Ordce Samna map peo, cionn pudaí éisin a cuipead im leit.

paisce-asur cao oo deinir annroin?

MACAIR-Cao Do D'feidin Dam a Déanam, act an botan a tabaint

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17. An example of the ubiquitious Gaelic typeface found at the time, Samhain 1905. Yeats's plays and for books published by Sealy, Bryer and Walker!

Generally speaking, all that marks these magazines as Celtic revival publications at all is their sharing with Cuala this gesture towards beautiful typography, and that some of the Irish language writing they contain is set in the ubiquitious Gaelic typeface seen in other revival journals (<u>illus.17</u>). Other pieces are set in roman type with 'h' replacing the 'séimhiu'. In just omeissue, that of October 1902, is an order form, for Yeats's play 'Cathleen Ni Hoolihan', composed of ornate 'Celtic' lettering.

A later magazine of the same name appeared from about 1915-18. Its content was "literary and patriotic" and mainly in Irish. Among its contributors were 'An Seabhac' and Padraig O'Conaire, both well known writers. Typical of its material was a piece on the Feast of Samhain, one of the four great Celtic festivals: "The kings and nobles of all Ireland came to Tara, the bards came, and the shanachies, and the druids, and for seven days there was feasting in Tara, and chariotracing, and feats of strength, and the recitation of new poems, the promulgation of new laws, and the saying over of ancient genealogies."

In style the magazine retained some links with Yeats's <u>Samhain</u>, the 1915 cover being printed on similar peat-brown paper. The masthead, however is quite different (<u>illus.18</u>) being a lavishly decorated affair. Hand-lettered in a Gaelic style it has huge illuminated initial which combines zoomorphic features, interlace and a pre-Christian spiral flourish in a rather non-authentic way! The masthead is crowned with the ever-popular sunburst. So we may call this a transitional design. The 1917 cover was printed on green paper



SAMAIN

Lá Samna, 1917.

Let me varry Your Cross for Ireland, Lord. THOMAS ASHE.

τοις του Το τύμ-ζμος σ'ιοπέψι, « Όι»,
το έψμαι τη beas te tuat,
beas ταυ πα σεόμα το stuarpriv im' τιαιν
τη mo čαιρτεαι κότ' τόμι χαι τυαν.

Ομάζαιμ η αζαιμη mac, a Όια, Ράζ αξ α cérte beó 1 τοτμού πά πιάς αμ σύη πα ηξαφύφαι

i nÉijunn féit zo beó,

Leis vom Do vúp-Čnoč viomčup, a Dia, flánie ir pran teir rin, Chompav so humat vá scubají 'r vá schaor,

Ful amzeočav rém a żom. Demeató na búny mo byużató zo heaz,

Οτηκ αυ μα σμης μο σμαγασ 50 μαγαύ-γα 1 στρεό 50 θράξραμ αξ RÓISÍN γεμή

An Sarpar schu ra suc.

Leis vom Do vüp-Čņoč viomčup, a Dia, Ap pon ap némeann sturp',
Ap pon a pean acă buarveancă trac 1p an aopa că ós anoir,
Ap pon aicpeaŭ pottam a bănca sté 1p an craeșit acă poimpe i brup:
Leis vom Do vüp-Čņoč viomčup, a Dia, Ap pon mo Rómín Omb.

mos nuit o'. 1reps.

19. Gaelic setting and decoration in Samhain, 1917. (actual size)

and the 1918 on purple. Irish throughout is set in the ubiquitious Gaelic type mentioned earlier (<u>illus.19</u>).

The issues all contain lots of ads, integrated onto the text pages. Almost all have a consciously Irish aspect to their content (<u>illus.20</u>), but not to their design. The only revival element is a 'Deanta in Eirinn' symbol on one or two of the ads. This was the 'made in Ireland' sybmol which appeared on ads for Irish products and was composed of interlace upon a vaguely 'Tara' brooch form. And showing that the old iconography still held on, an ad for 'The Warehouse' on Henry St. bears the Irish karp and 'Cead Mile Failte' set in Gaelic type. It's oko interesting that over 50 years after their first appearance, 'Tara' brooches and gold and silver torc brooches were still being advertised by Dublin jewellers like W.Stokes of Westmoreland St. and West and Son.

More Gaelic League Publications- 1897-1920

The Gaelic League must have been a great populariser of revival iconography. The 'Oireachtas' was the League's annual gathering of members to participate in performances and competitions in Irish singing, dancing, music, recitation, craftwork and so on. It had large popular support and James Joyce and John McCormack are said to have once competed in the competition for best tenor voice (but I couldn't find that competition listed among the catalogues I looked at!). A look at the Oireachtas programmes from the earliest available,1897, to 1920, approximately, gives a very good crystallization of the progress of the revival's influence on popular graphics.

The programme cover for the second Oireachtas, held in May 1898 at the Rotunda in Dublin, is very much in the early revival mould. It



O'Loughlin, Murphy Boland, Ltd., Lithographic and Defectors

:: :: Letterpress

Printers,

111 & 112 UPPER DORSET ST., DUBLIN.

Wholesale Stationers, Bookbinders, Paper Bag Manufacturers, Paper and Twine Merchants. C Special facilities for Bazaar and Church Printing, Posters, &c. :: ::

XII Jrish Manufactured Papers Regularly Stocked.

OUR REGISTERED TRADE MARK IS

Telephone No. 941. Telegraphic Address -"Paradise, Dublin."



"1867" An eventful year in the History of our Land! IT was also in 1867 that the doors of "THE WAREHOUSE," were first opened to the public. Since that date we have consistently pushed the in our own Land, and we cordially invite the favour of your visit to inspect our present stock. ceao mile pance! BEAUTIFUL BLOUSES, hand-embroidered by Irish peasants in their homes on the hillsides, from + 11 each. DAINTY IRISH-MADE UNDERCLOTHING. WINTER - WEIGHT LADIES' ALL - WOOL UNDERWEAR, made in Ireland. GENTS' IRISH-KNIT GLOVES from 1/63. LADIES' BALBRIGGAN HOSE from 2/6. WARM KNITTED GOLF COATS, hand-finished, from 18/11. GENTS' SHIRTS, COLLARS, SOCKS, AND TIES, home manufacture. EXTENSINE RANGE OF LADIES' DRESS MATERIALS in the most popular shades; also of GENTS' and CLERICAL SUITINGS, the quality that has made Irish Tweeds world-famous Welcome to Visit Money back if disatisfied DUBLIN Henry Street Warehouse Co., Ltd., Dublin

Second · Oireachtas

Or, IRISH FESTIVAL,

THE - ROTUNDA, - DUBLIN,

Tuesday, 24th May, 1898.

LORD CASTLETOWN OF UPPER OSSORY WILL PRESIDE.

Admission

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DURING THE DAY-SIXPENCE.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY BERNARD DOYLE, CAELIC PRINTER, S URPER COMOND BURY.

21. Oireachtas programme cover, 1898. (actual size)

bears no Celtic imagery at all. Printed in green on white (<u>illus.21</u>), it has a border of shamrocks (this is identical to the one seen before in <u>Fáinne an Lae</u> and advertised in the <u>Irish Printer</u> in the 1920'sno doubt it had been on the go for many years before this too!). A rather awkward looking cameo of a winged cherub playing an Irish harp appears at the top of the page, surrounded by Victorian leafy decoration. A jumble of typefaces appears under this, with the main title- 'Second Oireachtas'- set in a Gaelic display face.

Douglas Hyde was among the recitors at this Oireachtas, and the programme seems to have payed its way in that it carries ads from many of Dublin's top firms, including Hennessy's Whiskey, Clery and Co. Gent's Outfitters, Switzers, and McBirneys. <u>Fainne an Lae</u> also takes an ad!

The 1900 cover is quite plain, printed in black on light blue, and again without Celtic Revival influence. The 1901 one has a much more unified design, in red and black on pink card. This is another example of the <u>transitional</u> style. Its much more Celtic looking than the shamrocky 1898 one and the lettering is hand-done in the Gaelic style with two decorative initials. The word 'Oireachtas' itself is treated as a sort of panel with zoomorphic interlace ends, and a pre-Christian spiral also features. Inside the 'O' is a scene with a round tower and ruin. The whole lot is rather incongruously contained within floral borders top and bottom: (<u>illus.22</u>)

This combination, of Gaelic letters and an Irish scene, seems to have been popular around the turn of the century- cf. also <u>Dublin Penny</u> <u>Journal</u> 1902-03, and <u>Fainne an Lae</u>.









From 1902-08 the Oireachtas programme covers are exuberantly Celtic. The 1902 one is a totally Celtic style design, and is an early example of the work of Art O'Murnagham, who was later to become 'the last' Celtic illuminator. Printed in black on pink paper, the 'Celticness' of the design is not enhanced by the colour. The design (illus.23) shows none of the ideosyncracy which was the hallmark of O'Murnaghan's later and better known work.

Significant among the competitions held that year was one for the best collection of 'Irish Manuscripts' at least 30 years old, which had been in the posession of the competitor and his family for at least 10 years, and confined to persons engaged in manual labour!

The covers for 1904-06 were by J.F.Maxwell who also crops up as an illustrator in the Dublin Magazine, and who was mentioned by Paul Larmour in his lecture at NCAD in February as having freely adapted the Celtic style in his illustration in the mid-century. The 1904 and 1905 covers are similar, the first badly printed in black, red and purple on yellow card, the second (illus.24), a better printing, in black, yellow, red and blue on white. Its an amusing piece of revivalism with funny little figures emerging out of the interlace, illuminating books and playing musical instruments.

Competitions that year included one for the best series of five 'outline sketches' illustrating Irish history previous to the Union. There was also one for the best design for a Gaelic League Teaching Diploma, for which there were eight entries.

The 1906 cover is just another version of the last year's one, and



ÍÁR **IREACGAIS** ** 1905 **



25. Oireachtas programme cover, 1906. (actual size)

was used for the following two years (<u>illus.25</u>). It was printed in black, yellow, mauve and orange on white. Clearly, if the League was not alone in using one design over a number of years, there can't have been a very great living to be made out of Celtic style illumination.

Advertisments in the programmes were interesting. 1906's one contained an ad for 'An Túr Gloine', and 1907's for Joshua Clarke's stained glass and church decoration.

After this the exuberance goes out of the programme covers. It's as if the Celtic influence has become bureaucratised. The 1909 one was quite plain, consisting of a Gaelic style title and a decorated initial 'C', all quite stiff, and printed in blue and red on green card.

The 1910 cover (<u>illus.26</u>) is equally dulland offical looking. It has the same decorative 'C' and a rather stiff, if not unattractive, Celtic border, shaped like a Romanesque window. It is printed in dark green and red on light green card. This degenerates the following year to dark green on pale green, with the same design.

From then on the covers are not at all Celtic, with the exception of a 1920 one which is a reversion to the stiff Celtic style.

It's important to note that throughout all this flowering and then fading of the Celtic influence on the Oireachtas cover designs, the insides of the programmes bore no relation to the covers whatsoever, remaining dull in format with Gaelic and roman type used.







27. The Irish Homestead, 7th January 1905, showing front cover and masthead. (reduced) The Oireachtas covers show a definite progression in theirdesign from 1898 up to 1910, over a decade later. This progression is from a limited use of the symbols from the revival's first phase, through the transitional style, to full Celticism. We must now see if this pattern is repeated elsewhere.

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The Irish Homestead- 1897-1908

The <u>Irish Homestead</u> was the weekly journal of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, and was edited for a time by George Russell, or AE, a prominent member of the literary revival, and a painter. The society's main function was to encourage the development of agriculture in Ireland, but it also promoted cottage industry and homecrafts, and was very much a voice of the Celtic Revival. Out of this organisation, Jeanne Sheehy says, came the impetus for the setting up of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, in 1899, and this department took over the running of the School of Art in Dublin for a number of years!

<u>The Irish Homestead</u> itself was a rather plain affair, and contained many ads for heavy farm machinery, even on its front page. Its masthead, however, was quite a Celtic concoction, with rough interlacing spirals and a mythical looking head with ancient head-dress- all combined with hand-drawn lettering and a naturalistic rustic scene. This is yet another example of the <u>transitional</u> style. The design is signed but it is difficult to make out the name. The cover for the 7th of January 1905 (<u>illus.27</u>) was printed in green on white. The same design, and indeed the same ads, appear in different colour each issue.

The Homestead's special publications are more interesting. A supplement



to the 14th January 1905 issue contains an 'almanac' withAsix month calandar and a list of local societies. This section is headed by a panel containing an interesting scene of agricultural enterprise, incorporating some rather crude Celticism in the lettering (<u>illus.28</u>). The panel is printed in green on white.

From about 1897-1910, the <u>Homestead</u> brought out <u>A Celtic Christmas</u> each year. This was a special 'bumper' issue published in mid-December. It contained short stories, poetry and romantic tales from the ancient sagas. The <u>Celtic Christmas</u> was a literary interlude, for the rest of the year the <u>Homestead</u> was concerned with agricultural matters.

The 1897 cover, not signed, was printed in black and orange on pink paper (<u>illus.29</u>). The design features a border of alternating holly leaves and Celtic spirals, some rather ideosyncratic Gaelic handlettering, and, in the centre, a traditional winter scene.

Contributors, on the literary side, to this edition include W.B.Yeats, Douglas Hyde, Standish O'Grady and AE himself. Leading writers of the revival were being brought before a, presumably, agricultural public. This mixture of personnel, and of different aspects of a broadly nationalistic and revivalist mevement, is very characteristic of the period.

Among the many illustrations inside is a rather mystical painting of Queen Maeve by AE (<u>illus.30</u>). A tall and majestic figure shines out of the mists, wearing Celtic robes and carrying a spear and shield. It's another sort of Celticism, peculiar to AE and more reminiscent of the work of William Blake and of the Pre-Raphaelites in its use





30. 'Queen Maeve', an illustration by AE, <u>A Celtic Christmas</u>, 1897. (actual size) of elongated figures, than of the rather stiff revival aesthetic.

Another AE painting appears in the 1898 issue (<u>illus.31</u>), <u>He follows</u> <u>after shadows, the King of Ireland's son</u>. AE's misty paintings appear often in these issues- fairies abound! Another regular contributor was J.B.Yeats, for example in the issue for 1899 (<u>illus.32</u>). In another case he illustrates a poem by W.B., 'The Madness of King Goll', in 1898. An illustrator worth mentioning, too, is Seagan MacCatmaoil. His was a new way of visualising the Celtic, but his work exemplifies the tendency for a style to lose its initial exuberance. His illustrations are rigidly drawn scenes from the sagas with stylized figures in Celtic robes (<u>illus.33</u>), as can be seen in this small illustration in the 1904 issue. An illustration of his for a translation of <u>The Tain</u> is reproduced in Paul Larmour's book.

From 1898-1903, <u>A Celtic Christmas</u> used another rather ideosyncratic Celtic design as its cover. Shamrocks intertwine with interlace and Christmas bells in what seems a quite expensive production, with gold printed on purple, and then turquoise card, and finally gold and purple printed on white.

Decorated initials, headpieces and tailpieces abound in all issues. For example, in the 1898 issue is a Celtic panel at the top of the page and two decorated initials (<u>illus.34</u>). In the 1900 issue is a tailpiece with shamrocks in a Celtic tangle (<u>illus.35</u>). The illuminations don't show any great understanding of the principles behind the decoration in the original models, that is, they are not careful facsimiles or pastiches. The style has now become popularised and recognisable as 'Celtic' even if poorly or ideosyncratically



" HE FOLLOWS AFTER SHADOWS, THE KING OF IRELAND'S SON."

31. 'He follows after shadows, the King of Ireland's son', an illustration by AE, <u>A Celtic Christmas</u>, 1898. (actual size) 32. An illustration by J.B.Yeats in A Celtic Christmas, 1899. (actual size)



Bridget was listening to the words."



Br Nona Hoffren. OW all away to Tir na n'Og are many

roads that run. But he has ta'en the longest lane, the King of Ireland's son. There's roads of hate, and roads of

love, and many a middle way, And castles keep the valleys deep where happy lovets stray. Where Angus goes there's many a

men huma md mid shadows dun. No rose there is will draw his kiss, the King of Ireland's son.

And yonder where the sun is high Love laughs amid the hay, But smile and sigh have passed him by, and never make delay.

And here (and O! the sun is low!) they're glad for harvest we But naught he cares for wheat or tares, the King of Ireland's

Reaped at your feet's the yellow wheat, my tares are sowing

And here are fruits of gramarye with druid dews beset,

So bittersweet no man may cat, forgetting how 'twas won, But magic fruits he will not pluck, the King of Ireland's son.

Oh, what are magic fruits to him who meets the Lianan-sidhe, hears for him through distance dim Fionn's horn blow drowsily ?

He follows on for ever when all your chase is done, He follows after shadows, the King of Ireland's son.

THE AWAKENING OF THE ULTONIANS.

By STANDISH O'GRADY. [In the epical narrative of Cuculain and the Red Branch Knights, one of the most interesting episodes deals with the invasion of the North by the warriors of the three provinces led by Queen Meave and Ferges Mac Roy, the deposed and called King of Plster. A Druid enchantment for a time hullcalled King of Ulster. A Druid exchantment for a time bulk, the Northern chiefs into a drowsy inactivity, during which the warrisons of Meare spoil the territory of Ulster. As the latter are about to return laden with plunder, the great Knights of the Red Branch awake from their dream, and, full of sharme at their past inactivity, they pour forth from the North to give battle to the hosts of Meave. The episode here narrated describes how the Ulster warriors overtook the in-raders. Weave is in her fourd. raders. Meave is in her tent.]

HEN was heard the sweet-toned voice of Queen Floras:

" Mathinks till now I never has held the sur descend amid clouds so flaming red. Truly, to me, he seems no longer like a monarch of

of the Olnemacia And Queen Menre said :-

"What magic stillness is this that cleaves around the comp like a shroud around the dead, so that our voires sound dis-that far distance, O sovereign of the Tan?" tant and terrible? I hear not the lowing of the cattle or the "I hear a vast confueed hum like the murmur of tant and terrible? I hear not the lowing of the cattle or the gigantic hive, when in the spring-time there is a no grans, as though beneath a hovering caple, and but now I beard, as it were, the voice of a dove addressing me, and it said, 'I foresee bloodshed; I foresee power. Cumascrah is no longer under fear in his island, nor Kelkar at Dùn Sovarchey. nor Concobar at Emain Macha, nor Legairé in kis own land, nor Concobar at Emain Macha, nor Legairé in kis own land, nor Consill in Mel Consill.' Is it thou, O Faythleen, O fairy prophetess of Temairian hills."

Then sounded hard by the Barr-bush of the Tan, trumpet-blast of the battle-array of the four provinces, afar throughout the camp re-panded the call of the instruments of every sept and nation, summoning the warr instruments of every sept and nation, summoning the war to arms, and Fergus himself stool before the Queen, i sterally domissed the attending kings. Thereat startfel forth Queen Meave and cried :—

Thereal started forth Queen Meave and cried :-What are these trimple-cills of preparation, what pairs this that arises from thee and around thee? What of mains me these that thou sendest forth not enjoined by a manus are these that then sendest forth not enjoined by a and this low hearse swelling note is it of mutiny or of re Appeare then the heat, O Fergus, for I know not which r to look, but all my mind is confused."

And Fergus said . --"Fear not, O Queen, and regard not, for a space, the B of arms. But fear thou to give any commands, or to co-tenance those who may resist are. Henceforth, the warf of arms. Due tear from to give any communes, or to e tear tenance those who may resist are. Henceforth, the warr of the Tan shall not peacefully divide the booty, eat flesh, drink ale exulting, but stern war awaits them, and the conof heroes. Ned shall be the prince of their feasting, and eroaking of house their pleasant music, for the Red Bra of the Ultonians draweth nigh, fierce as the she-bear follow through the forest the track of the hunter carrying in hands her ravished off-pring. Stand here, O wilo of A2 Mor; seest thon aught youder above the dark green for that to the north of this plain stretches from the east wards " Then Queen Meave answered and said :-

"I see indeed a confused multitude of flying birds of e kind, small and great, flying thitherward as though terri from beyond the forest, and they break to the right hand a the left, but some fly towards us, and over us, and they so to no like sca-birds which flee before an ocean-racking b pest when on the horizon, yet still, and against a clear

they, with redoubled speed, are seen flecing shorowards, to the islands and the sheltering recesses of the crannied le rucks." "And now that these have passed away, borne swiftly paniestricken wings, seest thou yet aught, O High Queet the Olnemacta," said Fergus gazing, as he spake, upon

bright-eyed forward-bending Queen. "Northward, beyond the dark forest, I behold a vis lovely indeed and beautiful to look upon, and like a . raised by magic power, screne and fair; a soft, white, deb mist, like most pure wool many times refined; or like snow shed afar over the land; or like the very white w clouds of heaven unmoved against the blue canopy of stainless sky. Moreover, from its level floor, as from face of some beautiful lough, there arise, as it were, to ides, with that white soft sea poured around their base, never, O Fergus, have I a sight more beautiful beheld." "Make keener now thy far-seeing eyes, O wife of A

and tell me what thou seest." "That so serve and still, seems to me so now no lo but still with the stillness of some intense and endless

for within there appears, to me, to exist a rush, and t ment, and commotion, to be telt more than seen. More I now distinguish immunerable faint twinklings as of sta the gloaning of the night, and quick sadden flashings, the sky, attired in crimeon roles, rapid fires that harn and go out, and are illumined an but like a Hond-stained warrier, tinguished, and cross one another's paths through all weltering in fields of gere, as he snow-like fairy mist, also spots of blackness that me swoons westward into the country curved ways and cease not."

And now, O mistress of many warriors, in this silen thy own host, already divided into regiments and m which stand armed and expectant, earest thon aught

preparation amongst its populous youth, an oadless ro the far away roaring of the sea, when in the still moony rapid fires. Amid the mist there is the beckoning of a g



performed.

The 1904 cover (illus. 36) has a new design, signed with a monograph. Its main feature is a figure in a long robe, holding a leafy branch over a map of Ireland complete with thatched cottage and religious settlement. It was printed in gold on pale blue card. The design was used for a number of years subsequently, and different colours were used each time.

So, in general, we can see a progression in graphic design of a popular sort associated with nationalism and the literary revival. There's a move from the use of symbols in the late 19th-century, to the transitional style in the very early days of the new century, to full Celticism by about 1910. This is in no way a rigid pattern, but it is a trend which can be found running through all the work looked at. Furthermore, 'designing' was generally restricted to the covers of the publications looked at, or to decorative elements, and it really never stretched to typography other than decorative hand-lettering. Illustrators interpreted Celticism in a more personal way, as we've seen in the work of AE, MacCatmsoil and J.F.Maxwell. We shall now turn our attention to this area.

- 34. A page from <u>A Celtic Christmas</u>, 1898. showing a Celtic panel and decorated initials. (reduced)
- 35. A Celtic tailpiece from A Celtic Christmas, 1900. (same size)

.







33. Illustration by Seagan MacCatmaoil, <u>A Celtic Christmas</u>, 1904, (left). 36. Front cover, <u>A Celtic Christmas</u>,

1907, (above). (reduced)



37.<u>Ireland's Memorial Record</u>, 1923, illuminated by Harry Clarke. (<u>Harry Clarke- His Graphic Work</u>)

38.<u>The Irish Builder</u>, 3rd January 1920, masthead by Harry Clarke.
.(same size- 5mm trimmed each side)



6. ILLUSTRATION

From our look at the <u>Irish Homestead</u>, and its supplements, it seems that illustration with a revival influence flourished, at least from the late 1890's on. Already we've seen work by AE, J.B.Yeats and Seagan MacCatmaoil appearing between the years 1898 and 1904.

Harry Clarke

Among the illustrators whose work was associated with the revival, the best known is undoubtedly Harry Clarke. His work is not an entirely Celtic Revival phenomenon, for his style owes much to Beardsley and the vogue for fantasy work which followed on from the earlier medievalism. And his attitude towards some applications of the revival style may be seen from a comment quoted by Nicola Gordon Bowe in her book <u>Harry Clarke</u>, in which he said that the design of the first stamps issued by the Free State was "horrid", and that a minister of art ought to be appointed before some real blunder "was made!

Clarke was a very strong influence on other illustrators of his period, some of whom were more pro-revival than himself, so it's worth looking at some of his work which does contain a revival influence.

The most outstanding of these was commissioned in 1922 by the Irish National War Memorial sub-committee. Clarke was invited to design the commemorative volumes of names of Irishmen who died in the 1914-18 war. He designed eight decorative borders which were, as Gordon Bowe points out, a combination of Celtic and Art Deco motifs. These are repeated throughout the volumes and the most Celtic of

them goes on the title page for each volume, the rest being repeated at random and sometimes reversed.

The title page has four angels carrying the shields of the four provinces, two each side, surrounded by Celtic patterns composed of interlace and strange zoomorphic forms, some of them mollusc-like in shape. The centre bottom of the page has a semi-circle in which stands Erin with a harp and a wolfhound, flanked on the right with a sunburst, and on the left by a round tower and ruin. This is about as Celtic as Clarke ever got (<u>illus.37</u>)!

The other seven borders vary but all incorporate realistic silhouettes of soldiers in various battle-scenes, complete with rifles, machineguns, horses and headstones. These figures are set in various decorative swirls. One page has a leaf device which incorporates the harp, with Erin forming one of its sides, and topped with a crown. Another has zoomorphic trellis work into which are fitted harps, shamrocks and the crown. A third is very characteristically Clarke, being composed mainly of a patchwork of rectangles of pattern. Strangely, this sort of work has a very 'Celtic' feel to it, perhaps it's the obsessive use of pattern for it's own sake. This obsessiveness can lead to a subjectivity which can be quite unappealing, as with Art O'Murnaghan, but Clarke, like his 'Celtic' predecessors, always managed to keep his work open enough to have public appeal!

The volumes of <u>Ireland's Memorial Record</u> were, as Gordon Bowe says, beautifully printed by Maunsel and Roberts. The set is in the collection of the NCAD library.

Another of Clarke's designs which shows a strongly revivalist influence is the masthead for <u>The Irish Builder</u> which was used from 1920 on (<u>illus.38</u>). There's a very wriggly bit of interlace, some Celtic relief on the pillars, and on either side of the title stands a monk-like figure, atop a beehive hut and some ruins, respectively!

A very typical example of the style Clarke adopted when treating Irish subjects is his unfinished black and white illustration (probably for <u>The Playboy of the Western World</u>, says Gordon Bowe) (<u>illus.39</u>). In it he uses a slightly less ethereal human figure and a wealth of pattern, a lot of it patchwork. He also introduced some modern objects and dress, though overall the style is still fantasy. This approach may also be found in his stained glass windows at the Hugh Lane Gallery, and was the one emulated by many of his Irish contemporaries.

The Dublin Magazine

A look at the <u>Dublin Magazine</u>, a literary journal which first appeared in September 1923, shows the strength of Clarke's influence. The first example is by Millicent Girling, a student of Clarke's, and appeared in the first issue (<u>illus.40</u>). It's for a short story by Brinsley MacNamara. The most 'Clarke' feature, apart from the drawing, is the rather fey cloth cap on the righthand figure, patterned in patchwork. Another, from the second issue, is by Philip Deegan for a story called 'The Ingoldsby Legends' (<u>illus.41</u>). Clarke's influence is quite obvious both in the composition and in the drawing and decoration.

- 40. Illustration by Millicent Girling, <u>Dublin Magazine</u>, August 1923.
- 41. Illustration by Philip Deegan, <u>Dublin Magazine</u>, September 1923.



Other illustrations in the <u>Dublin Magazine</u> have a different revivalism. Art O'Murnaghan appears, using a style much more like his work in the <u>Book of Ressurection</u> than in that on the Oireachtas cover earlier. 'The Volcano', which appears in the June 1924 issue (<u>illus.42</u>) is a crazy Celtic work, with no rigidity left in the interlace atall.

A rather strange approach to Celticism is shown in the illustration 'Balor' by A.O Malaoidh (<u>illus.43</u>). Celtic ornament here is suggested rather than realised.

Others who illustrated for the magazine were Harry Kernoff, J.B.Yeats, and many more. Paintings by John Keating and Sarah Purser were reproduced. Literary contributions came from James Stephens, Liam O'Flaherty, Padraic Colum, and others.

In conclusion, while there is no one trend running through the illustrations shown, all were influenced by the revival in that they chose a consciously Irish subject matter, or included Celtic motifs. Harry Clarke was certainly an influence on some artists, but others developed their own personal Celticism. But there was no 'movement' in illustration comparable to that in graphic design, let alone to that in the other applied arts. It seems that the 1920 s might have seen a flowering of illustrators, as compared to the earlier years. But further research would be needed to verify this.

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42. Illustration by Art O'Murnaghan, <u>Dublin</u> <u>Magazine</u>, January 1924.

43. Illustration by A.
O'Malaoidh, <u>Dublin</u>
Magazine, August 1923.

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS SOCIETY OF IRELAND AND GUILD OF IRISH ART-WORKERS

OF THE FIFTH EXHIBITION

1917

HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE IRISH ART COMPETITION AND EXHIBITION, ORGANIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION FOR IRELAND IN

DUBLIN, BELFAST, CORK

44. Title-page from the fifth Arts and Crafts exhibition, 1917.

7. <u>SOME TYPOGRAPHY IN THE REVIVAL</u>- The Arts and Crafts Catalogues, Cuala Press and The Irish Printer.

In this section we'll see that while most revival publications neglected typography, there were a few exceptions, such as the Arts and Crafts Society exhibition catalogues and the work of the Cuala Press. But even these exceptions lacked the penetration of comparable revival design in England. There was some general awareness of certain aspects of typography during the period, however, as is borne out by discussions on Gaelic type in <u>The Irish Printer</u>. These show that while typographical design- of Gaelic type- may not have been tackled, it was certainly adverted to.

The Arts and Crafts Catalogues.

One place where we might expect to see the revival reflected in a fairly distilled form in in the catalogues of the Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland's exhibitions. After all, the revival was most active in the crafts, and in architecture, and so the exhibition organisers would have been concerned, not just about good design, but also to reflect their revival aesthetic.

The cover of the second Arts and Crafts catalogue, 1899, is not in the slightest bit revivalist, however. In fact it's got a slightly art nouveau flavour in its border of leaves and its illustration of a lady holding an urn and a brush, surrounded by an owl, a pallette, a book and a skull! The inside betrays no design input, either.

The cover for the catalogue of the third exhibition, held in 1904, is quite plain. The fourth, 1906, catalogue cover has two rather



'Celtic myth' looking heads with a chalice held by one of the figures. The list of exhibits is more interesting. Among them are some drawings by John P. Campbell with revivalist titles like 'Niamh appears to Ossian and his companions', and 'Finn finds the Old Men of the Fianna'. Also listed were hand-coloured prints designed by J.B.Yeats and his wife.

Harry Clarke designed the cover for the fifth exhibition, 1917, and it's an attractive piece of fantasy, but not at all Celtic. The whole catalogue was beautifully produced. The pages were not guillotined, indicating hand-made paper, and it was printed by George Roberts in Dublin. It is an exception to the rule about the revivalist's usual indifference to graphic 'design', in so far as its typography and layout is concerned. The whole production, from titlepage, through text, to the ads for firms like Cuala Industries and Cluna Workshops, is set in the same typeface-'Caslon'-and in column widths which allow generous margins. The setting of the ads is particularily attractive, because they appear in a narrow column centred on the page, and each ad is separated by a thin rule. (illus. 44 and 45).

A Celtic touch is provided by Clarke with an illuminated capital 'T' at the beginning of the foreward. The'T' contains a saintly monk holding a book (illus.46). The foreward, by John R.O'Connell, shows how Celtic revivalism was by that time totally accepted by the arts and crafts establishment as the natural aesthetic towards a "conscious and definite" revival in artistic work. It is "the terrible conflict in Europe which causes each nation to study

within which to work. He says that since 1910 there's been a tendency



CUALA INDUSTRIES, LTD.

Embroidery LILY YEATS Hand-Press ELIZABETH C. YEATS Cuala Hand-Press Editor W. B. YEATS

Embroidery, Cushions, Tea Cloths, Table Centres, Opera Cloaks, Card Cases, Broadsides, Hand-Coloured Prints. List of Books, Embroidery, etc., on application.

CHURCHTOWN, DUNDRUM CO. DUBLIN.

CHARLES BRAITHWAITE AND T. H. DRUMMOND

Craftsmen and Designers, Illuminations, Heraldry, Designs for Book-production, Bookbinding, Ecclesiastical and other Fine Embroideries. Memorials in Bronze, ... Brass or Copper Designed and Executed.

STUDIO: 7 CHICHESTER STREET, BELFAST

45. Page with ads from the fifth Arts and Crafts exhibition, 1917. (same size)

FOREWORD



HE ARTS AND CRAFTS SOCIETY OF IRELAND wish to put on record their gratitude to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland for having given the Society an opportunity to take part in this Exhibition. The

two sections, the one arranged by the Department, the other by the Society, explain and supplement each other, and students, craftsmen, and all who are interested in craft work will benefit by the union. It will enable the public to judge the results of the course of training in craft and design given in the Art and Technical Schools under the Department from the selected examples shown in that section. It will help them also to appreciate the more mature work of those who have taken up the practice of craft work in one or other of its branches as the business of their lives.

Although in such a period as that through which we are passing the Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland would not have been able to hold an exhibition of their 15

46. Illuminated capital from the foreword of the catalogue to the fifth Arts and Crafts exhibition, 1917, by Harry Clarke. (same size)

more deeply its own art rather than draw influence from afar". Ireland has turned to its own rich tradition- the Cross of Cong, The Ardagh Chalice and the Tara Brooch. But inspiration should also be drawn from movements of the present, he says, and there should be no slavish reversion to ancient forms.

Among the exhibits were illuminations by Joseph Tierney, George A. Cogan andGeorge Atkinson. There was illuminated lettering from Cuthbert C.English, drawings by J.B.Yeats, a headpiece by Oswald Reeves, Cuala Press editions, and books printed by George Robertsincluding 'Earth of Cualann', written and illustrated by Joseph Campbell. The other revival crafts were well represented, too. The Celtic Revival seems to have been at its peak in so far as the arts and crafts are concerned. And the more specialised graphic arts, like illustration, illumination and lettering, were clearly very popular.

The sixth exhibition was held in 1921, and its catalogue cover was designed by Wilhelmina Geddes, who also illustrated for the Dublin Magazine. Inside, the catalogue repeats the nice typographical style of the last one. Thomas Bodkin's review, mentioned by Gordon Bowe, in The Studio, says that slavish copying of the old glories of Irish art is now out of favour, and that there is little that suggests mere imitation.

A.O'Maolaoid, whose work we've already seen in the Dublin Magazine designed the cover for the seventh catalogue. The design consists of two rather regal and Celtic myth type figures with ornate robes, drawn in a rather stiff way. A huge decorative halo encompasses both heads-

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a feature much used later by the dreadful Jim FitzPatrick. The male figure holds aloft what appears to be an Hiberno-Romanesque religious settlement ! So the Celtic Revival aesthetic was still upheld to some extent by the arts and crafts establishment in 1925, despite increasing criticism. Inside, the catalogue remains similar in format to the previous two. Ads appear for Cuala Industries and for Colm O'Lochlainn's printing firm 'The Sign of the Three Candles' in Harcourt St., among others. (illus. 47 and 48)

The 1925 foreward by P.Oswald Reeves, the enamelist, is interesting as a contrast to the 1917 one. Though he himself was a Celtic Revival artist he is critical of the Celicism which pervaded design at the time- "At the present moment in our history, it is perhaps not surprising that thought is apt to direct itself, not so much to underlying and controlling conditions, as to the adoption of a distinctive national style in the Arts, derived from the Celtic tradition, in apparent unconsciousness of the dependence of national style upon a determined vital striving on the part of a people, to achieve in their actual lives their settled ideal of human dignity". Other countries seem determined to create an environment acceptable to modern life, he says- "from architecture to the smallest utensil everything is being transformed to accord with living conditions. habits and ideals". Reeves feels that a 20th-century style not derived from any pre-existing one has been arrived at. An assumed mannerism, Celtic or otherwise, shows a poverty in ideals and in courage, he says, but a new style will grow in Ireland if we have sufficiently strong modern ideals of "human dignity".

As Sheehy says, we can see from this (she quotes a portion of it)







2 MANOR STREET CLIFTONVILLE ROAD BELFAST

CRAFT WORKERS

THE CUALA INDUSTRIES

HAND-PRESS MISS E. C. YEATS BOOKS

>

PIOUN PIOTURES CHRINTMAN CAPDS CALENDARS PAINTED WOOD CANDLESTICKS BONUS HANN BRUSHES WALL MIRLORS, ETC. CHILDNEN'S URESSES TUSSORE, CHANTUNG, LINEN, UN-FADING COTTON, COTTON CHEPS, EMBROIDERED IN COLOURS, FROM 21 15, TO 24 45, ACCORD-ING TO MEE AND MATERIAL



AUDIORADI RES W. R. VEATS & MISS ELEY YEATS EVENING WEAPS CUSHIONS, BANNER FLAGS, MTC. OLD BLEACH LINENS TEA (LOTHS FROM \$1 45, 6D LUNCH SETS, \$L 25 6D.

SETS OF TABLE MATS, SIX ROUND THREE OVAL, 11 -5, 60, COSY COVERS, 125, 60,

COT AND CRADLE COVERS BEAUTIFUL DESIGNS, PALE COLOURS LINED WITH SILK

BOOKS, PRINTS, EMBROIDERIES, ETC., CAN BE PURCHASED ON THE PREMISES ESTIMATES SUPPLIED FOR SPECIAL ORDERS VISITORS WELCONE, 9-1; 2-5. SATURDAY, 9-12.

In Preparation-

LOVE'S BITTER SWEET : POEMS TRANSLATED FROM THE IRISH BY ROBIN FLOWER

133 LOWER BAGGOT STREET

48. Ads from tha catalogue for the seventh Arts and Crafts exhibition, 1925. (same size)



that by 1925 there was a reaction against the use of Celtic ornament, similar to the earlier reaction against harps and shamrocks. There was a feeling, she says, that <u>Irish</u> art was not to be created simply by reviving formscharacteristic of ancient times. This was certainly the case, I think, in the arts and crafts. But as an <u>iconagraphy</u>, rather than as a design movement, the harps and shamrocks and the Celtic motifs continued in use in some areas of the popular graphic arts. Throughout the 1920's, at any rate, whenever the new Irish state wished to declare itself in visual terms it turned to the 'emblems' and to Celtic ornament. We can see this in the first postage stamps and in <u>The Book of Ressurection</u>- we'll look at these soonand in <u>Ireland's Memorial Record</u> which we've seen.

Finally, a look at the items listed in the 1925 catalogue shows that while the Celtic Revival may have been on the wane, many artists were still working within the style. <u>Irelands Memorial Record</u> was on show, along with <u>Clann Lir</u>, illustrated by A O'Maolaoid who did the cover that year and printed by Colm O'Lochlainn. Decorative scribework included: "an initial letter with Celtic treatment" by Lucy E. Costello BA; an illuminated book by W.Dunne and printed by O'Lochlainn; and eight Gaelic Prayers by Michael O'Brien. Drawings for reproduction include A O'Maolaoid's 'I am Finn the son of Cool' and 'Balor of the Evil Eye', seen earlier.

Other items came from Harry Kernoff, Dun Emer, Cuala, J.B.Yeats, Oswald Reeves and more from Harry Clarke. But a large proportion of the exhibits seem definitely well within the Celtic Revival tradition.

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Cuala Press

In neither of its two phases did the revival generate real exploration in graphic design. But there was some work which came near it! In most of the material we've looked at,'designing' rarely went beyond the front cover and was confined to illustration and decoration. There were exceptions: the Arts and Crafts catalogues from 1917 on, printed by Roberts; <u>Irelands Memorial Record</u> printed by Maunsell and Roberts; and work from Colm O'lochlainn's 'Sign of the Three Candles'.

All of these were pleasing, however, because they came from the hands of <u>good printers</u>. In other words, each was a good printing job which had been typeset and prepared with care and good taste. This doesn't mean that any real <u>design</u> conviction went into their production. Rather, the works mentioned exhibit a traditional and rather conservative 'good taste'.

The only group which came close to being book designers in this sense were Dun Emer, later Cuala, Press. Sheehy gives an account of them. Dun Emer was founded in Dublin in 1902 by Evelyn Gleeson and Lily and Elizabeth Yeats. Both Gleeson and Lily Yeats had backgrounds connected with William Morris and the Guild's ideals came from this influence. Gleeson was born in England and studied carpet design under Alexander Millar, a follower of Morris. Lily Yeats worked as an embroideress under his daughter May. The main crafts at the Dun Emer Guild were embroidery, printing and tapestry, and as far as possible they used Irish materials- paper, linen and wool.

Printing began in 1903 under Elizabeth Yeats's direction. An 18thcentury typeface was chosen, "not eccentric in form, or difficult to



read"- this was 'Caslon'. Paper was made of linen rags without bleaching chemicals, and a small hand-press was used. Elizabeth had learned a little about typesetting in London under Emery Walker, Morris's friend, and with the Women's Printing Society. But she knew nothing about press-work and was, apparently, afraid of machinery! None the less, the Guild began to produce printed work of a high quality and of a distinctive style.

From 1903 Dun Emer produced books, prints and Christmas cards, hand-colouring some of the prints and cards. We've seen mention of this work in the Arts and Crafts catalogues already. By 1916 the Guildhad shed Evelyn Gleeson, who took the 'Dun Emer' title with her, and had become 'Cuala'. Throughout all this time, and right up to the 1940's, the style of book production remained the same. So we can safely look at <u>A Lament for Art O'Leary</u>, published in 1940, as an example of Cuala's work.

The book contains a long poem, translated from the Irish by Frank O'Connor, with six illustrations by J.B.Yeats. The title-page (<u>illus.49</u>) has type and vignette typically centred on the page with generous margins all round. The title, name of author, address of publisher and date of publication are all set in the same typeface-Caslon ~ and in capitals, inflesame point size. This leads to a very harmonious effect. The vignette is a square-format drawing by Yeats and is placed in the middle, between the author's name and title, and the publishing information.

The main text is set in a marrow column down the centre of the page, again with generous margins. Line-spacing is presizely the same as

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Rider of the white palms, How a brooch became you In a shirt of cambric! And your hat with laces — When you rode there, And their streets were bare, 'Twas no love that stayed them But hatred and fear.

My love and my calf Of the race of the earls of Antrim And the Barrys of Eemokilly, A sword became you. A hat with a band, A slender foreign shoe A suit of yarn Woven over the water.

and the second

And a second

My love and my secret 'Tis well you were suited In a five-ribbed stocking Your legs top-booted, Your cornered Caroline Your cracking whip. Your sprightly gelding — Oh, many's the girl That would stop to behold you!

My love and my sweetheart, When I come back The little lad Conor And Fiach the baby Will ask me surely Where I left their father; I will say with anguish 'Twas in Kilnamartyr — They will call the fath er That will never answer.

Berto Starts T

49. and 50. Title-page and double-page-spread from <u>A Lament for Art</u> O'Leary, 1940, published by Cuala Press. (same size)





T HAS BEEN told that there was once a young man of free kindred and whose name was Hallblithe: he was fair, strong, & not untried in battle; hewas of the House of the Raven of old

time. I This man loved an exceeding fair damsel called the Hostage, who was of the

- 51. An example of type-design and page-design by William Morris-
- from The <u>Story of the Glittering Plain</u>, 1890. (<u>William Morris</u> and his World).
- 52. A page from the 'Chaucer' by William Morris, 1896. (<u>William</u> Morris and his World).



on the title page, and the same typeface and point size are used again. A double-page-spread (<u>illus.50</u>) shows that while all the design elements are pure and of excellent quality, when put together the effect is rather plain and featureless, though its restraint, and the quality of the paper, illustrations, and setting make it quite pleasing. Missing, however, is the sense that the medium has been mastered to the extent of having a design theory behind it. We get this sense from the work of Morris's Kelmscott Press, but never seem to find it in Celtic Revival work.

None the less, Cuala Press editions were held in high esteem by their contemporaries, as they are today. A note in <u>The Irish Printer</u> of March 1926 reports that a review in <u>The Sphere</u> praises the books printed by Cuala as being better than any of the same kind in England, where the type is too small, or the line of type too long!

There's no doubt that the Arts and Crafts movement in England, from tne mid-19th-century on, had a great influence on the Celtic Revival arts. That movement represented a genuine design revolution, and it provided many of the forms upon which the Celtic Revival hung its decoration. The difference between the two movements was precisely this- the former movement changed the <u>shape</u> of design, while the latter really just developed a decorative style. And in Ireland it seems that there was really no Arts and Crafts movement separate from the Celtic Revival.

One Arts and Crafts artist, and veteran of the Gothic Revival, was William Morris. As we've seen already, he had a direct influence on some of the Celtic Revivalists. It is as a contrast to their

-49-


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-49-



graphic design, particularily typographical design, that we shall briefly look at him now.

William Morris only began to control the design, printing and production of his books in the last decade of his life. In that period, as Ray Watkinson notes in <u>William Morris and Kelmscott</u>, his press printed over fifty books, all of a very high standard, and Morris himself designed three typefaces for use in the press. His type design was influenced by early letterforms and by the art of calligraphy, which he had explored since the 1860's. One of these, 'Golden' (<u>illus.51</u>) was based on a 1476 roman face by the famous Nicholas Jenson. It is the most readible of the three, and is based to some extent on a handwriting script, as can be seen from the slanted cross-stroke on the lower case 'e'. The other two typefaces were 'gothic', though not 'black letter', more a medium between this and roman.

Morris's typefaces were used often in conjunction with lavish decoration, sometimes quite simply, to create books with a strong, unified design which echoed their early models, but were also something new and in keeping with the Gothic Revivalism of the age. An example of this unity may be seen in <u>The Story of the Glittering Plain</u>, 1890, (<u>illus.51</u>) where illuminated initials are used in conjunction with the typeface 'Golden' to produce a complete integration of type and decoration. Letter-spacing, word-spacing and line-spacing have all been adjusted to achieve this effect.

The Kelmscott 'Chaucer' represents the height of Morris's achievement as printer, typographer and book designer. It took nearly four years

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to complete and was ready only three months before his death in 1896. The type used was his gothic 'Troy', in an ammended form, and the overall effect is perhaps over ornate for modern tastes (<u>illus.52</u> and 53). What is interesting as a contrast to the book design and scribe-work seen from the Celtic Revival is the attention to design elements such as the spacing mentioned above, and the total integration of type, illustration and ornament, all based on worked out proportions and design principles.

It was the conviction about the rightness of what they were doing, in human terms, together with a full exploration of materials and medieval forms, in design terms, which gives the work of the English Arts and Crafts movement, and Morris in particular, its completeness, and the sense of ideas and forms thoroughly realised. Morris, in other words, started from first principles and followed the logic of his revivalism. In the Celtic Revival the ground work required for a real <u>design</u> movement was not done, but we can see from the former what the latter might have been. This holds for typography above all, because there was a genuine need during the period for the design of good Gaelic typefaces. This is in no way to dismiss the appealing vigour and energy of the Celtic Revival work, but it helps explain why, once the vogue for Celtic decoration passed, there was little graphic design legacy for succeeding generations to work on.

The Irish Printer

The Irish Printer was the monthly journal of the printing trade in the first years of the 20th-century, and was published from 23, Bachelors Walk. It is of interest to look at it for references to the Celtic Revival, as it should give some indication as to its penetration





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The Same to Yourself

1924

" Guid luck and joy be with you all !" Sang an old-time songster gaily : May the echo of his glad refrain Ring round your pathway daily, Dispelling care and dull despair-Defying weary sadness; Filling life with visions fair And crowning it with gladness; So that the merry Christmas chime Of " Peace on earth, goodwill," May like a garland round you twine And shield you from all ill, Till New Year's joy on earth shall blend With blessings more enduring, Where peace and plenty never end And ills shall need no curing. Till then may you and yours be blest With every needed blessing, And each glad day, like sun's bright ray, Bring treasures worth possessing. And when, like glorious sunset glow The evening shadows linger, May life's decline with glory shine, Touched by Time's kindly finger.

WM. J. SAUNDERS.

54. A page with Celtic ornament from <u>The Irish Printer</u>, January 1924. (same size)

into printed material generally. The journal is totally plain in appearance but its content shows it to have been remarkably abreast of Revivalist concerns.

In the issue for June-July, 1918, the editorial contains a review of a copy received of specimens of work by students of the Dublin School of Book Production. What exactly this school was is not clear, but the editorial praises the standard of work while criticising the omission of Celtic ornament! This neglect he finds hard to justify in such a school- "not a sign of anything Celtic from beginning to end.... not a headpiece, tail-piece, border or ornament....". And this inspite of the "greatest resurgence of Nationality within the memory or living man". Often, he says, "we have looked in vain for the decorative title page, by an Irish artist who.... could suggest to the imagination by design what the writer aimed to convey in words". The writer hopes that in the coming season this lack will be remedied, not by the introduction of round towers, sunbursts and wolfhounds, but by the cultivation of Celtic design and ornament.

This piece shows how the 'emblems' of the early revival had become unpopular at this time and how it was now proper to demand the use Celtic ornament as a sign of the spirit of nationalism which had become the accepted 'ideology'. The writer is perhaps a little unfair in finding no sign of the style about, but clearly he felt there was not enough of it! It's interesting to note that the journal took its own advice a few months later, in the November-December, 1919, issue, where there are a couple of rather crude decorated initials.

The December 1924 issue shows the journal making another of its rare

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forays into decoration, and an extremely crude Celtic border, incorporating rather odd wolfhounds and shamrocks, appears as a surround to a seasonal poem (<u>illus.54</u>). The same issue contains a reproduction of new Gaelic typefaces from the Lanston Monotype Corporation (<u>illus.55</u>).

In May, 1925, is an article on a Belfast printers suppliers, named Strain, illustrated with a charming concoction of five photographic vignettes of the firm's building, the central one in the shape of a postcard, all entwined in a delicate interlace of shamrocks. The design is rather in the stlye of the older revival, and reminiscent of the work of the Belfast firm of Marcus Ward in the 19th-century (<u>illus.56</u>). Perhaps the work of that firm continued to have influence there after its demise.

The Irish Printer was always good at keeping its readers informed of interesting reports in other publications. In October, 1928, a piece in the <u>Irish Independent</u> is mentioned where an 'admirer of Gaelic lettering' feels that too often only the poorest specimens of it appear in print. The 'admirer' blames the Gaelic League et al for having done little to encourage good printing, and says that all too common are the 'shaded' or "thick and thin" letters, which are objectionable in small print, and don't look very well in large print either!

The controversy is continued in the issues of December, 1928, and February, 1929, when an article in the <u>Irish Book Lover</u> by Colm O'Lochlainn, the printer mentioned earlier, is reported. In this article O'Lochlainn says that to date little attention has been

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Set Seattran

THE PRINTER on GAELIC PRINTING

THE technicalities of Gaelic Printing have hitherto been given very scant attention, either by Printers, Typefounders, or Authors—the three crafts most intimately concerned.

Nothing less than a study of the problems by a group or commission representative of all three bodies would be likely to bring about any results, but for the moment it is useful to set forth the difficulties as seen by the Printer.

Capitals 29; Small caps. 29; Lowercase letters (which includes the usual diphthongs and ligatures x, x, fi, ffi, fl, ffl, ff) 33; Points, *i.e.*, punctuation marks and brackets 10; Fractions, *i.e.*, halves, quarters, thirds, and eighths 9; Commercial signs 8; Reference marks, *i.e.*, asterisks, daggers, &c. 8; Braces 3 sizes; Dashes 3 lengths; Leaders 1; Quads 4 kinds; Spaces 4 kinds.

This enumeration does not include accented letters (not often used in English Printing); italic type, which is so useful for emphasis; or the heavy black type called Clarendon, so much used for headings, sub-headings, and (in school books) for important names or incidents. While Clarendon can be done without, the italic can hardly be, and a workable fount of italic contains capitals, lowercase, and points—at least 72 characters, even if the figures, &c. are omitted.

I have given this in extenso to show the comparative poverty of the Gaelic equipment at present available. It contains no small capitals, no fractions, no reference marks, and no italic alphabet whatever. Added to this there are really only two faces made, one light, the other heavy—a marked contrast with the Roman Alphabet, of which there are some hundreds to choose from for book-work and display.

The type in The Irish Book Lover is for the most part. Caslon Old Face (the smaller type is Ronaldson Old Style :

57. Page set in 'Caslon Old Face', from <u>The Irish Book Lover</u>, May-June 1928. (same size)

paid to the technicalities of Gaelic printing by printers, typefounders or authors. He calls for a commission to be gathered from all these people to look into the matter.

In describing the poverty of Gaelic equipment available, he mentions the complete absence of small capitals, fractions, reference marks and italics. There are really only available, he says, a light version and a heavier one. He pays tribute to the Monotype Corporation who, in 1913, collaborated with The O'Rahilly to cut a new lower case 'r' and 's' for their standard fount, and evolved two new heavy faces suitable for headings and ads. These may well be the faces reproduced in The Irish Printer of December, 1924, (<u>illus.55</u>). O'Lochlainn urges the printers of Ireland to demand from Monotype small capitals in all sizes and perhaps later on an italic face.

At present, though, he says that it is easier to design a beautiful book, even in Irish, using roman. This will remain so until the 'average' Gaelic fount is extended. Just which typeface this 'average' fount was is not clear, but it certainly came in for a lot of criticism. In the original article, in the <u>Irish Book Lover</u>, O'Lochlainn compares a page, in that journal, in English and set in 'Caslon Old Face', with a page in Irish, in the fount just referred to (<u>illus.57</u> <u>and 58</u>). He contrasts the 'pleasing diversity' of the English page with the Irish one and "ceases to wonder at the perpetual sameness of our Gaelic book printing". That 'average' fount, at any rate, he considers the worst of the twenty Gaelic typefaces ever used. As noted in connection with Gaelic League printing, he finds it "spiky and patchy", and in anything over 18-point it is "an atrocity compared to even the most amateurish penmanship";

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THE IRISH BOOK LOVER

Sean-cara vam ' Conán Maol '- Pávrais Ó Séasoa A FUAIR DAS AN 2140 ADRAIN AJUS DI AICMEALA ORM 5an beit as an socraio. Ar mo bealad abaile dam AS SASANAID CONNACAS AR AN DPAIPEAR ' SJEAL DEARAC a éaza.' Cúiz blian véaz ó soin azus mise im' matrac, tária com beit as obair le Conán ar coisce CRAOIDE CUALANN DE CONNRAD NA JAEDILJE 1 RAC Maoinis, agus níor cailleas 30 póill cuimne na léactaí a tuy sé uaio an trat sin ar Stair na n-Éireann. LEARJUS NUA A DI 10NNTA AJUS É AJ CUR SÍOS JO suimeamail ar Jac a Otáinic ré ceanntar Daile Ata Cliat o aimsir an Oilinn anuas.

Ouine croideamail misneamail a bí i 5Conán agus ba mor an méadú meanman agus arou incinne a cuir se orainne na malraiz. Seo alt a scriob 'Fiachra Euzeac' raoi 'san Sunday Independent, April

scéal ouaire seo do leatnuit moé .1. bás ár moeascarao paorais O Seasoa, 'Conán Maol.' 45 4 AIT communoe, TIS NORA, DOCAR JORT NA SLAINTE,

Cé 50 Raio chazaois mait aize oo di sé driozmar AIDIO, AJUS DA MINIC É A CUAIRO AR DARR CRAMA AMAC 50 Dim Cavair, ball morclú vo b'annsa leis.

1 Sceannear Loc Drain, ar compar nervin, vo RUSAD PAORAIS CUAIRIM DEIC MOLIANA IS CRI FICID 6 soin. Cuy se an Jaeoily leis ona oize : 15 aize oo bi si 50 51an runneamail agus 15 aige, com mait, Do bi an peann tiomta, Ruo nac 5404 innsint von BREAM DEAS DICEALLAC & RINN AN MORSAOCAR IONSANCAG Can ceann na ceangan Outcais Deic moliana ricear 6 soin. Is onta san oo bioo an-aine, cim-aisce Condin o percoinc an an "SCLarbeam Soluis" 546 maidin doine, 50 monthon a cur slos an pol Cruzan Azus an Iner a cine a bi az croid zo dian docraceae ar son a n-acarda. D'ine an uair a flac se cuige





62. The first set of definitives of the Free State.

So we see that while no real work was done during the Celtic Revival period on the design of new Gaelic typefaces, there was much disatisfaction with them, and they were discussed in detail by their users. This failure to tackle typography for the Irish language was a bit of a lost opportunity, in view of the exploration that went on during a similar, but Gothic, revival in England!

Finally, an ad from the <u>Irish Printer</u> of February 1928 is shown (<u>illus.59</u>). It's for 'Ardee Vellum' and shows how Celtic ornament had by then become popular in ads for Irish products. This sort of usage continued, to some extent, right up to the 1960's.



8. THE NATIONAL STYLE- Art O'Murnaghan, postage stamps.

Graphic design in the Celtic Revival, as we've seen , was mainly concerned with a sort of illumination, combined with a fairly crude Gaelic hand-lettering or scribe-work. Some of this work was done in the more rarified end of the movement, for journals of the literary revival. Some of it, a marginally more popularised version, was done for publications attached to the nationalist cause. When the new Irish state finally came into being, Celticism was firmly established as a means whereby nationhood could be visually proclaimed, though elements from the earlier revival were also used.

Art O'Mumaghan

An example of how Celticism came to have an offical function can be seen in the work of Art O'Murnaghan. A late exponent of the Celtic Revival, O'Murnaghan was an actor by profession and self-taught as an artist. Apparently he was busy as an illustrator and illuminator. We've already seen his work, earlier on the Oireachtas programme cover, 1902, and later in illustrations for the Dublin Magazine. His work shows a development from a rather stiff style in 1902 to a looser and more individual approach in the 1920's.

In 1922 a competition was held by the Irish Government to find an artist to design Leabhar na hAiseirighe or the Book of Ressurection. This was to be a Republican memorial celebrating the winning of independence. O'Murnaghan won the commission and worked from 1924-28 to complete nine and a half of the twenty seven illuminated pages planned. Financial disputes arose between O'Murnaghan and the committee, however, and work was suspended until the Department of Education stepped in in 1943. From then until his death in 1954

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finished or put together. The loose pages are now in the National

ancient manuscripts, is a very personal interpretation. It combines zoomorphic forms, and lettering. The Eastern influence may be seen especially in the 'Men of the Coasts' page (illus.60). A turbulent sea, divided in two by a layer of extended interlace, predominates. Above is land, and a stylised sky with stars in which sits a sun, incorporated with a sail. Celtic interlace proliferates down the sides of the design, including stylized birds at the top of the design, and stylized Eastern looking ships. There are inscriptions in Irish coloured in blues with touches of red and gold. As Sheehy points out, the treatment of the water and the ships has a particularily Eastern feeling. One might also point out the oriental dragon in the centre

interlacing. This distortion may be explained, perhaps, by his belief, reported by Larmour, that the lines of Celtic ornament should grow out of natural forms. His interlace seems to have no rigid structure. and looks as if someone had pulled one of the strands, causing it to collapse in a heap! This may be seen in the 'Treaty Page' (illus.61). This composition features a map of Ireland on which is superimposed an elaborate Celtic confection, richly patterned and coloured and





61. The 'Treaty Page' from Leabhar na hAiseirighe by Art O'Murnaghan. (The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past)

tri-colour and elements from the British flag also appear.

Jeanne Sheehy finds O'Murnaghan's work "exquisitely decorative, fine and intricately designed". Etienne Rynne, in the journal Topic 24, 1972, considers it a wonderful "blossoming forth", demonstrating that a modern artist could be totally at home in an ancient style. Paul Larmour says that O'Murnaghan's work is the most "original graphic work" of the Revival: "an original interpretation and reworking of the old.... conventions" and "freely developed, yet tightly controlled". He says that O'Murnaghan went beyond the straight foreward Revival and created an entirely personal art that was "new and vital".

In fact, this work is hardly 'new and vital' in any important sense at all! It seems to me to be fairly clumsy in execution- cf. the lettering, where letters on the same line are uneven in size and styleand is a good example of a style so subjectively obsessive that it fails to make itself available to anyone other than the artist. In other words, his work is entirely ideosyncratic and is therefore quite obscure and difficult to understand. It's not a true development, since it was too subjective to be part of a new trend. Indeed, it seems to me to be really the 'end of the line' for the vogue for 'interpreting' Celtic ornament.

The Postage Stamps

The new Irish state adopted the symbols from the early revival and the decorative style of the Celtic Revival as a means for expressing national identity. How far this went and for how long it continued into the century is a topic worthy of investigation. But it's worthwhile, finally, to look at the first postage stamps to get an

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indication of what happened.

In 1922 a competition was held to choose designs for the new definitives. The entries, without exception, were revivalist in style. The winning designs are illustrated (illus.62). One of these, seen here in the 3 -pence stamp, was by Millicent Girling, mentioned earlier as an illustrator for the Dublin Magazine and a student of Harry Clarke's -who didn't like the designs! It's interesting that while Celtic ornament decorates all the stamps to some degree, 'emblems' such as the shamrock, the high cross, and the sword of light, largely predominate. In fact, the favoured aesthetic is a perfect example of the 'transitional' style identified earlier as appearing in publications from the late 1890's to about 1910- a mixture of Celtic ornament, and fairly representational renderings of these symbols or 'emblems'. And some of the losing designs show the transitional style even more typically, especially some of those printed by O'Loughlin, Murphy and Boland. In these, round towers, harps and sunbursts, together with Celtic borders, proliferate.

Perhaps, after all, this was the revivalist style most popular with the public!

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9. CONCLUSION

An outline has been presented of the progress of both popular and specialised graphic design during the Irish revivalist periodfrom the early 19th-century birth of a new set of 'emblems' to the decorative Celtic Revival later. We have seen how Ireland gradually adopted, in its graphic material, an iconography which it used, firstly to encourage and educate itself, secondly to symbolize its struggle for freedom, and thirdly to distinguish itself as a sovereign state.

Our survey hasn't really been extensive enough to show how soon the new iconography, promoted by the antiquarians and the Young Irelanders, began to appear in popular graphics other than those associated directly with the revival. But by the mid-century the Repeal card, the work of the firm of Marcus Ward, and ads in the Arts and Manufactures catalogues show that it had begun to make an appearance. And one ad in the latter contained a 'veritable catalogue' of the new symbolism, suggesting that by this date such sentiments must have become quite acceptable and desirable as a selling point.

At the same time, by 1861, Margaret Stokes's work shows that in the specialised graphics area Celticism was also beginning to put in an appearance.

In the 1890's the 'emblems' proliferated on journal covers and mastheads connected in some way with the nationalist movement. So the groundwork done by the antiquarians had finally had its effect.



Meanwhile the Celtic Revival which had dominated in the arts and crafts since the 1880's finally begins to show up. In the late 1890's it appears at first used in tandem with the earlier iconography, in a combination style which may be termed transitional - shamrocks and round towers combined with Celtic interlace and Gaelic lettering. Good examples of the transitional style were found in mastheads from Fainne an Lae and the second Dublin Penny Journal. This style was not necessarily transitional in chronological terms, though this was generally the case. For instance, the first stamps of the Free State display this mixture of themes.

By the first decade of the 20th-century totally Celtic designs start to appear, again in popular and broadly nationalist or revivalist publications. Examples of this development were seen on the Oireachtas programme covers. The 'emblems' had by then become suspect ideologically, and were probably thought a little vulgar by Celtic Revivalists.

When nationality had to be expressed officially from 1922 on, the older iconography was adopted once more, even if used with a small amount of Celtic ornament, as in the postage stamps. Perhaps, as suggested earlier, the old sentimental symbols, and the transitional style, were always the most popular with the public, anyway!

As far as illustration during the Celtic Revival goes, there seems to have been a bit of a flowering in the 1920's, as can be seen in journals like the Irish Homestead and the Dublin Magazine. No single trend ran through this work, but many illustrators chose a consciously Irish subject matter, or included Celtic motifs. When they did use a Celtic approach there was no one style- illustrators



developed their own brand of Celticism, as can be seen in the work of AE, A O'Maoloidh and Art O'Murnaghen, among others.

In general, the Irish revival in both its phases was not really a design revolution! During the first phase an iconagraphy was adopted and superimposed upon traditional forms in all the applied arts, or sometimes upon Gothic Revival forms. When the Celtic Revival took over in the specialised arts, the Arts and Crafts movement had come into its own in England. Under the influence of the Gothic Revival forms were being explored and refined, and materials fully exploited for the first time. This movement had a great influence in Ireland with English artists coming over to work and teach here, and Irish artists being trained in London. The Celtic Revival happened at the same time and the two elements mixed to produce a new style.

Perhaps this is one reason why a separate design movement failed to develop in tandem with the Celtic Revival. It's disappointing that there was not more exploration of forms. Much of the work is simply Celtic ornament applied to given forms. This ornament was often applied in a fairly straight forward way. When it was developed, by artists like O'Murnaghan, the results are not always very successful!

The revival provided a wonderful opportunity for typographical design. The popularity of writing in the Irish language created a genuine need for good Gaelic typefaces.But this challenge was not taken up. This failure was not due to any lack of awareness, as we've seen, and there was much discussion of, and dissatisfaction with, the available types. A precedent had been set, by William

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Morris, for a revivalist exploration in typography, but it was not followed here.

One other reason for the lack of exploration in design during the Celtic Revival has to do with the artists themselves. Quite a few were not professional in that they were also involved in other activities. Where they were professional, they did not necessarily spend many years working within the Revival style, or in the same art. Charles Russell, the painter, who produced some fine Revival ceramics in the 1880's, is an example of this trend, as are the Yeats sisters to some extent. So there must have been a certain lack of continuity.

But all this said, the work of the Celtic Revival has a beauty and an energy which makes it exciting, and very evocative for Irish people. And a large and coherent body of work was produced in all the applied arts from 1880 to well into the 20th-century. The exact extent of its impact on graphic design deserves to be studied further.



CATALOGUES Exhibition of Arts, Industries and Manufacture, Dublin, 1872 Exhibition of Irish Arts and Manufactures, Dublin, 1882 Oireachtas programmes, Dublin, 1897-1920 The Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland, catalogues, Dublin, 1899-1925 PRIMARY SOURCES FOR DESIGN RESEARCH Dublin Penny Journal, 1832-36 Exhibition of Arts, Industries and Manufacture, catalogue, 1872 Exhibition of Irish Arts and Manufactures, catalogue, 1882 Fáinne an Lae, 1899-1903 An Claidheamh Soluis, 1903-14 Dublin Penny Journal, 1902-03 Samhain, 1901-08 Samhain, 1915-18 Sinn Fein, daily and weekly, 1909-25 Sinn Fein miscellaneous publications, 1912-26 Oireachtas Programmes, 1897-1920 The Irish Homestead, 1897-1908 Ireland's Memorial Record, 1923 The Irish Builder, 1920 The Dublin Magazine, 1923-24 The Arts and Crafts Society of Ireland catalogues, 1899-1925 A Lament for Art O'Leary, Dublin, 1940 The Irish Printer, 1918-1930 The Irish Book Lover, 1909-30