

Dublin-the starting point for Irish explorations

PART II

By GEOFFREY BAKER

Probably the best starting point for ones Irish explorations would be Dublin, the capital city of about 3/4 million inhabitants i.e. slightly over 1/4 of the total population. The arriver at Pearse Station will debouch into the dreary wilderness of Westland Row and Pearse Street, but can refresh his aesthetic soul by passing immediately behind these to the matured green lawns and ancient grey stone of Trinity College. This is architecturally pleasing, particularly Front Square, which offers a Campanile affording an irresistible challenge to the unsober mountaineer; and some cobblestones prized for their history and guaranteed to wrench a few ankles on a slippery day. A colourable studious purpose may justify securing accommodation on the campus, which is both very cheap and within easily strolling distance of the whole downtown area. The college boasts a copyright library so most studious purposes would be pursuable there. One might be an examination of the Book of

Kells, which is historic, beautiful and, with its recurrent motifs of meandering curlicues and snakes swallowing their own tails, may afford some insight into the Celtic character.

Of the possible strolls, a left turn out of Front Gate takes one up Grafton Street to St. Stephens Green. The former has the ritziest shops in Dublin, and the latter is credited in popular song with some unlikely happenings, involving President DeValera, an ass and assorted members of the British Royal family. A right incline from the same starting point brings one to the River Liffey. Left at this point brings one to the Guinness brewery with tours every hour, more or less, with pleasing views of the River en route. Other senses are less gracefully saluted and there is much comfort in Guinnesses reassurances their water supplies are not drawn from the Liffey. Alternatively one may proceed straight ahead up the noblest broadest thoroughfare, O'Connell Street. Here is the celebrated G.P.O., site of sundry original

independence noises. Since everybody claims they or their uncles were there at the time, numbers then present would have filled the largest Roman amphitheatres several times over, but somehow they all packed into this quite small space. Outside there may sometimes be observed uniformed members of a certain non existent illegal organization, collecting monies. Unfortunately no one has told their official Press Secretary that they are non existent. Problems of that gentleman include explaining the death of one of their people by accidental shooting on a training camp range. Obviously this was a martyrdom blameable, like all other catastrophes, on the Brits. However, since the training camps do not exist either, the more immediate cause of death remained obscure.

Night life of the city is very much focussed on pubs, several of which have admirable singing groups. Try the Abbey tavern in Hoath or the Old Shieling at Raheny. In that the original (and, as ever, quite unavailing) English attempts to tidy up the Irish

scene were at the behest of the then Pope (Adrian IV) some appreciation of those efforts might be expected. However, it is conspicuously lacking in most of the songs. Irrespective of the hour specified in party invitations, no arrivals are expected (not even the host's) before closing time. The same applies to rugger club and other dances - the early arrival sees only the empty floor and, possibly, a few incurably optimistic girls. The function of the dances is essentially that performed by singles bars elsewhere, so earlier arrival would be pointless. Discotheques are few in number and modest in size, ambition and most other respects except decibels. A partial exception to this is the Zhivago on Baggot Street.

An unkind foreign critic visiting the Dublin theatre festival observed Ireland's only contribution to the theatre was the length of the interval (necessary to allow for thirst slaking). This in fact is far from the only plus, and several theatres would well repay a visit. The Abbey has been expensively refurbished and, from the outside,

closely matches the charm of a disused aircraft hanger. Inside, however renovation was more successful and it is acoustically and visually excellent. Nestling underneath it is the Peacock, a highly conservative experimental theatre. Coyly lurking in the bus station, and sharing its refreshment bar, is the Eblana. Rarely can one fall over so many bags of groceries in a theatre interval.

Prior to 1970, Catholics desirous of attending Trinity required a dispensation from their bishop. This type of information may give some tourists fears that their own moral fibre may be corrupted by a visit. Reassurance is available on every side. Official statistics prove that no prostitution exists in the country (nor, of course, the attendant health hazards). One should ignore scurrilous rumour suggesting some evidence to the contrary is findable no further away than Merrion Squire, home of, inter alia, the occasionally smouldering British Embassy and the National Art Gallery (which, incidentally, dispenses excellent teas, in addition to culture.)

fall festival

FRIDAY NOV. 3:

Festival Ball: Lady Dunn Hall 9-1 am Tickets: SRC Office \$3.00

Movies: T102 7:00p.m. (1) KELLEY'S HEROES
(2) MAD DOGS AND ENGLISH MEN

Pub in the SUB: Cafateria 9-1 am Featuring: SEA DOG \$1.00

SATURDAY NOV. 4:

Pushball: 10 a.m. Buchanan Field

Football Warmup: STUD 9 am - 1 pm

Football Game: UNB vs ACADIA College Field 1:30

Leder hosen Bierfest: McConnel Hall 9-1am THE ROMEROS OM-PA-PA

SUNDAY NOV. 5:

Slalom Car Rally: UNB by LDH :12-5 for Schooner Trophy

Ping Pong : morning - ping-pong \$1 (entries to Dud Shoppe) 1:00 p.m.