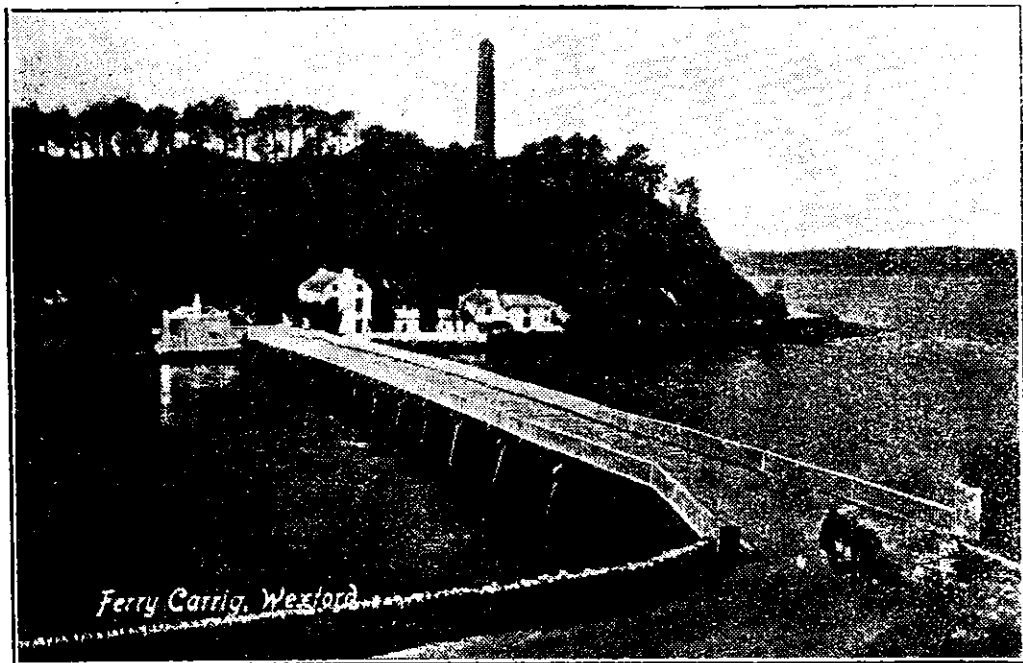


NOTES OF TRAVEL

THE LAST GLIMPSE OF ERIN.

(By J.K.)



FERRY CARRIG, WEXFORD.

After a showery April and a wintry May, during which I was often sorely tempted to fold my tent and steal silently away from the green shores of Erin, there came a June such as one dreams of when looking back to the golden days of long ago. The hawthorn was sweet on every roadside, the beeches never had such wonderful foliage, and, as a man said to me, the chestnut trees, with their wax-like plumes, were like Benediction services.

Followed a splendid July, during which the farmers smiled as they watched the long tresses of the meadows ripening for the mower, and as they saw the corn, that had remained so close to the earth till now, shooting up boldly to welcome the warm kisses of the sun. As the cold rains of May succeeded the tearful April, people shook their heads and wondered what was going to happen at all, at all, if we had another bad season. But the long hours of sunshine revived the dying hopes, and for once in a while even the farmers were pleased.

It was ideal weather for a rover like myself, and I enjoyed every minute of it. Once, as I have already written, I escaped to Scotland, and once I went over to London and spent a few days motoring in England. But always I came back to enjoy more than ever *il dolce far niente* by the Wexford shores. The Western Ocean (which, for the benefit of landlubbers, I may say is the Atlantic) is now between me and dear old Loc Garmain, but over many seas and for as many years as God gives me I shall carry the memories of those summer days and of the old friends whom neither years nor distance changes.

Time and again I found myself lying in the sun on the grassy head of Bag-in-Bun Bay, and looking out across the waters over

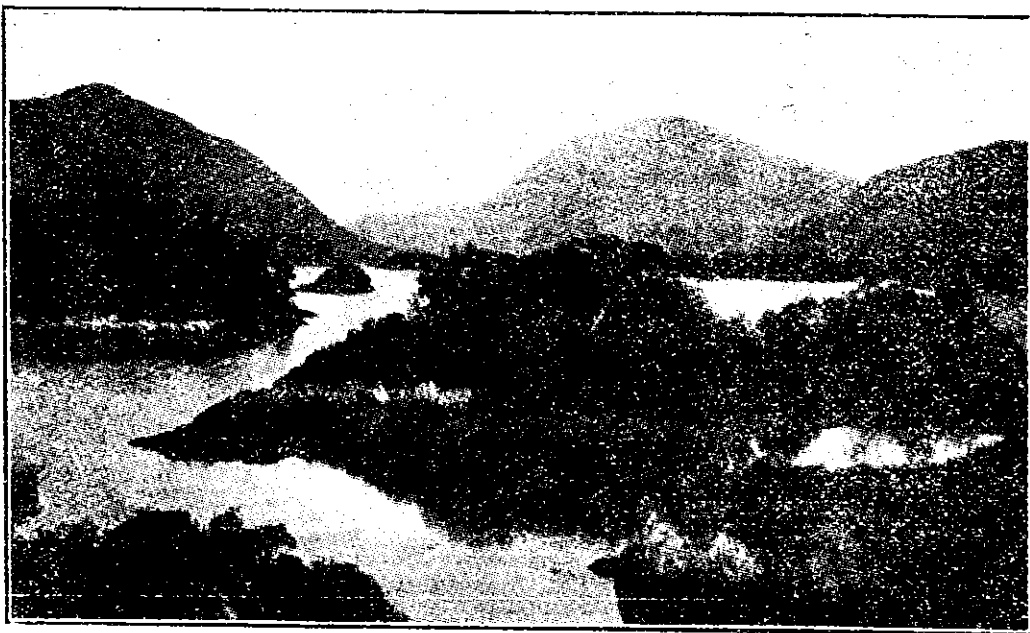
which, on a fatal day, more than seven hundred years ago now, Raymond le Gros and his Norman freebooters sailed for the age-long conquest of Ireland. There below me was the clear water in which their two ships—*La Bague* and *La Bonne*—sailed right up to the cliffs; behind me were the remains of the ancient trenches thrown up for the great battle in which Raymond here defeated the Danes who marched on him from Waterford. Across the Bay was the site of the Buried City of Bannow, of whose phantom bells the fishermen used to tell me years ago when I was learning to love the sea and to handle a sailing boat.

To the left of Bannow was Tintern Abbey,

first built by Fitzstephen, in thanksgiving for his escape from a storm; and beyond it was a great panorama of Wexford county, with its historic hills breaking the skyline. Over there was Forth Mountain, and just behind it lay Wexford town; in the west was Slieve Coyltha, where the big stone fences gave a spice to hunting in the old days; and in the north, beyond Blackstairs and Mount Leinster, was the dim outline of Vinegar Hill, with its memories of the hopeless rebellion of '98.

Looking around, towards the south, I saw the Hook promontory, with the lighthouse at its extremity. It is all historic ground, but it would take too long now to write about it. But I will tell you how it got its name, which is something I learned one day from my friend, Chevalier Gratian Flood.

On the cliffs, near Slade, stand the four bare walls of a very old church. To this day it is called St. Brecan's church, and recently Father Cloney, the P.P. of Templetown, found a fine Ogham stone near it. Brecan was a Welsh prince who came over here before the time of St. Patrick, just as did St. Ibar and St. Vaux and other old Wexford saints. Brecan had a son named Dubhan, who also became a saint. Down there, close to the Hook Tower, you will see, clustering round the grey walls of another ruined church, the little village of Churchtown. The church here was first built by Dubhan, and in old times it was called Kildubhan, or Dubhan's church. Tradition has it that the beacon light on the point was first kindled by Dubhan. There is a State Paper record giving a grant, dated in the twelfth century, for the maintenance of the light kept on the Hook Point by the monks of Kildubhan. But in those days, instead of calling it the Hook Point they called it Rinn Dubhan, or Dubhan's Point. Now Dubhan,



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