



NatSCA

Natural Sciences Collections Association

<http://www.natsca.org>

Biology Curators Group Newsletter

Title: The Zoology Museum at Trinity College Dublin

Author(s): Not Listed.

Source: Not Listed. (1981). The Zoology Museum at Trinity College Dublin. *Biology Curators Group Newsletter, Vol 3 No 1*, 36 - 37.

URL: <http://www.natsca.org/article/1863>

NatSCA supports open access publication as part of its mission is to promote and support natural science collections. NatSCA uses the Creative Commons Attribution License (CCAL) <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/> for all works we publish. Under CCAL authors retain ownership of the copyright for their article, but authors allow anyone to download, reuse, reprint, modify, distribute, and/or copy articles in NatSCA publications, so long as the original authors and source are cited.

THE ZOOLOGY MUSEUM AT TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

The Department of Zoology museum in Trinity College Dublin has been in existence since 1887. At that time the museum's display area consisted of a large ground floor with a spiral staircase leading to the galleries above. However, as time progressed and the demand for office and laboratory space increased with the growing numbers of students, areas in the Zoology building were allocated to other departments in the faculty. This resulted in drastic changes in the size and style of the museum and it now occupies only a relatively small area on the Zoology department's first floor.

The museum's function is primarily a teaching one, providing practical demonstrations for over 300 undergraduate students each year. These demonstrations include a wide range of material covering all the major animal groups. Excluding the insect material, the museum has over 5,000 specimens in its collection, the majority of which are no longer on display. Probably the most valuable specimen is a mounted preparation of Ireland's last Great Auk (*Alca impennis*)*. These birds inhabited the North Atlantic region until they became extinct in the mid-19th century largely as a result of predation by man. The particular specimen on display was presented to Trinity College in 1844 by a Dr. Burkitt. It is of significant interest as it was in fact the last Great Auk seen alive in Ireland and is the only known example showing immature plumage. Other specimens of interest on display include a Passenger Pigeon, Tasmanian Wolf, New Zealand Night Parrot, a Black Rhinoceros and an Indian Elephant. The collection also includes material of historical interest including samples of Globigerina ooze from the Challenger expedition of 1872, insect material from the collections of Tardy, Haliday, Wright and Coulter and a series of beautifully hand-made glass models prepared by the famous Blaschka family in the latter half of the 19th century.

As the museum is in constant use, the main teaching collection requires regular maintenance and updating. This frequently means the collection and preparation of specimens to supplement or replace existing material. Recent additions to the collection include a puma, several grivet monkeys, a wallaby, a common porpoise and an 18 month old elephant, kindly donated by the Royal Zoological Society of Ireland. As there is a scuba-diving unit within the department, the museum's collection of marine and freshwater

* See Front Cover.

exhibits is constantly being increased. Along with scuba-diving, other techniques involved in maintaining the museum include osteology and underwater photography as well as the usual general techniques associated with museums.

Although the museum is principally used for teaching purposes, it is however open to the public at certain times and anyone interested in seeing the collection is always very welcome.

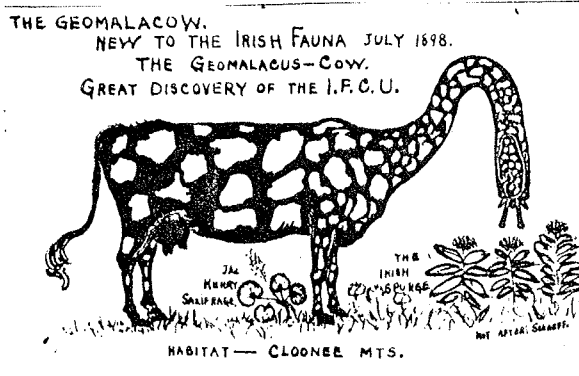
Further information on the museum or on any aspect of its collection can be obtained from the museum's curator Martyn Linnie at the Zoology Dept., Trinity College, Dublin 2.



Mr. R. Welch, "THE TRAVELLER'S PHOTOGRAPHER."

We have much pleasure in giving our readers a portrait of one of the leading scenic photographers in the United Kingdom, Mr. R. Welch, of Lonsdale Street, Belfast. It is open to question whether any other gentleman has, in recent years, taken a greater number of touring views. Numerous specimens of Mr. Welch's studies have appeared in the "Tourist."

Mr. Welch does not take portraits, but confines himself strictly to landscape, antiquarian, and especially natural history photography, in many cases for use in science schools, museums, and scientific societies. Liverpool Museum has a good set of his early Irish antiquities, and some of the large geological and antiquarian views. Nottingham Natural History Museum (county of Notts) has a very extensive series of his geological subjects (large and small) for use on the walls. Manchester Museum, Salford Museum, Pool Park, Dublin (very many of plant life, bird life, antiquarian, Irish ethno-



From his diary preserved in the Ulster Museum

Robert John Welch (1859-1936) was awarded an honorary MSc from Queen's University, Belfast in 1925 for his "contributions to advancement of knowledge of archaeology, geology, botany and zoology", and contributed (by donation) "more than 1 million land and freshwater shells to museums in GB and Ireland". There must be plenty of his material in a number of museums in this country.

graphic and geological—some of these panelled permanently along walls and cases).

Apart from the above Mr. Welch photographs for several big shipbuilders, and many of the Irish Railway Companies. He often travels with scientific parties, and has even supplied the French Government with special Irish views for the Paris Museum. *THE TOURIST*, July 1893.