

A TRIP TO EUROPE

Fourteenth article in a series by Miss Margaret Laundry.

SCOTLAND (Cont.)

With our Cheshire couple we followed the Forth Valley, which cuts thro' the center of Scotland from Edinburgh, to Balloch at the southern tip of Loch Lomond. About two miles up the west shore was the hostel, a pallatine stone mansion of the nineteenth century turned over to the Association like so many others because of inability to meet the high cost of upkeep. From our bedroom window that night even at 11:30 we could see the calm waters of the Loch with its high forested banks silhouetted against the light sky. The Loch is about forty miles in length and of varying widths but relatively narrow since it is always possible to see from one side to the other. Steamers run the full length of the Loch stopping at several towns on the way --- but we chose to see the Loch by road which closely follows the shoreline.

Less than twenty miles from Loch Lomond is the big industrial city of Glasgow - population two million. We had a good look at the University buildings and the busy dock yards along the Clyde as we drove through, to continue down the lowland coast to the seaside resort of Ayr and on to Stronraer, the jumping off place to Ireland.

The hostel here with only about twenty beds was built right at the dock approach and during the war was a rest home for sailors. Sunday we had a look around the fishing boats in the harbour and then had a picnic perched on a hill overlooking the sea.

Next day we took our leave of Scotland in the "mizzle", (a favourite expression of ours for that nasty mixture of light rain and mist), aboard the Princess Margaret. The 2½ hour trip across the North Channel was quite calm and for amusement - a pipe band from Glasgow kept playing the same march over and over until Kath finally named it "Ditto".

Our first sight of Ireland was the small port of Larne where we took a train thirty miles south to Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland. We couldn't have arrived on a more appropriate day - July 12th. A huge parade of thirty thousand including two hundred bands was underway. Many of the bands contained Irish bagpipes which are higher pitched than the Scottish for they have three reeds rather than four. There were also some of the biggest drums I've ever seen, which were being whalloped

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in a most rythmless fashion with large curved sticks. (Strictly an Irish custom, thank goodness).

At first we had a difficult time with the Irish accent and apparently they couldn't understand ours for on two occasions we were asked if we came from Dublin. The closest hostel was seven miles away, another huge home very much down at the heels called Killynether Castle. Climbing the hill at the back we got a wide view over the rolling countryside with its patch work quilt farms much like Surrey. Believe it or not that hill was covered with shamrocks -- that was the first and last time we saw them in Ireland.

We took a very difficult detour fifteen miles off the main road (of which we walked ten) to Armough birthplace of one of Kath's great great great's - 150 years ago (and after all that we didn't see him). Dairy farming was the chief industry in that section. Many of the cattle were housed in barns attached to the houses and generally speaking the people were poorly dressed.

Next day we went on to Dublin crossing the border with an Irish priest who sailed thro' the customs with a wave of his hand. Dublin is a very lovely city attractively laid out with impressive buildings including the Leinster House where the Dial and Seanad meet (corresponding to our House of Commons and Senate). At Trinity college we saw a library of old documents some written on paprip and parchment papers. Among them was the Book of Kells, and illuminated Bible done in Latin by the Irish clergy about 900 A.D. Beautifully coloured, scroll capital letters filling a whole page opened each chapter. Most of the lettering was in gold with many designs containing minute human faces, fishes, animals and legs. The closer you looked the more you found. The Book was stolen from the church and hidden under sods for 500 years before it was finally recovered; but it is so well preserved that this is difficult to believe. It is kept in a glass case and each day a new page turned.

O'Connell Street, called after the leader of the 1916-21 revolution is the chief street of the City flanked with attractive shops of hand made linens. The O'Connell Bridge, as wide as it's long, has a flower garden and fountains, dividing the two traffic lanes. Dublin will always

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