

**APPENDIX I**

**HISTORIOGRAPHER'S REPORT 2004**

I am glad to be able to report that the study of Church of Ireland history continues apace, and that our contribution to Irish history in general, shows no sign of declining. That this should be so owes much to the work of the RCB Library as a major repository of both primary and secondary material, heavily drawn upon by the international academic community as well as by the local historian delving into the story of the parish church. Not only does the library facilitate scholars, whether professional or amateur, but through its publishing programme makes Church of Ireland parish and diocesan records available that would otherwise be inaccessible to researchers. Most recently, the Registers of the parish of St Catherine, Dublin have been issued.

The Church of Ireland Historical Society is another important element in our approach to the study of history, providing as it does a forum where the work of experienced scholars and of those embarking on serious research for the first time can have the benefit of presenting their work to an interested audience and of having it discussed. The society publishes from time to time, and planning of a companion volume, dealing with the clergy, to last year's Laity and the Church of Ireland is at an advanced stage.

Of special importance since last I reported has been the publication of Dr Toby Barnard's *A new anatomy of Ireland: the Irish Protestants 1649-1770*. This book of almost 500 pages deals in the main with the Church of Ireland community, and 'its enduring impact on the shape and complexity of Irish life'. There is reason to hope that a further volume is planned by Dr Barnard whose seminal work on the erstwhile Established Church maintains the tradition set by the major historians of the past.

I have been glad to continue to contribute to the Church History course at the Theological College, and have spoken at meetings of the Fellowship of Vocations of Dublin and Glendalough. I was a contributor to Gill and Macmillan's *Encyclopaedia of Ireland*, and have some entries in a forthcoming American publication with a similar title. A paper I delivered in Cardiff in 2001 on 'the Church of Ireland as a national church' has appeared in *Law and Justice: the Christian Law Review* and in *l'Année Canonique*. The fourth edition of my *Short history of the Church of Ireland* was published during the year under the imprint APCK and Columba Press.

The above paragraphs deal entirely with the written and spoken word. We should not overlook, however, the enormous potential for historical study represented by our buildings, ancient and modern. Often regarded as burdensome by those with the responsibility for maintaining them, we have yet to realise their potential to act as agencies for exploring theological, aesthetic and historical ideas. A daunting task in many ways, and one that may only be possible in association with partners such as educational institutions and heritage bodies. The past has bequeathed to us many of Ireland's most important buildings with their monuments and other architectural features. The least we can do is to maximise the contribution that they can make to society at large.