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Irish Beekeeping in the past

by EVA CRANE and PENELOPE WALKER

Our knowledge of past beekeeping in Ireland is based largely on early mediaeval manuscripts, printed books from later centuries, and also surviving structures built to protect bee hives.

The Use of Wild Nests of Bees

Before bees were kept in hives, people in Ireland would have obtained honey combs from wild nests in trees, and combs were still harvested from natural nests long after hives were used. Deforestation eventually removed trees with large trunks which might contain cavities suitable for bees' nests, although a few such nests can still be found, for instance in an oak in Tomies wood near Killarney.

The bee judgments' in the Ancient Irish Laws written in the seventh and eighth centuries, referred to in detail below, gave directions for dividing the produce of a bees' nest in a tree between owners of the land and of different parts of the tree (§11 and on). When a nest was found in owned (enclosed) land by someone other than the land owner:

§47. The man who finds a tree with bees in a lawful green [enclosed land]: . . . one half [goes] to the man who finds it, the other half to [the owner of] the green where it is found.

The two following paragraphs also probably refer to the honey combs from a wild nest.

§48. The man who finds a stray swarm if it be outside the green up to a great forest or inaccessible country or unshared land, one third [goes] to the man who finds it, two thirds to [the owner of] the land where it is found.

§49. The man who finds a stray swarm in a forest or unshared land or inaccessible country: it is immune for him [to take it], for it is one of the complete immunities in Irish law except for the share of the chief of the kindred and the share of the church to which he makes a bequest; and this is their share: one third from every third, lest the church or the kindred be defrauded of anything which their members may be entitled to.

In later times, beekeepers collected swarms that issued from wild nests, and possibly bees from the nests themselves, to put in hives.

Bees and the Early Christian Church

Christianity reached Ireland about AD 430, and a number of Christian saints who lived in the 500s were credited with bringing bees to Ireland. In fact, the bees were present long before this, and the records more probably refer to hives being brought. Even so, it is unlikely that any hives brought by Christian saints were the earliest, for reasons explained below.

In 1937 Hilda Ransome² published the following stories. One legend said that St David introduced bees to Ireland from Wales in the charge of St Modomnoc (or Medoc), and others that St Molaga or St Aidan – also friends or disciples of St David – brought them. The *Martyrology of Oengus* has a gloss on the entry for St Finan Cam of Kinnitty, Co. Offaly:

‘Finan Cam brought wheat into Ireland, i.e. the full of his shoe he brought. [In fact wheat was grown in Ireland from Neolithic times.] Declan brought the rye, i.e. the full of his shoe; Modomnoc brought bees, i.e. the full of his bell; and in one ship they were brought.’ The shape and mouth-down position of a skep (Fig. 1) would link it with a bell.

There are other stories about saints and bees. *The Book of Lismore* relates a story of St Patrick’s boyhood, in about AD 400. The children where he lived used to bring their mothers honey from the comb.

So his nurse said to him, ‘Thou bringst no honey to me, my boy, even as the boys bring it to their mothers.’ Then Patrick taking a vessel goes to the water, and sained the water, so that it became honey, and relics were made of that honey and it used to heal every disease.

Later, when Patrick was at sea and all the provisions were finished, the sailors asked him for food, and ‘God gave them a fresh-cooked swine, and wild honey was brought to Patrick like John the Baptist.’

St Brigit was connected with mead. Once a certain man of her household made mead for the King of Leinster, but when they came to drink it not a drop was to be found. Brigit rose to save the man, and she blessed the vessels; the mead was then found in fullness, and ‘that was a wonderful miracle’.

There is another story in which bees venerated the Holy Host. In one told by Lady Gregory, a swarm of bees approached an honourable priest carrying the Host to a sick man. The priest captured the swarm and took it with him, leaving the Host on the ground, but the swarm escaped and took the Host to the nest site. The bees used their wax to build a chapel for the Host, complete with altar, chalice and priests. The visiting priest was much concerned when he saw that the Host had disappeared, but later an angel told him where it was, sheltered and venerated. So the priest called the people to see this new wonder, and a great many of them believed.

Saint Gobnat, who lived in the 500s, kept bees when she was in charge of a Christian convent at Ballyvourney in Co. Cork. She used them – probably by upsetting skeps to make the bees fly out – to repel a band of raiders who tried to steal the local people’s cattle. In some versions of the story she miraculously changed the bees into soldiers, and a skep into a brass helmet which she presented afterwards to the defending chieftain O’Hierley. His family is said to have treasured the helmet, but this was lost during the penal days in the 1700s. In another version the skep was turned into a bell, and up to the 1800s St Gobnat’s bronze bell was kept at Ballyvourney. Ransome,² Fife³ and Crane⁴ gave further details.

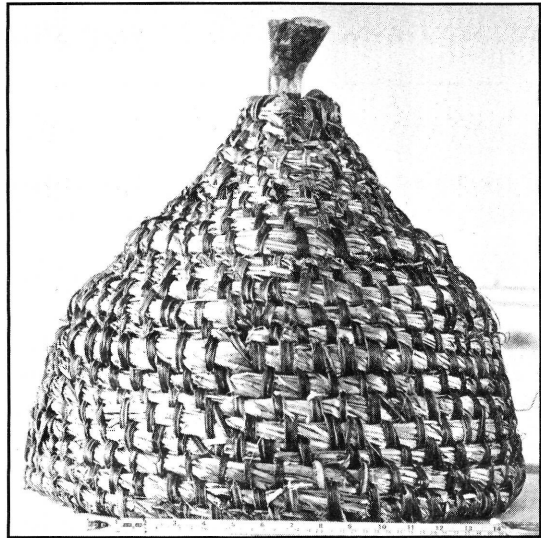


Fig. 1
Coiled-straw skep exhibited at the Irish National Honey Show in 1980; it is about 45 cm wide and has a wooden carrying knob.
(Photo: Dominic Ryan)

The following lines, translated by James Carney, refer to the Irish hermit Marbán in the 600s.⁵

... alone I live quite happy . . .
 Eggs in clutches, and God gives mast, honey, heath-pease; . . .
 A cup of mead from noble hazel, . . .
 Bees and chafers, gentle humming . . .

The Culdees, a monastic order in Ireland, were allowed to drink thick milk mixed with honey on Christmas and Easter Eves. According to *The Book of Lismore*, St Findian fed six days of the week on bread and water, but on Sunday was allowed salmon and ‘the full of a cup of clear mead’.

Traditional Hive Beekeeping in the Middle Ages

We know little about mediaeval Irish beekeeping except from the Ancient Laws which were written in the 600s/700s, and were based on earlier material. Some of them have proved a rich source of information on certain aspects of beekeeping which is lacking in English manuscripts of the same period.⁶ They were made accessible by Charles-Edwards and Kelly’s 1983 book *Bechbretha*,⁷ i.e. Bee judgments, which gives the text of 55 judgments, with English translations and extensive notes and commentary. These authors point out that the Irish bee judgments contained no Latin loan words relating to bees or beekeeping, so the beekeeping vocabulary in Ireland must have been established before the arrival of Christianity in about AD 430.

As many as a third of the bee judgments were concerned with the ownership and value of swarms. In Ireland, as in Wales and England, colonies were kept in small hives so that they would swarm early and produce many later swarms; an Irish triad from the 1800s listed ‘three small things which are best: a small hive, a small sheep, and a small woman’. Laws about ‘stray swarms’ (§46- §49) did not specify whether the swarm was from a hive or natural nest, but one (§45) mentioned a communal apiary: ‘a place where there are many hives’ which were owned by different people.

Like many other countries, Ireland had Ancient Laws which dealt with the theft of bees. In general, bees on enclosed land were given greater legal protection than those on unenclosed land; bees stolen from a garden or courtyard ‘incur equal penalty with household goods’ (§50- §52).

A judgment in *Bretha Egid*, an Irish legal commentary from about the 1100s, dealt with accidental injury to bees. It referred for example to ‘three hen-offences in a farmyard: soft swallowing of bees, and distribution of madder and onions’.⁸ The owner of the bee-eating hens was fined, and the payment used to recompense the beekeeper. Such behaviour by hens need not be considered impossible; in Turkey, Adsay⁹ trained chicks of common domestic poultry to eat wasps, as a method of wasp control in an apiary.

Congal ‘the one-eyed’, who had been King of Tara in the early 600s, was deprived of his kingship after being stung in the eye by a bee and was thus blinded and blemished (*Bechbretha* §31-§32). A number of the judgments (§28-30, §33) relate to the blame attached to bees which sting a person. Bees were immune from blame if they stung a man who was robbing them, or investigating them while they were swarming (§27). But if they attacked ‘anyone going

past them on his way who is doing them no harm or illegality' (§28), the injury to the person 'entails his sufficiency of honey . . . , with an oath from him that he did not kill the bee which stung him' (§29).

Although *Bechbretha* do not make it clear what hives were used, the word *crand* (tree) for a hive in one of the judgments suggests that there were log hives in Ireland during or before the 600s/700s.¹⁰ The reference quoted above to Modomnoc bringing 'the full of his bell' to Ireland from Wales suggests skeps. Other Irish texts used the following terms for hive:¹¹

600s-800s	<i>lestar</i> , widely used for a domestic wooden vessel for liquids <i>crand</i> [tree]: log hive
1000s-1100s	<i>ce(i)s</i> , also <i>clíab</i> , basket: woven wicker skep
1600s on	<i>corcóg</i> or <i>coirceóg</i> , cognate with <i>corca</i> , oats (the cereal most commonly grown in Ireland): coiled-straw skep.

According to the *Book of Rights* written between 1050 and 1100 (see Dillon¹²) the King of Ulaid was entitled to '20 baskets [*clíab*] in which are bees' – woven wicker skeps.

The Annals of Ulster, which cover the period to 1131, referred in the year 951 to *bechdibad*, 'a mortality of bees', and in 993 to 'a great mortality of people and cattle and bees' throughout all Ireland.¹³

Later Traditional Hive Beekeeping

The first beekeeping book in Ireland was *Instructions for Managing Bees* 'drawn up and published by the Dublin Society' in 1733.¹⁴ It set out approved beekeeping practice at the time, which was rather similar to that in the 1500s in the rest of the skep region of north-west Europe; for example straw skeps were recommended (Fig. 1), since hives of woven wicker did not provide enough insulation. As to the size of skeps, 'some recommend Hives that will hold a Bushel or more, yet an Half-bushel Hive will contain a competent Stock: . . . I have set an Half-bushel Hive as the Medium . . .'. This was probably just over 12 inches (30 cm) in diameter and 9 inches (23 cm) or more in height; the capacity would be about 18 litres. (The capacity of a 10-frame Langstroth brood box is about 40 litres.) The killing of bees with brimstone matches was 'too commonly known to be mentioned'. Swarms were still highly valued: 'If you begin with Ten good stocks, and the Years prove favourable, so that each Hive yield one prime Swarm, and a Cast [afterswarm] besides, and if you put two Casts into one Hive, then you will have 25 good Stocks at the End of the first Year, . . .'.

The Gardener's New Companion published by the Dublin Society in 1767 included an Appendix: 'The Revd Mr Thorley's directions for keeping Bees, whether in Hives [skeps] or Boxes; and when in the former, how to remove the Honey and Wax, without destroying the Bees'. This Appendix, together with the 1733 book (and a paper by Arthur Dobbs in 1750 mentioned below), were reprinted by the Royal Dublin Society in 1980.¹⁴

In 1780 Lord O'Neill of Shane's Castle, Co. Antrim, engaged P. Carrara, an Italian 'bee artificer', to construct an apiary and give instructions to his gardener as to the successful management of bees. One hive which occupied a high central position in the apiary was made of cedar wood, overlaid with pure gold leaf.¹⁵

The Statutes of Ireland in force in 1786¹⁶ included the following:

Every person who shall be taken . . . with bee hives with honey or combs in them, or with fresh honey in combs, and not keeping bees of his or her own; [and cannot prove how he or she came by the same,] shall be deemed to be guilty of stealing . . . and suffer all the penalties which by law ought to be inflicted on such offence.

An Irish beekeeper, Arthur Dobbs of Castle Dobbs in Co. Antrim, was the first person to describe clearly the part played by honey bees in plant pollination,¹⁷ which was an advance of world importance. Using a magnifying glass, he saw that honey bees transferred pollen from the anthers of one flower to the pistil of another flower of the same species, where the pollen – ‘the male seed’ – impregnated the ovum. He reported this at a meeting of the Royal Society in London on 8 November 1750, and it was published in the same year.¹⁸

In 1800 the *Transactions of the Dublin Society* (1: 75-96) published a letter from Christian Schulze: ‘A memoir on the great advantage of raising silkworms and of cultivating bees in Ireland’.

In Co. Down, where bees were reckoned to thrive remarkably well, Doubourdieu¹⁹ described a ‘new constructed beehive’ (Fig. 2). It was an open-topped skep with a glass bell jar for honey above, protected by a tall straw cap. It was said that a wooden covering was better, and that more than 90 lb [40 kg] of honey was taken from such a hive the previous autumn.

A statistical and political account of Ireland in 1812²⁰ reported that the Dublin Society had offered a premium for the preservation of bees in winter. It also included the following comments.

Honey from the dry hills of Co. Down, covered with heath and odiferous herbs, is highly esteemed for its fine flavour.

In Derry . . . the number of bees kept for profit has greatly decreased within the past 20 years. Round Aghadowey, scaps [skeps] average 20-40 pounds of honey in the comb. Mr Acheson is the only person in this district who has made any attempt to abolish the usual practice of suffocating bees . . . In place of the common scaps he uses square boxes with panes of glass. Boxes are divided into two by a sheet of copper across the middle; a stick can be introduced to support the comb. Mr Green at Kilrea in Co. Kildare has pursued the same plan.

Three other books which included instructions on beekeeping in Ireland were published before modern (movable-frame) hives were used.

1839 W. Hickey (*pseud.* M. Doyle), *A Cyclopaedia of Practical Husbandry and Rural Affairs* (Dublin, Curry, pp. 37-48).

1841 H. M. Stationery Office, Dublin, *The Farmer’s Guide . . . for Small Farmers and Cotter Tenantry of Ireland*, pp. 153-158.

1847 H. D. Richardson, *The Hive and the Honey-bee . . .* (Dublin, McClashan).

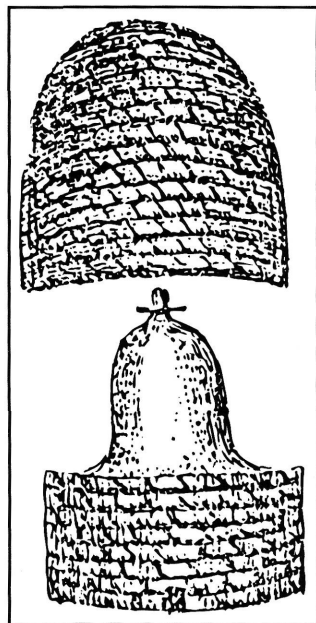


Fig. 2 Doubourdieu’s colied-straw hive (1803).¹⁹

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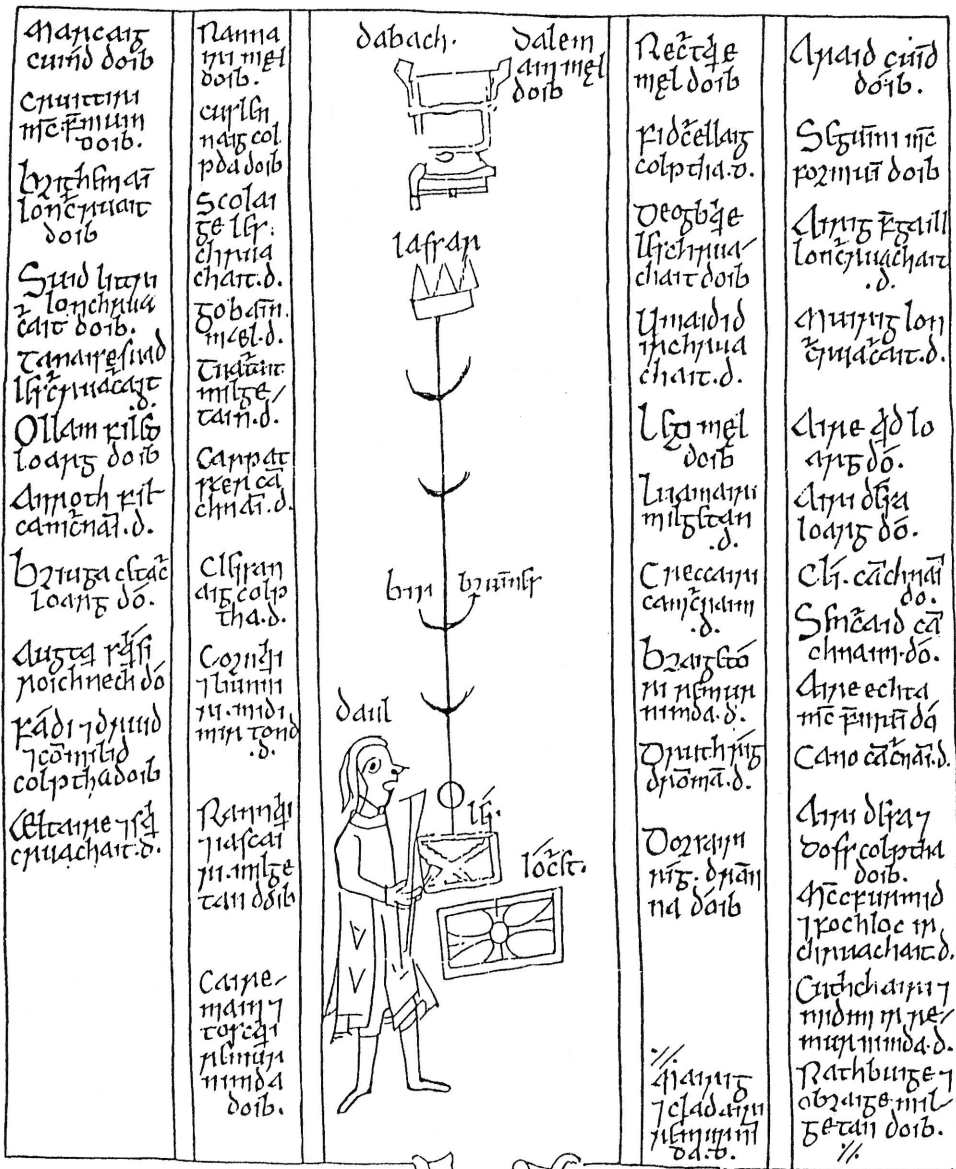


Fig. 3

Reproduction of a seating plan of the House of the Mead Circuit on the Hill of Tara (The Book of Leinster, 1100s, reproduced by Trinity College, Dublin, 1880) See text.

Honey and Beeswax

In the 600s, the Venerable Bede of Northumbria described Ireland as an 'island rich in milk and honey', and the Northumbrian King Aldrith said when he left Ireland in 685 that he found there 'gold and silver; I found honey, I found wheat'.²¹ Giraldus Cambrensis, who visited Ireland in 1183 and 1185, also described the island as rich in honey and milk.²²

In Ancient Ireland the 'stirabout' fed to children in poor families consisted of oatmeal on buttermilk or water, eaten with stale butter. Sons of chieftains had barley meal on new milk, with fresh butter, but sons of kings had wheaten bread upon new milk, taken with honey.²³

Mead, an alcoholic drink produced by the fermentation of honey in water, is mentioned in a few mediaeval Irish manuscripts, although not in the Ancient Laws. A penitential from about the 800s referred to the sin of 'drunkenness from drinking beer or a measure of mead'. And Fig. 3 from the 1100s shows a seating plan (reputedly from the 200s) of the great mead hall on the Hill of Tara in the Boyne valley. Food was distributed by the man shown in the centre, and lights to illuminate the hall are shown immediately to the right. Above is the cooking spit, and at the top the mead vat, *dabach*; a mead cup (not shown) was *mid-chuach*. Writing on the left and right of the plan indicates the places where persons belonging to certain grades of society should sit, and the joint of meat with which they should be served. The National Museum of Ireland in Dublin has a collection of wooden methers or mazers from the 1600s or earlier.

Beeswax was essential for church candles in mediaeval times, but less evidence of this was found in Ireland. However, in *The Statutes of Ireland*,²⁴ there is a reference to waxicot (*ceragium*), a duty paid twice a year towards the charge of wax candles in churches. An English statute from the mid-1400s, which became applicable in Ireland, set stringent standards for the sale of beeswax and objects made from it.

No person shall sell, nor put to sale any candles, images, figures, and other works of wax at higher price, but only after the rate of three pence more in the weight of a pound, over than the common price of a pound of plain wax, is between merchant and merchant at the time of such sale, upon pain to forfeit such candles, and other works of wax so put to sale, and the value of them that shall be sold against the form of this statute, and to make a fine to the King, . . . This statute does not extend to hearses to be made for nobles that die.

Structures for Protecting Hives

Skeps were usually kept in the open on stands, but some beekeepers built a special structure to protect skeps of bees from wind and rain.²⁵ In Ireland, as in Britain, most of the surviving structures are bee boles – recesses, each for one skep, built in a row into an outside stone or brick wall (Fig. 4). Since 1952 records have been collected in the International Bee Research Association *Register of Bee Boles and other Beekeeping Structures*, and they now include the following.

	<i>sets of bee boles</i>	<i>other structures</i>
England	675	141
Scotland	201	19
Wales	78	23
Ireland	33	10 (+ 3 towers)
France	116	

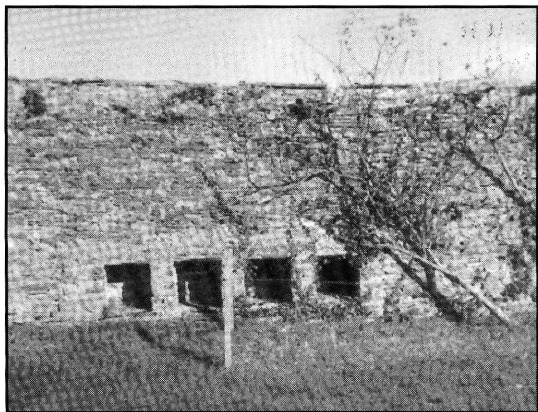


Fig. 4

Four typical rectangular bee boles in a garden wall at Ardbrack House, Kinsale, Co. Cork [Register no. 695] (photo: S. Lucas, 1980).

Co. Galway [910]. These are all in the grounds of substantial houses. On average there are seven bee boles at a site in Ireland; this is more than in England and Wales (5-6) and Scotland (3), but less than in France (16).

About half the sets of bee boles in Ireland have a rectangular opening, as in Fig. 4, and about half are arched (Fig. 6); two unusual sets of triangular bee boles have also been found. Inside a recess, the sides and back may be flat, or rounded to accommodate the shape of the skep. Dimensions of bee boles vary considerably between sets, e.g. width is from 14 to 24 inches, but on average they are about 24 inches [60 cm] in height and 20 inches [50 cm] in width and depth. These are considerably larger than dimensions of the skeps used, but are comparable to those of bee boles in Scotland and northern England. We know that in winter in Scotland some beekeepers packed bracken or sacks round their skeps in bee boles, so these recesses were large enough for a skep plus packing,²⁶ but we have found no evidence for this practice in Ireland.

Just over half Ireland's sets of bee boles can be dated, most of them to century. The oldest known are two sets of 3 and 4 in brick walls at Dromoland Castle, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare [697] from the late 1500s. At Borriskane in Co. Tipperary a stone wall was built with 10 bee boles about 1650 [699].

Hives in the open and in bee boles were commonly placed with the flight hole facing in a southerly direction, as recommended by early English beekeeping books. In Ireland as well as Britain, most bee boles face south, south-east or south-west.

Stone was used for almost all the walls in which bee boles have been recorded. Only those at Dromoland Castle are entirely of brick but, in several stone walls, arched recesses have been lined with bricks, e.g. 887 in Co. Down. A wall with bee boles is often in a garden – and might even be the house wall, as in Fig. 6 – so that the bees were protected from animals and

Fig. 5 shows the distribution of the bee boles and other beekeeping structures so far recorded in Ireland. Only fifteen counties are represented, and we think that the distribution of sites is much influenced by the location of interested people who have searched for and reported them. Information on possible new sites would be welcomed for the IBRA Register, at the address given. * in the Appendix.

Although many sets of bee boles consist of only three or four recesses, some large sets survive; for example at Craigavad, Holywood, Co. Down [Register no. 837] there are 22 bee boles, still in a very good state of repair. Large numbers in the west are: 20 in a wall in Co. Limerick [698] and 18 at Ballingarry in Co. Tipperary [167a], and sets of 10 and 8 at Gurtray, Portumna,

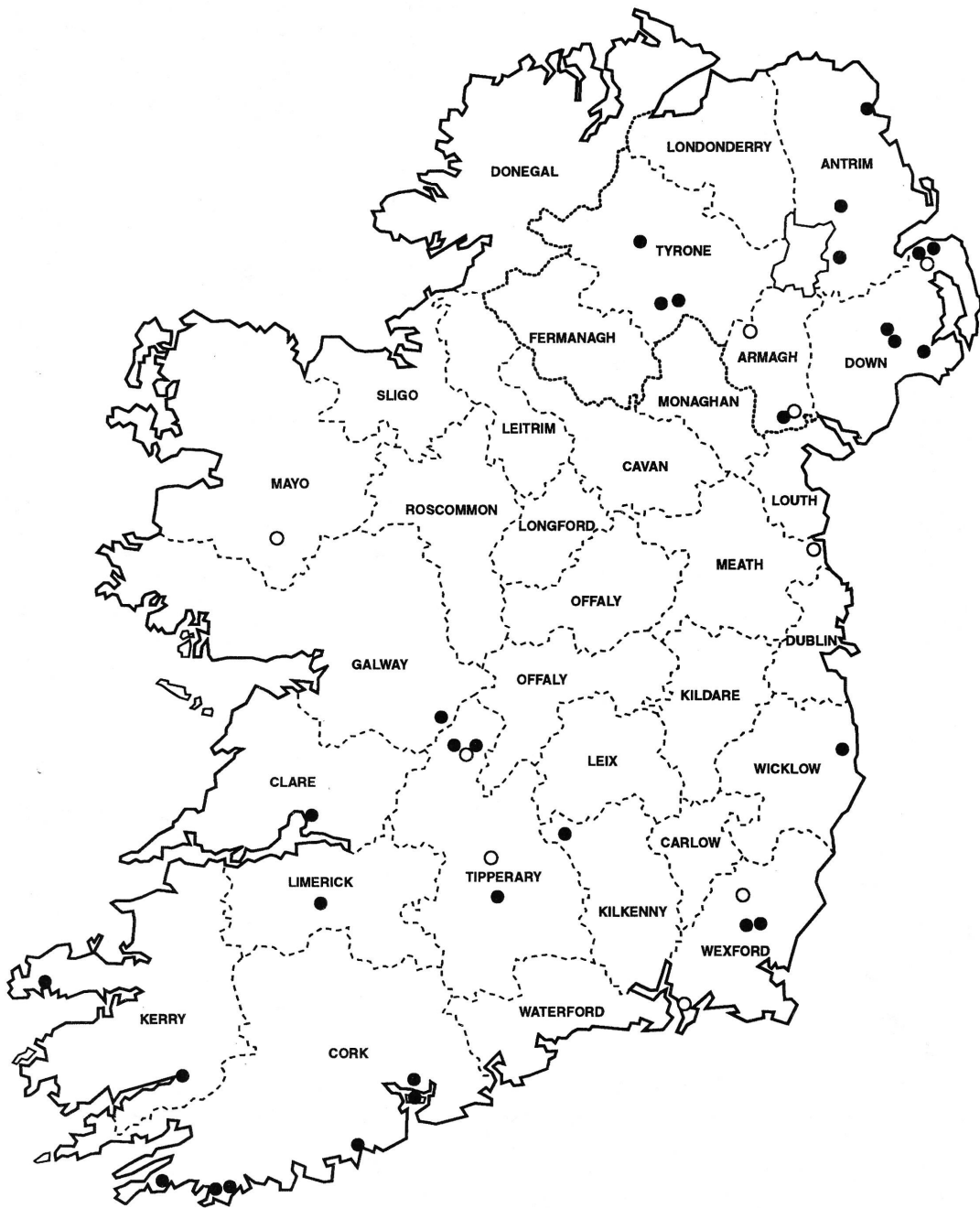


Fig. 5 *Distribution of beekeeping structures recorded in Ireland up to August 1998.*

• *bee boles* ○ *others*

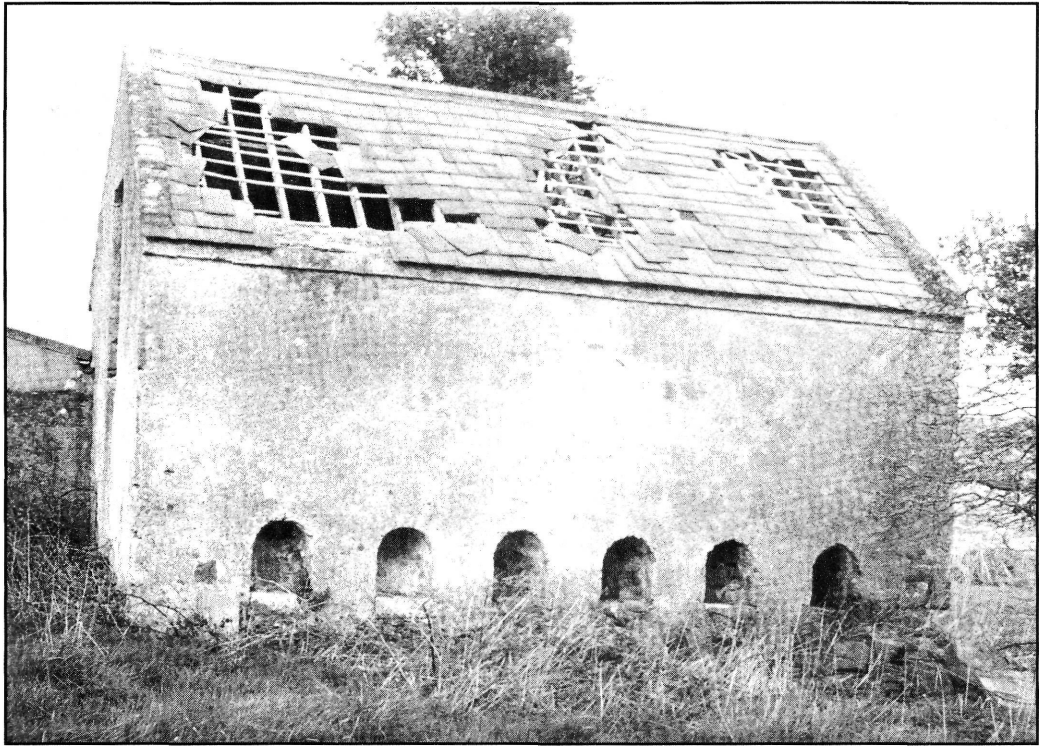


Fig. 6 Arched bee boles in the south-facing wall of an outbuilding at Mr Loughran's old house, Killevy, Co. Armagh [1083] (photo: C. Nicholson, 1992).

intruders, and also swarms could be watched for. Some bee bole walls are in an orchard, and a few in a farmyard, courtyard or field.

C. J. Robb told us in 1965 that his grandfather Alexander Robb remembered bees being kept in one of the bee boles at Timpany, Ballynahinch, Co. Down [443] in the 1840s, and this is the earliest oral evidence we know of the use of bee boles. There are other records from the late 1800s and early 1900s: in Co. Down (38 in 1850 and 880 until 1900; in Co. Galway 910) in about 1870.

A *bee house* for hives was occasionally built. This is an enclosed building with a door, in which skeps or wooden hives stand on shelves and a flight entrance through the wall is provided for each hive. Three bee houses reported in Ireland have been demolished: two in Co. Wexford [891, 892], and one in Co. Armagh [702] which held many skeps in the 1800s. At Castlecarra, by Lough Carra in Co. Mayo, are the ruins of a *winter bee house* [584] with recesses for 46 skeps, more than in any other such building in Ireland or Britain. A bee house for more advanced wooden hives which was moved from Co. Waterford to Clandeboye House, Holywood, Co. Down in the late 1980s [1062], deserves special mention. Detailed plans dated November 1827 still exist, and a study of these make it clear that the house was built for six hives based on Edward Bevan's description in *The Honey-bee*²⁷ published in

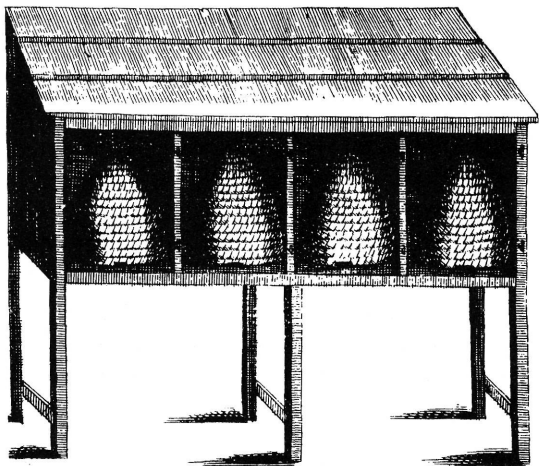


Fig. 7 Design for a shelter for four skeps published by the Dublin Society in 1733.³⁰

Although 47 stone shelters have survived in Cumbria and some in Wales, we have found none in Ireland. However, a wooden one was illustrated in the book published in 1733 by the Dublin Society³⁰ (Fig. 7), and there may have been others made of wood which have not survived.

By the 1200s, Anglo-Normans had conquered much of Ireland, and according to *Historia*³¹ they introduced *bee-towers* (also known as honey towers or honey pots), which seem to have been rather like pigeon lofts. In Co. Louth there was one at the Cistercian Monastery at Mellifont, and another at Clonmore said to have been built in the 1200s. In Co. Down there was one at Moira Castle. No more is known about them, and none has survived.

In addition to buildings, there are a few records of individual stone hives, or covers for them. According to an old estate daybook from Shane's Castle, Co. Antrim, referred to above, the hives were housed in an open shed with a thatched roof of heather; they were set on stone pedestals shaped like a mushroom, to keep out vermin. The hives were made of white marble like inverted classical urns, and lined with cork to insulate against cold.

Fig. 8 shows a stone structure auctioned at Moorsfort House near Clommel, Co. Tipperary, about 1970. The owner of the house said that it came from a monastery on its estate in north Tipperary which has been dated between 900 and 1300.³² Its external diameter is 56 cm. A somewhat

England earlier in the same year. Each hive consisted of three tiered wooden boxes, which facilitated the harvesting of honey and allowed more advanced beekeeping than that with the skeps used earlier. The bee house was described in some detail by Fisher.²⁸ In 1997 James Ryan²⁹ told us of a wooden bee house at Beakestown Mills, Holycross, Co. Tipperary [1237], built about 1906 by C. J. Molloy for movable-frame hives, and these were probably on view at the 1911 meeting announced in Fig. 9

In many parts of Europe a common protective structure was a simple open-fronted *bee shelter* made of stone or wood, with one or more shelves for skeps.

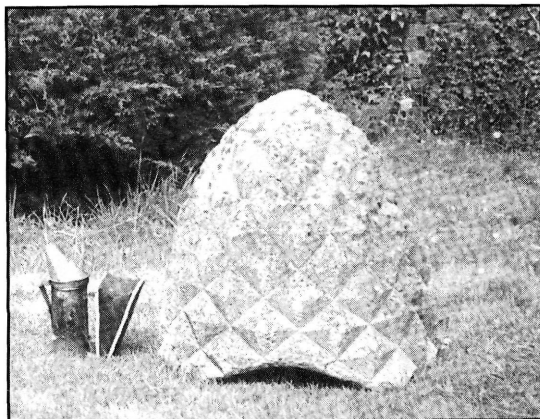


Fig. 8

A shaped stone hive (or a skep cover) now at Clommel, Co. Tipperary (photo: J. Joyce).

similar structure, referred to as 'the old stone skep', is still preserved at Naas, Co. Kildare, and bees were said to have been kept in it before 1918.³³

Beekeeping after 1880

Movable-frame wooden hives were introduced into Ireland in 1880, and in 1901 the Reverend J. G. Digges started the *Irish Bee Journal*; his book *The Irish Bee Guide*,³⁴ first published in 1904, came into wide use. Watson³⁵ gave a detailed history of modern Irish beekeeping. The standard movable-frame hive devised for Ireland is referred to as the CDB, after the Congested Districts Board set up in 1891 to help people in poorer isolated areas to acquire better land.³⁶ Turlough Butler O'Bryen played an important part in establishing modern beekeeping in the west of Ireland, and Fig. 9 is part of a bill advertising one of his demonstrations in 1911. Watson published a biography of him, *The Bee Man of County Clare*.³⁷

THURLES & DISTRICT BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION.

A PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION IN BEEKEEPING,

WILL BE GIVEN BY

Mr. T. B. O'BRYEN,

THE DEPARTMENTS' EXPERT IN BEEKEEPING,

— AT —

MR. C. J. MOLLOY'S,

Beakstown Mills, Holycross,

— ON —

Tuesday, July 25th, 1911.

At ONE O'CLOCK.

Fig. 9

Handbill for a 1911 meeting at which 'the advantages of Modern Hives over the Cheaper Old Fashioned Classes' were to be explained.

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APPENDIX

The list below includes all sites recorded in the International Bee Research Association Register of Bee Boles and other Beekeeping Structures, at 31 August 1998. Each entry gives: Register number and address; in brackets, number of bee boles and (if known) approximate date of construction or, for another type of structure, a brief description. The address of the Register is: c/o Woodside House, Woodside Hill, Gerrards Cross, Bucks, SL9 9TB, England.

Almost all sites are on private property, but some might be visited by prior appointment.

Co. Antrim

- 528 near Red Bay (4)
 812 Moat House, Donegore Hill, Antrim (6, 1700)
 1082 17 Main St., Crumlin (2)

Co. Armagh

- 183 Ashfort, Middletown (structure containing bee boles; demolished in late 1980s, rebuilt at Gosford Forest Park, Markethill)
 702 Killevy (bee house or shelter, now disappeared)
 1083 Mr Loughran's old house, Killevy (6)

Co. Clare

- 697 Dromoland Castle, Newmarket-on-Fergus (2 sets of 3 and 4, late 1500s)

Co. Cork

- 583 The White House, Castletownsend, Skibbereen (6, late 1700s)
 685 The Castle, Castletownsend, Skibbereen (1, late 1700s)
 695 Ardbrack House, Kinsale (4)
 890 Church of Ireland Rectory, Goleen (6 bee boles)
 893 National Memorial Bee Garden, Fota (3 reproduction boles, built 1983)
 1148 Sallybrook, Midleton, nr Cork (8)

Co. Down

- 38 Harmony Hill, Drumaness, Ballynahinch (5, 1829)
 443 Timpany, Ballynahinch (4, 1780)
 880 "Tir Chiuin", 21 Scaddy Road, Downpatrick (3)
 887 Glencraig Community, Craigavad, Holywood (22, 1711 or later)
 1062 Clandeboye Estate, Bangor (restored bee house; was at Altona, Co. Waterford)
 1111 Watermill House, Crawfordsburn, nr Bangor (28, 1750)

Co. Galway

- 910 Gurtray, Portumna (2 sets of 10 and 8, 1800)
 1168 (3 bee boles, address not yet known)

Co. Kerry

- 799 ruined house on Commons of Dingle (2)
1203 The Shrubberies, Kenmare (1 possible bee bole)

Co. Kilkenny

- 1236 Melrose House, Johnstown (8, 1800)

Co. Limerick

- 698 Ballyneale House, Ballingarry (20)

Co. Mayo

- 584 ruins next to Castlecarra, nr Ballinrobe (46 recesses for winter storage; roof of building gone by 1978)

Co. Meath

- 701a Ninch West, Laytown, Drogheda (18? recesses for winter storage; accidentally demolished 1979)
701b Ninch West, Laytown, Drogheda (4 recesses for winter storage)

Co. Tipperary

- 167a Ballingarry House, Ballingarry (18)
167b Ballingarry House, Ballingarry (8 recesses for winter storage)
699 Milford House, Borrisokane (10, 1650)
1237 Beakestown, Holycross (bee house, c. 1906)
1238 Car park beside Cashel Palace Hotel, Main St., Cashel (7)

Co. Tyrone

- 159 Lettry, Ballygawley (5, disappeared by 1953)
160 Martray, Ballygawley (8 or 10, disappeared by 1953)
1235 Lisnamallard House, Omagh (17, 1720s?)

Co. Wexford

- 184 Ballyhyland, Killanne, Enniscorthy (6, 1830)
185 The Daphne, Enniscorthy (3, 1800)
891 Arthurstown (bee house, now disappeared)
892 Bunclody (bee house, now disappeared)

Co. Wicklow

- 696 Warble Bank, Newtown Mountkennedy (5, pre-1798)