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Francis Johnston, Architect, 1760-1829

By PATRICK HENCHY, B.A.

THE Johnston family were of Scottish origin, having come to Ireland and settled in Armagh after the 1641 Rebellion. In 1690, when James attacked Derry, at least two members of the family joined the army of William and went to the defence of the town. One of them, William Johnston, was among the Apprentice Boys who shut the gates of Derry before the siege commenced; there is still preserved at Kilmore, Co. Armagh, a Claymore sword which was used by the young William Johnston at the siege. Mr. J. P. G. Johnston, its present custodian, tells that the sword was brought to Ireland by the boy's father, William, soon after the Rebellion of 1641. This man, according to Burke,¹ was an architect, sent from Scotland to superintend the restoration of public buildings damaged during the Rebellion. The Apprentice Boy, William, lived the life of a farmer on his Armagh property, died at the age of eighty-three, and was buried in Armagh Cathedral in 1753. He left one son, Edward, who in turn had one son, William, who in 1757 married Margaret Houston of Armagh and had four sons, Richard, Francis (the subject of this paper), William and Andrew.

William Johnston, the father of these boys, was a respectable builder in the town of Armagh and occasionally acted as architect.² Anxious that his sons should get a better opportunity in life than he himself had had, and encouraged by Primate Robinson, he sent his eldest son Richard to Dublin to follow his vocation for architecture for which he had already shown a liking while working with his father in Armagh.

In 1784 the work of reconstructing the Rotunda building and Gardens was undertaken. The high stone wall which enclosed and obscured the Gardens was removed, and in the following year the foundation stone of the Assembly Rooms adjoining the Rotunda was laid by the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Rutland. These beautiful rooms were from the designs of Richard Johnston, who by now was a successful and established architect with an address at 40 Dorset Street. He was married to Susanna Barnes,

and died without issue in 1806, at the comparatively early age of fifty-two, at 6 Eccles Street, where he had been residing since 1801. He has been described as an architect of whom any country might be proud.³ The third son, William, also became an architect but died in 1797 at the age of only thirty-three and was buried in the family grave in Armagh.⁴ The youngest son, Andrew, alone of the four did not follow the profession of architect. He became a prominent Dublin surgeon, and lived at Barnhill, Dalkey. He was for a period President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and died in 1833 at the age of 63. He was married to Sophia, only daughter of George Cheny of Holywood, Co. Kildare, and left a large family. The fourth son, Richard, lived at Kilmore, Co. Armagh, and the house is still occupied by a descendant.⁵

Francis, the second son of William Johnston, and by far the most illustrious of the four, was born in 1760, and received a good education. The Royal Classical School of Armagh moved into its present building in 1774, and it is more than likely that this promising son of a well-to-do family attended there for some time. This school was opened by Primate Robinson who took a keen interest in the affairs of the Johnston family and had already encouraged the elder brother Richard to get an architectural training in Dublin. Francis was fourteen at the date of the opening of the new school. Like his brothers Richard and William, he displayed a bent for architecture, and in 1778, when he was eighteen, Primate Robinson sent him to Dublin to work with his architect, Thomas Cooley. This Dr. Richard Robinson, a lineal descendant of the Robinsons of Rokeby, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, was born in 1709, and came to Ireland as Chaplain to the Duke of Dorset, Lord Lieutenant, in 1751. The same year he was appointed Bishop of Killala. Later, he was translated to the Sees of Leighlin and Ferns, and to Kildare, before being promoted to the Primacy of Armagh in 1765. On the death of his brother in 1785 he succeeded to the title of Baron Rokeby. Armagh is under a deep debt of gratitude to this great man for its Library, School and Observatory, as well as its many imposing buildings which make it one of Ireland's most beautiful towns to-day. Antiquarians may complain that he uprooted many buildings of historic interest, but his consideration was for the architectural beauty of the town rather than the preservation of old ruins. After his promotion to the Primacy he made a survey of the diocese with a view to planning and building on a more extensive scale than that carried out by his predecessor, Primate Stone, who towards the end of his career, had built new roads and streets in Armagh.⁶ He engaged the services of Thomas

Cooley, best known for his designing and planning of the Royal Exchange, now the City Hall, Dublin, who superintended the erection and improvement of many buildings in and about the town of Armagh for him.

When Francis Johnston arrived in Dublin to work with Cooley, the latter was engaged as architect for the erection of the Linen Hall, and the young apprentice, who had already learned a good deal about architecture, was given much responsibility in the superintending of the work. The drawings of Thomas Cooley are in the Armagh Public Library (founded and endowed by Primate Robinson in 1771), and it is possible that Francis Johnston had seen and studied some of these before leaving Armagh. For the next four years he remained in close touch with Cooley till, in 1782, he was articled to Samuel Sprout, who was architect to the Wide Streets Commissioners of Dublin.

Two years later, Cooley, who at the time was engaged as architect for the Four Courts, died at his residence in Anglesea Street. Francis Johnston, at the age of twenty-four, succeeded him as architect to Primate Robinson, and from that date his career as an architect may be said to have commenced.

In 1782 the Primate had decided to build a new tower on the Cathedral in Armagh, to be similar to that of Magdalen College, Oxford. Cooley began the construction and had raised the tower about 60 feet above the roof, when some old ladies, fearing that the roof might collapse, became panic-stricken and refused to attend Divine Service in the Cathedral any longer. Their panic spread till the Primate, fearing that all the congregation would desert him, had the new erection pulled down. Francis Johnston's first task on his appointment was to make a plan somewhat similar to the old tower and put it into execution by raising the tower on the old piers and arches, about 38 feet above the roof of the church to the top of the battlement, with the spire rising 40 feet above that.⁷ The safety of the structure was not again questioned by the timid old ladies, a full attendance of the congregation was assured, and the good taste and beauty of the new tower put the young architect on a high standing.

In the following year, Francis Johnston completed the inside of the Chapel in the Primate's Palace. Writing to J. N. Brewer in 1820 on the various works in which he had been engaged,⁸ he says that from that year (1785) till the death of the Primate in 1793, he was employed in erecting a handsome mansion house at Marlay, near Dunleer, Co. Louth, as well as various other buildings, including two churches, one at Ballymakenny, three miles from Drogheda and the other at Clonmore, Co. Louth. These buildings, he says, cost the Primate about £30,000. In 1789

Johnston planned the Armagh Observatory as it stands to-day. This was completed in 1791 when the Primate appointed the Very Rev. Archibald Hamilton as the first chief astronomer of the institution.

In 1786, while designing and executing the buildings on the Rokeby estate, Francis Johnston took up his residence at Drogheda, and lived there till 1793. During this period he designed and executed Drumiskin Glebe House, Armagh (1786); and the Cornmarket and Market House in Drogheda (1788). It was at this time (1790), that he married Anne Barnes of Armagh, whose sister Susanna, was already married to his brother, Richard. In the same year as his marriage, he planned the erection of the Obelisk on Knox's Hill, within sight of the Palace. One is reminded of Nelson's Pillar on viewing this lofty monument, 130 feet high. In the same year he designed and executed the erection of Kilnacoo Glebe House, Co. Louth, and a tower and spire on the Church of St. Peter's, Drogheda, and in 1791, a spire on the Dundalk parish church, of which he says, "though very plain and simple, has a good effect from its good proportion to the tower."⁹

In this year also his design was accepted for Daly's Club House, College Green, Dublin. When completed, the new building extending from the corner of Anglesea Street to Foster Place, was opened for the first time with a grand dinner on 16th February, 1791.¹⁰ The magnificence of the new structure was commented on by many visitors to the Metropolis.

In 1794, Johnston's patron and friend, Primate Robinson died. He is described as "a man of tall stature, robust, yet of dignified form, penetrating eye and commanding aspect."¹¹ He had never ceased in his efforts to improve Armagh and its surroundings, and on his death left it the most beautiful of all the Irish provincial towns.

In the year of the Archbishop's death, Francis Johnston was designing Townley Hall, the mansion of Blayney Balfour, Esqr., three miles from Drogheda, and within half-a-mile of where the Battle of the Boyne was fought. The plans, now in the National Library, are much admired by architects. Of this house, Johnston himself writes: "it measures 88 feet by 87 feet, is cased with a beautiful stone got in the neighbourhood and contains several spacious apartments. The stair case, a circle of 30 feet in diameter, open and lighted from the top, has a good effect."¹² During the progress of the erection of this house he "planned and executed several detached works about the Castle of Slane," which belonged to Colonel Conyngham.

When Johnston's work at the Rokeby estate at Marlay was finished in 1793, he came to live in Dublin. After he had finished

his work at Slane Castle in 1796, he decided to go on a tour in England to study some of that country's architectural achievements. The tour lasted from the 25th March to the 14th April and, fortunately for us, he kept a diary of it.¹³ Everywhere he went he visited and examined bridges, cathedrals and other architectural structures, and commented on them in his diary. He spent a whole day in examining the Castle of Lord Bulkeley at Baron Hill in Anglesey—the description of which reminds one somewhat of Charleville Castle at Tullamore, built later by Johnston. He went to Shrewsbury, where he examined five churches; to Kidderminster; to Tewkesbury, where he was greatly impressed by the structure of the wooden houses; to Gloucester, where the cathedral far surpassed anything he had ever seen. Of this cathedral he says: "The lightness and true proportion of the buttresses, the neatness of the belt courses, and the elegance of Gothic screen and pinnacles of the tower cannot be described." He tries to describe it, but gives it up, adding that he had a plan of it. At Bath he was received with great kindness by Mr. Ogle who gave him all the maps and guides he had, and also presented him with eight volumes of *The Arts and Sciences*. The seat of Lord de Clifford at Kingswestern in Gloucestershire, built by Sir John Vanbrugh in 1713 (the plans of which appear in vol. i of *Vitruvius Britannicus*) he describes as "large and good but monstrous heavy." He visited all the churches in Bristol. St. Paul's and St. Nicholas' were newly-built in a light plain Gothic style; Christ Church was also new with ceiling supported by Corinthian columns. At Wilton, near Salisbury he saw many handsome buildings by Sir William Chambers, including the Casino there. (It was this Chambers who built the Casino at Marino.) Continuing his journey, Johnston visited the fortifications at Portsmouth. He sailed to Spithead and went on board the *Juste*, manned and officered with Irishmen—all except 22 out of a total of 800. They were, he says, a brave and wicked set of fellows, fit for any enterprise. Through Surrey, he finally arrived on April 10th, in London, where he spent five days viewing the City's finest architectural specimens. The most of a day was devoted to St. Paul's, which he describes as a wonderful edifice—the contrivances about the dome, he says, show the superior abilities of the architect and workmen who built it. He found time to visit Covent Garden Theatre where he saw *The Lad of the Hills, or Wicklow Goldmine*; however it is not on the performance he comments but on the building, which he considered "superior to Drury Lane, both in style of finishing and in convenience of seeing and hearing. The gallery or box ranges all hang without support which gives an

elegance of appearance (when filled with company) not to be described." The paintings of the theatre, and the scenery, he also admires. On the following day he visited the Shakespeare Gallery where he examined the paintings and engravings.

There is no doubt that this tour helped to broaden the mind of Johnston. The new Gothic style, which had now established itself in England, must have greatly impressed him, for on his return to Dublin he became the greatest exponent of that new fashion in architecture. He was already an architect of standing, and his many observations on his art show that he was no mere sightseer, but an artist, with a critical eye and an assimilating mind. His return to Dublin begins the phase of his life which was destined to make him one of the greatest architects of his day.

Perhaps we should pause here to view the position of architecture in Dublin at that time. The city's public buildings in the early part of the 18th century had been designed more or less on Jacobean lines. The chief of these were the Portobello and Richmond Barracks (1706), Steevens' Hospital (so plain and unornamented), and the Library of Trinity College. In England the main source of inspiration in the early 18th century was the work of the Italian, Andrea Palladio. He was a very great architect, and his influence is seen in the houses of the Georgian period.¹⁴ With the advance of the century this Palladian style, introduced from England, became evident in our Dublin buildings.

The Parliament House was begun by Pearce in 1729, and continued by Dobbs in 1739, the chief front consisting of "a central façade and projecting wings, constituting a colonnade of the Ionic order."¹⁵ The Royal Exchange, which shows three fronts of Portland stone, was designed in the Corinthian order by Thomas Cooley in 1779. (This, I may mention, was the occasion of Cooley's leaving England and coming to Ireland).¹⁶ Leinster House was also designed by Cooley. The Rotunda Lying-in-Hospital was designed and planned by Richard Cassels, of German origin, in 1751. Of this building Thomas Cromwell¹⁷ says: "Its centre, decorated with four Doric columns on a rustic basement, and supporting a beautiful entablature and pediment, the whole crowned with a domed steeple, has a truly elegant effect: ornamental colonnades communicate with the wings, which have also Doric columns. . . ." In the Custom House, designed by James Gandon in 1781, "the Doric order is adopted in the columns and embellishments, but with some innovations in the austere simplicity of that architectural style."¹⁸

Amongst the architects of these principal Dublin buildings I have mentioned there is not one native Irishman; but soon their Palladian style was superseded by the Gothic, and it was Francis

Johnston of Armagh, more than any other man, who introduced it. Thomas Bell, in his prize Essay on Gothic architecture in Ireland, gives Johnston full credit for the part he played in the revival of this style in Ireland. He adds that a description of the Castle Chapel, designed by Johnston, because it is "the most complete and defined in its character," is sufficient "to represent the entire of this modern-antique class of architecture."¹⁹ There are some, of course, who hold that the finest specimen of his work in Dublin is St. George's Church.

In these passing remarks on the state of architecture in Ireland in general, and in Dublin in particular, we have not been following the strict order of the years in respect to Francis Johnston. He came to live in this city in 1793, but it was not till 1798 that he received his first commission here. Where there was such a galaxy of able and eminent non-native architects at work, it is perfectly understandable that this quiet, unobtrusive young architect from Armagh should remain for so long practically unnoticed in the city. When, however, in 1798, it was decided to carry out alterations and additions to the Foundling Hospital, originally founded in 1728 at the west end of St. James's Street, the designs of Francis Johnston were accepted for the scheme, and the Irish architect had at last got his chance. He was responsible for the new chapel with its Gothic columns in the centre of the building. The infirmary, also from his designs, was finished in 1810.²⁰

From this date the buildings of Francis Johnston become too numerous to treat in detail in this short paper. In that very fine publication *The Pavilion* (1947), there is a dated tabulated list of the works of Johnston, compiled by Mr. John Betjeman. The letter from Johnston to Brewer in 1820, from which I have already quoted, amplifies the information in that table, so I add it as an appendix to this paper.²¹

From the date of his alterations and additions to the Foundling Hospital, Francis Johnston was a busy man. The principal buildings from his designs in Dublin were: St. George's Church (1800); Nelson's Pillar (1808); Richmond Bridewell (1811); the Chapel Royal and Record Tower, Dublin Castle (1813); Richmond Lunatic Asylum and the General Post Office (1814); and the Royal Hibernian Academy (1824). Outside Dublin he gave us, amongst others, at this period: Charleville, Tullamore; Corbalton Hall, Tara; and Farnham House, Cavan (1801); Ballycurry, Wicklow (1805); Ballynagall, Mullingar (1808); Tullamore Church (c. 1818); and Moate Glebe House (1819).

To treat of these houses—even the Dublin ones—is outside the scope of this paper; in any case, the Dublin buildings are well

described in the *Irish Builder* (1896), and in the standard Dublin histories. Warburton, Whitelaw, and Walsh's *History of Dublin* (1818), as well as giving detailed descriptions, reproduces some very fine views. As an appendix I have added a list of Johnston's architectural drawings which are in the National Library of Ireland,²² also his own description of the Castle Chapel, which he wrote in 1823. This, as a descriptive essay, is of special merit.²³

In 1765, the "Society of Artists" was formed in Dublin, and a short time later, with the aid of a £500 grant from Parliament, and £200 from the Society of Merchants, the Society procured premises in William Street where exhibitions, etc., were held till 1774, when a schism took place within the ranks. Gradually the Society declined; the last exhibition held in the William Street premises was in 1780. From that date Dublin was without a permanent art academy, though exhibitions were held in various places from time to time. The need for an art institution must have been obvious to the many illustrious painters, engravers, architects, etc., who lived and worked in Dublin in Johnston's time, but it had to wait until 1823.

Francis Johnston will be remembered as the person most responsible for the revival of Gothic architecture in Ireland, but he will also be honoured by art lovers as the man who founded and endowed the Royal Hibernian Academy. This body was established by Royal Charter dated 2nd August, 1823, and consisted of fourteen Academicians and ten Associates, all of whom had to be professional painters, sculptors, or architects. The first stone of the building to house the Academy was laid on 29th April, 1824, by the donor, Francis Johnston. On a copper plate which was firmly embedded in the stone, was the following inscription: "Anno Dom. MDCCCXXIV. His most gracious Majesty, George the Fourth, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c., having by His Royal Letters Patent, bearing date at Carlton Palace, the 5th August, 1823, incorporated the Artists of Ireland, under the name of 'The Royal Hibernian Academy of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture,' Francis Johnston, Esq., Architect, one of the members of that body, munificently founded this building for their use, to form a National School of Art; and laid this, the first stone, April 29th, 1824, the day appointed for the celebration of His Majesty's birthday, in the presence of the Academy." Then follow the names of the Committee: William Ashford, president; Henry Aaron Baker; William Cuming; William Cregan; Francis Johnston, treasurer; Thomas Kirk; John G. Mulvany; Thomas J. Mulvany; William Mossop, secretary; Joseph Peacock;

Thomas Sotel Roberts ; Thomas C. Thompson ; Robert L. West ; Solomon Williams ; Andrew Johnson ; Paul Twigge.

This committee presented Francis Johnston with an address of thanks for the great and permanent benefit he had conferred on the country by providing at his own expense "a noble and durable edifice for the present and future artists of Ireland."²⁴ The Society of Artists nominated William Ashford, landscape painter, and William Cuming, portrait painter, together with Francis Johnston to select the foundation members of the new institution. Their choice for president fell on James Gandon, the architect of the Four Courts, the Custom House and the portico of the old Irish House of Lords ; but Gandon (now in his eighty-third year) refused the honour, and William Ashford was subsequently installed as first president. He was succeeded by Francis Johnston, who remained in office till his death.²⁵

After his death his widow, in 1830, built and endowed a gallery for the Academy's collection of antique and modern sculpture. The Academy prospered in Abbey Street under twelve successive presidents from its foundation until the destruction of the building in Easter Week, 1916.

So much for Francis Johnston, the architect. Let us now look at Francis Johnston, the man. He was described²⁶ as small, almost fragile, lame, delicate in constitution, a man of retiring disposition and simple habits, who did not seek the limelight. He was shrewd, with a high capacity for business, which certainly enabled him to amass a fortune wherewith to indulge his taste as a collector. His house in Eccles Street was richly furnished. A prized possession was the silver trowel which he had used in laying the foundation stone of the Royal Hibernian Academy. This trowel was designed by William Mossop the Younger for the firm of West in Dublin, who gave a description of it from their books to Mr. Henry Johnston.²⁷

His wife, a lady of wealth, had inherited property in Dublin from her father Robert Barnes, a prosperous and well-connected Armagh man. She is described as a lady of good personal dignity and manner, pretty, with very delicate aquiline features and a slender figure. She was of a more assertive character than her husband, identified herself very much with his professional career, and in presiding over the elegant mansion which he built for himself, 40 Eccles Street, lent dignity to his private position in social life. Among the many prominent people of the time entertained at the Johnston residence in Eccles Street was Earl Whitworth, the Lord Lieutenant, who on one occasion expressed a desire to see the artist's collection there.²⁸ As they were about to partake of some refreshments he was confronted by Mrs.

Johnston, who said: "Your Excellency, there is a toast which everyone who comes to this house drinks." He, of course, consented to honour it, and was quite taken aback when he heard the toast: "The glorious pious and immortal memory of the great and good King William the Third." Her ancestors, like her husband's, had been present at the Siege of Derry. The Lord Lieutenant, no doubt, duly honoured the toast. We are told that she was proud of the Johnstons, and liked to pay tribute to them in the following: *Here's to the Johnstons, and the Johnston bairns, and them that lies in the Johnston aermes.* When improvements to Armagh Cathedral were being carried out, subscribers of £50 to the building fund had their coats-of-arms inserted in a window which gives light to the Chapter Room. The widow of Francis Johnston, however, subscribed £300. Mr. John Davidson of Armagh had published a description of the Cathedral, in which he claimed that if Rome had produced its Vitruvius, Armagh had produced its Francis Johnston. This so gratified her that she gave six times the usual subscription. The arms of Johnston impaling those of Barnes were, accordingly, placed in the window, in which are also the arms of other subscribers.²⁹

Francis Johnston was presented with the freedom of several corporate towns in Ireland where he had built town-halls, churches, and other public buildings. He won the personal friendship of several of the Viceroy's of Ireland under whom he had served as Government architect. Lord Whitworth assigned him a seat in the Chapel of Dublin Castle, and Lord Talbot used to send him game when shooting in the country. But his friendships were not confined to the wealthy. When a young stable-boy at Killymoon—Col. Stewart's seat in Tyrone—who showed an aptitude for drawing on the kitchen wall with the burnt butt of a stick, came under the notice of Francis Johnston, he paid 100 guineas to Sir Martin Archer Shee, the Dublin portrait painter, to train the boy; this boy, Martin Cregan, became a distinguished portrait painter, and painted the portrait of his patron.³⁰ Thomas Bell, author of the *Essay on Gothic Architecture* already mentioned, likewise pays tribute to the generous interest Johnston took in his work, although he had never met him. In his will Johnston left £100 to the poor of the parish of St. George.

Apart from his collecting, campanology was Francis Johnston's great hobby, and he could never resist the opportunity of visiting any village where the church spire was embellished with a chime of bells. He adorned his own Wren-like spire at St. George's Church with a peal, at a personal cost of £1,500 guineas, and vested certain rents accruing to him in the interest of the ringers.³¹

When he died, on 14th March, 1829, he left more than £60,000,

the most of which went to relatives. He was laid to rest in St. George's burial ground, where his widow was also buried in 1841. They had no family, but much of Johnston's practice was carried on by a cousin, William Murray, who had joined him in partnership in 1819.

The little grave in the north side of St. George's burial ground, Whitworth Road, is not marked by any lofty monument, and one will seek in vain for a tablet to commemorate his name in the Castle Chapel—the most beautiful, perhaps, of all his works. No biography of him has yet been written, but Dubliners who look about them and admire the many beautiful buildings he has given to our city can never forget the name of this great architect and the debt they owe him. *Circumspice, si monumentum requiris.*

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APPENDIX A.

FRANCIS JOHNSTON'S LETTER TO J. N. BREWER. (From a copy at Kilmore in Johnston's handwriting.)

ECCLES STREET,
DUBLIN,
Feb. 29, 1820.

DEAR SIR,

I write to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st of January and to give the best account of the several buildings erected by my plans and under my superintendence. In the early part of the year 1784 my master Mr. Thomas Cooley (who built the Royal Exchange here) died, and I was in consequence appointed by the late Primate Robinson, Architect to his buildings at Armagh where I erected the present tower to the Cathedral in that city, completed the inside of the chapel attached to His Grace's palace, and an obelisk which stands on Knox's hill in the demesne, and a few years afterwards (1789) I designed and built the Observatory for His Grace on another hill near Armagh. I was also employed by the Primate from 1785 to 94, when he died, in erecting a very handsome mansion house and offices, with various other buildings in which are included two churches (one at Ballymakenny within 3 miles of Drogheda and the other at Clonmore in the County of Louth), N.East from that town and built on an estate purchased from Lord Derby by the Primate for himself and family, as the residence of Lord Rokeby to which dignity he had been raised by His late Majesty, but times have so changed that none of his family reside at Rokeby Hall, the name he gave this place, and it is now let out to farming gentlemen for what rent it will bring, and must of course soon fall to decay. These buildings cost the Primate about £30,000, but if they were to be done at present day £10,000 more would not be sufficient. For a very correct and well digested account of all the buildings which Primate Robinson erected and caused to be built at Armagh and in Louth I refer you to Mr. Stuart's history of that city (which I mentioned to you and which will be forthwith published, and Mr. Cumming will of course have it). On Primate Robinson's death in October 1794, I was employed by Mr. Balfour to plan and erect a very large mansion house and offices at his seat Townley Hall, County of Louth, within three miles of Drogheda, within half a mile of the spot where the battle of the Boyne was fought, many marks of which remain to this day. The house measures 88 feet by 87, is cased with a beautiful stone, got in the neighbourhood, and contains several spacious apartments. The stair case a circle of 30 feet in diameter open to and lighted from the top has a good effect. During the progress of the erection of this house, etc., I planned and executed several detached works, about the Castle of Slane, at the Gothic gate opposite the mill, the steeple of the church, and finished the hall, stair case, and entrance to the castle. The other works there had been executed from the design of Mr. James Wyatt, who was at Slane in the year 1785 for that purpose. This magnificent seat did at that time belong to Colonel Conyngham, and is now the property of his nephew the Marquis Conyngham. From the death of Primate Robinson my residence and home was Dublin, where I planned and executed the alterations and additions to the Foundling Hospital, Hibernian School in the Phoenix Park, the Bank of Ireland, the House of Industry, Lock Hospital, and Royal Hospital Kilmainham, and in October, 1805 I was appointed Architect of the Board of Works and Civil Buildings, when I planned and erected the Castle Chapel, the Adjutant General's office, the Quartermaster General's do., the gate to the military road, the additions to the new Stamp Office in William Street, the porticoes to the Lord Lieutenant's

residence in the Phoenix Park, the new gates and lodges to do., the Richmond House of Correction near Harold's Cross, the Richmond Penitentiary in Grangegorman lane, St. George's Church, the Richmond Lunatic Asylum, and the Post Office. I planned and executed the interior of St. Andrew's Church, and many minor buildings not worth mentioning. I forgot to state before that I planned the Roman Catholic Chapel of St. Peter's, Drogheda, erected the spire of St. Peter's church, and planned and erected the Corn Market in that town. In the Co. of Meath I planned and erected an addition to Killeen Castle for Lord Fingal, and built a considerable mansion and Offices for Elias Corbally, Esq., in the same neighbourhood. In the town of Kells I planned the Popish Chapel and the Session House, and made plans for the Marquis of Headford to alter his mansion which he approved of, paid me for, but never put into execution. I also built a villa at Galtrum near Summerhill in this county for the Revd. Vesey Dawson deceased, who was nephew to the late Lord Cremorne, and I planned and directed additions to the villa of Thomas Bligh, Esq., at Brittas, near Nobber, the birth place of Carolin, the famous Irish bard. In the County of Westmeath I planned and directed a mansion house for James Gibbons, Esq., at Ballinagall, near Lough Owel, the source from which the Royal Canal is supplied, also large additions to Pakenham Hall near the town of Castlepollard, the seat of the Earl of Longford, and made plans for a church in Castlepollard, but I understand the people concerned have begun to build upon a cheaper one. In the King's Co. I planned and erected Charleville Castle and offices, it is a very extensive building imitating as near as modern convenience and comfort could admit an old British Castle. I did no other building in this county except the Church of Tullamore; the alterations and additions made at Lord Rosse's Castle, at Parsonstown or Birr were done by a Mr. John Johnston, who died about five years ago. In the County of Cavan I planned and superintended the erection of a large addition to Farnham house for the Earl of Farnham, I also planned an addition to the house of James Saunderson, Esq., of Clover Hill near Belturbet, and the Inn in the town of Cavan. In the Co. Sligo I planned and erected Markrea Castle near the town of Collooney, the seat of Joshua Edward Cooper, Esq. In the County of Wexford I planned the Church of New Ross, and in the County of Wicklow Mr. Synge's Castle at the Devil's Glen, and Mr. Tottenham's house at Ballycurry. Returning to Armagh I sent a plan for the new Session House (erected there about seven years ago) but it has not been followed, the Managers (an Attorney and others) were prevailed upon by some of the workmen to reduce the diameter of the columns (I suppose for the greater convenience of getting the stones of which they are composed) and have thereby ruined the portico. In Dundalk I planned and directed the erection of a spire on the church which though very plain and simple has a good effect from its good proportion to the tower. At Killincoole about five miles from Dundalk I erected a small Glebe House, and another near the town of Moate in the Co. of Westmeath, thus I have detailed as near as I can recollect my whole life of business, and which I submit to you with a due sense of the imperfections of many of my undertakings, some caused by my own inexperience and others by the whims and obstinacy of my employers, and for which I am sure you will make reasonable allowance, considering that during my life of business, the arts have advanced from a very inferior state indeed to what they now assume. I expect with anxiety the works you state to have forwarded to me and shall be happy to acknowledge the receipt of them as soon as they come to hand. Believe me, dear Sir, with the best wishes for the success of your work,

Your Faithful, humble servant,

J. N. BREWER, Esq.

FRANCIS JOHNSTON.

APPENDIX B.

ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS BY FRANCIS JOHNSTON, IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY,
DUBLIN.

1. Armagh Cathedral.
2. Ditto, details.
3. Marlay, Co. Louth.
4. Ballymackenny Church, Co. Louth.
5. St. Catherine's, Leixlip, Co. Kildare.
6. St. Andrew's Church, Dublin.
7. St. George's Church, Dublin.
8. Charleville Castle, Tullamore.
9. Corbalton Hall, Co. Meath.
10. Townley Hall, Drogheda, Co. Louth.
11. Garvey House, Co. Tyrone.
12. Slane, Co. Meath.
13. Clown, Co. Meath.
14. Killeen Castle, Co. Meath.
15. Kells, Co. Meath.
16. Dunshaughlin, Co. Meath.
17. Headfort House, Co. Meath.
18. Killucan Glebe House, Co. Westmeath.
19. Termonmaguirk Glebe House, Co. Tyrone.
20. Farnham House, Co. Cavan.
21. Swords Schools, Co. Dublin.
22. Markree Castle, Co. Sligo.
23. Foundling Hospital, Dublin.
24. Carton, Co. Kildare.
25. Sessions House, Armagh.
26. Ballycurry, Co. Wicklow.
27. House of Industry, Dublin.
28. Pakenham Hall, Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath.
29. Stamp Office, Dublin.
30. Royal Hibernian School, Dublin.
31. Nelson Pillar, Dublin.
32. Richmond Penitentiary, Dublin.
33. City Bridewell or Richmond House of Correction, Dublin.
34. Kilruddery, Co. Wicklow.
35. General Post Office, Dublin.
36. Richmond Lunatic Asylum, Dublin.
37. King's Inns, Dublin.
38. Lunatic Asylum, Armagh.
39. Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin.
40. Eccles Street houses, Dublin.
41. Lunatic Asylum, Belfast.
42. Francis Synge's house, Glenmore, Co. Wicklow.

APPENDIX C.

THE CHAPEL ROYAL, DUBLIN CASTLE.

The old chapel having fallen into a state of ruinous dilapidation, it was resolved to erect a new one on the same site, and the Duke of Bedford, the then Lord Lieutenant, directed Mr. Johnston, the architect to the Board of

Works, to prepare plans for the new chapel, which were accordingly done, approved of, and the first stone laid by His Grace, 15th February, 1807, and the work proceeded with regularly according to the yearly grants of money until completed: it was opened for divine service on Christmas Day, 1814, during the administration of Earl Whitworth. The exterior is composed of hard limestone of a dark bluish hue, producing a variation of tint with good effect. The outline and dimensions being confined to the limits of the former building, put it out of the architect's power to deviate, should he have wished it, as any further obtrusion on the avenues around it could not be allowed. The outside appears plain and simple, having buttresses of a good proportion terminating with pinnacles, decorated with grotesque heads; droppers on the angles, and handsome finials executed in limestone, which was got from the quarries near Tullamore, in the King's County; a monastic battlement finishes the wall between the buttresses, which is properly decorated, and well proportioned. There are two tiers of windows giving light to the chapel, those under the gallery have flat Gothic arches, and the windows over pointed ditto; all these windows are divided with mullions, and into well-formed Gothic compartments, and glazed in metal. The east window is of larger dimensions, having more divisions and tracery, into which are introduced a series of painted glass, representing the Saviour before Caiaphas, the high priest, and Pontius Pilate, with a confusion of figures, and the colours good. The four compartments at bottom, and three at top, are filled with painted glass, executed by Mr. Bradley in Dublin; the subjects at the bottom are the Four Evangelists, and at the top, the Crucifixion and Resurrection, and Lord Whitworth's arms, who made a present of the glass in the other compartments before described, and which his lordship had purchased whilst on his embassy in France. There are a series of heads, sustaining the labels over the window arches and over the entrance doors, some of them historical and some fanciful; of the former are the heads of Queen Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots, Archbishops Usher and Robinson, Dean Swift, etc. There are also heads representing St. Peter and St. Patrick, and accompanying the latter, at the eastern door, is the head of Brian Boroimhe, King of Ireland, supporting the decorated label, and at the top thereof of the east window are three-quarter length figures representing Faith, Hope and Charity. The gable over this window is battlemented, and its apex finished with an ornamented Calvary cross; all these heads and ornaments are composed of fine limestone from Tullamore quarry, and were modelled and executed by the late Mr. Edwd. Smyth and his son, the present Mr. John Smyth, sculptors, of this city.

The inside is in length 73 ft. and 35 ft. wide, divided into a centre and two side divisions by Gothic pillars of a good proportion and form, with handsome bases and capitals; along the side divisions are the galleries, which continue round the west end, to give space for the organ and choristers; on the south side the Lord Lieutenant's throne is placed; opposite to it, the seat for the bishops. On the other side of the throne are the seats for the members of the household, and on each side of the bishop's seat are pews for the peers and peeresses, also a seat for the Lord Chancellor and opposite to it a seat for the Chief Secretary; next to the organ gallery are seats for other secretaries and heads of Government offices. The centre division of the chapel has a handsome groined ceiling, with tracery mouldings, and well proportioned copes at their intersections. The groins are sustained by angelic figures, issuing from the small pillarets which spring out of the small caps. On the capitals of the pillars which enclose the chancel, are placed heads with part of the figures of the Four Evangelists, over which the groins of the ceiling spring, and from the top of the two front figures arises an ornamental band,

terminating with a half-length figure of Moses holding the Commandment Tables. Over the chancel window are three figures representing Faith, Hope and Charity, as large as life. The ceilings over the galleries are formed with brackets and droppers, richly ornamented with tracery and these brackets are supported by male and female heads, alluding to Piety and Devotion. The window labels are supported by heads, in various attitudes of like allusion, and under the galleries the ceilings are laid out in tracery agreeing with the above, except that it is on a flat ground and the droppers more compressed. Their termination is decorated with groups of cherubs, well imagined and executed by Mr. Stapleton, but all the sculptural figures and heads by the present Mr. Smyth after the death of his father, who assisted him in the designs and models at the commencement of the work. The upper and lower vestibules are decorated in the same manner as the galleries, having groined ceilings springing from the heads of various characters, and the capitals of the upper vestibule are singularly curious. The latter were executed by Mr. Stewart of this city, who also executed all the wood carving and decorations, in that material, throughout the chapel. The front of the galleries, the throne, pews, reading-desk, pulpit and Communion place are fitted up with oak, and richly decorated. The gallery fronts are divided into several compartments, into which are introduced the arms of the different Chief Governors with symbols showing their rank and dates, beginning with Baron de Lacy, who was Lord Lieutenant or Chief Governor in the year 1173, and ending with Lord Whitworth, who filled that situation in the year 1814, when the Chapel was opened. A very rich frieze of Gothic foliage goes round the gallery, and the projections for the throne and bishop's seat are supported by coverings richly decorated. The pulpit and reading desk are placed in the centre of the aisle, a little forward of the altar steps. They are highly ornamented, and the stairs to the former particularly so. The manner of supporting the pulpit is well designed and characteristic, as are the See arms, and those of the eminent reformers, on the several compartments of it, and the reading desk. The altar is chastely decorated, on the panels of which are written the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and Apostles' Creed. The rail and balustrade are very rich in form and decoration. The approach to the altar is paved with marble in mosaic compartments, as in the aisle of the Chapel, with a combination of Portland and black stone.

The joiners' work was executed by Mr. Battersby, and all the carving by Mr. Richard Stewart before mentioned. The exterior of the organ was designed by the architect of the Chapel, and built by Mr. Gray of London, and it was the only article of this fabric that was not executed by native artists. The superintendent of the works was Mr. Thomas Hunt, who is still in the employment of the Board of Works.

May, 1823.

F. J.

[From *The Irish Builder*, 1896, pp. 48-51].