

Assembly Committee to Get Look At County Assessor's Operations

The Assembly Interim Committee on Revenue and Taxation has accepted County Assessor Philip Watson's invitation to meet in Los Angeles Nov. 14 and 15 for a first-hand look at the world's biggest assessing job.

The committee, headed by Assemblyman Nicholas C. Petris (D., Oakland), said it was particularly interested in the procedural changes initiated by Watson since taking office last December.

Committee consultant David A. Doerr also told Watson the group would like to hear from

organizations or individuals on any aspect of property taxation.

THE PUBLIC is invited to address queries or suggestions to the committee, in case of Assessor Watson, Room 320, Hall of Administration, 590 W. Temple St. The committee will schedule hearings within the limits of the time available, Doerr said.

Watson urged the public to take advantage of the opportunity to make its views known to the committee.

"The problems of property

taxation in Los Angeles are not in themselves unique," Watson commented, "but the immensity of the county magnifies them to out-size proportions."

"THIS OFFICE is charged with assessing more than 1,800,000 parcels of land, 2,200,000 structures, and 200,000 businesses. It is estimated we handle some two million pieces of paper in the process."

Watson said his invitation to the committee was prompted by his experience during the last legislative session.

"Some 30 bills were introduced to grant partial or complete exemptions to special interests," Watson said. "If only three of them had passed —

those granting exemptions to the film industry, the oil industry and public lessees — Los Angeles County's tax base would have shrunk more than \$100 million."

IN ADDITION, he said, another 25 bills dealing with procedural changes were introduced, any one of which, when enacted, involves a changeover job of unprecedented size when put into effect here.

Watson said he had been impressed by the operation of the Revenue and Taxation Committee at the last session.

"I feel these local hearings will give the committee first-hand knowledge of the Southern California scene that will be invaluable in attacking the legislative problems next session."



ON JAUNTING CAR . . . Jerrilyn Crandall (left) and Dorothy Leonard are shown seated on an Irish jaunting car, horse-drawn, two-wheel rig with seats slung over each of the two large wheels, side-saddle style. The jaunting cars are favorite modes of travel along the banks of Lake Killarney. Larry Macaray reports for his "Let's Go" readers.

... Let's Go

By LARRY MACARAY

All that I envisage is that I offer here, as nearly as I can, the effects that Ireland had upon me in a recent visit. Two members of my travel group—Jerrilyn Crandall and Dorothy Leonard — enjoyed their Irish visit, as I did, but they must be in possession of remembrances quite unique from mine.

What did we expect? What thoughts and misconceptions we must collect as we take a passage which no other takes, even though in the same years, and through what, for convenience, we agree to call the same landscape. This small plot of earth called Ireland: land of fable, leprechauns and fairies, a lush green meadow inhabited by people renowned for their "good luck," literature steeped in rare wit and humor; all of this sprinkled with the indomitable spirit of the Irish, well known for centuries.

WE ARRIVED, as do the majority of foreigners to Ireland, at Shannon Airport, just a few miles from Limerick. So it must often be the first Irish city in which a stranger will set foot. It may not be a radiant starting point. First impressions need not dazzle, and a slow approach is wise where true acquaintance is expected. The history of Limerick, Ireland's oldest city, dates from about the middle of the ninth century, when the Danes used it as a base to plunder the hinterland (until Brian Boru finally sacked the town over a century later and drove out the invaders).

A SENSITIVE stranger crossing one of Limerick's bridges, having looked up and down the River Shannon, might begin to wonder if he should hesitate in sending off "first-impressions" postcards about Ireland.

The Shannon is a formidable water . . . nothing of prattle or girlish dreams, such as the River Lee. Its harbor has long been accustomed to news and trouble; and in the general movement of time, Limerick has been shaped as much by invasions and sieges, as by acts of God and the usual weatherings. It is for Ireland, therefore, a truly representative city. Whatever happened to Ireland, happened also here; and some things happened to Ireland, because of things that happened here.

JERRILYN, DOROTHY and I took the bus from Shannon to Limerick one afternoon to do some last minute shopping. We had heard about the fine goods and reasonable prices that Ireland had to offer, so we set out to find them. The Irish linens were superb and the wool sweaters were of superior quality . . . which means that we returned from our shopping experience in Limerick heavily laden with gifts for friends and relatives back home.

Another exciting excursion

that we took was a motor coach tour from Shannon to Killarney via Limerick, Adare (the loveliest village in Ireland), and Abbeysale. Staying at the new and luxurious German-owned Hotel Europe in Killarney was a special treat. Elegantly furnished rooms overlooking beautiful Lake Killarney . . . hi-fi in every room . . . fast courteous service and taste tempting food was the "frosting on the cake" as far as our European trip was concerned.

FROM KILLARNEY our itinerary took us to Cork via Ballyvourney and Blarney, then from Cork back to Shannon via Croom and Mallow. Kissing the Blarney Stone at Blarney Castle was an experience we had all been looking forward to. The 120 steep stone steps to the top of the crumbling castle were rather precarious to maneuver and the actual kissing of the stone was almost too much!

Lying on my back . . . bending backwards at almost a 45 degree angle . . . held down at my ankles by a stout Irish gentleman . . . and then pressing my lips against a cold clammy stone is not my idea of what a kiss should be! But if the "gift of eloquence" that comes to those who kiss the stone, comes to me in time, it will be worth it.

CORK CITY, built on an island in the River Lee, has a setting that is hill-bound and sheltered, making an informal type of beauty—a kind of "go as you please" charm. In Cork the people seem to be handsome above the average, and the girls especially pretty—in an individual way of prettiness. We heard it said in Ireland that to find the best-looking young ones, you must search among "the Cork lads and the Limerick lasses."

The saddest story we learned of Cork was that of a Lord Mayor whose long, long, death—self-appointed, self-imposed for a principle—caused the whole world to look on in wonder and in grief. Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork in 1920, when the Black and Tans were raging through Ireland, was taken prisoner by the British. He was thus deprived of his right to fight his enemy in arms so he used a terrible weapon. In Brixton Gaol he settled to hunger-strike, to death if necessary. He was a very young man, handsome, gifted, lately married to a beautiful wife. And death took a long time to reach him in his Brixton cell. Seventy-eight days. And the Black and Tan went on. But a cold hush fell, and the long, extraordinary act of faith was pondered willy-nilly day after day . . . by anyone who could read a newspaper . . . anywhere.

Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork. The name and title went around the earth . . . and people were awestruck and remembered them.

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