

# IRISH EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LOOKING GLASSES

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This article discusses looking-glass design and production in eighteenth-century Ireland, concentrating on wall mirrors produced by known makers, or displaying Irish characteristics. The research presented here is preliminary; of the information known today, most is due to the labours of Desmond Fitzgerald, Knight of Glin. I am grateful to him and the many other historians who have helped in this research.<sup>1</sup>

Without setting forth a potted history of post-Restoration Ireland some comments of the early eighteenth century may throw some light on the standard of furnishings in houses of the wealthy and nobility. Mary Pendarves, later Mrs Delaney, a well-known diarist who came to live in Ireland, wrote in 1732 that 'the people of this country don't seem solicitous of having good dwellings or more furniture than is absolutely necessary'. However in the same year an English visitor noted that 'the buildings of the quality, gentry, and the citizens in Dublin, are large and beautiful, the furniture neat'. In 1736 Lord Orrery was not impressed by the Irish interpretation of fashion in architecture and accoutrements: 'here we see nothing but . . . the awkward imitation of what is now distinguished by the word Taste'.<sup>2</sup> At this period fashions in Ireland may have been lagging behind London or have been of a different character, in itself a disincentive for the nobility to espouse the cause of Irish products. Mirrors must have been common in Dublin, however, by the start of the eighteenth century; as in 1711 William Rose, of Essex Bridge Dublin, advertised a lottery of looking glasses, in which there were 189 prizes, and the notice regarding the emigration of a Dublin looking glass maker, Caleb Emerson, in 1731 describes him as eminent and rich.<sup>3</sup>

Contemporary sources for frame designs occasionally come to light; English and French pattern books were disseminated — some had pirate editions published in Ireland, such as William Jones's *Gentleman and Builders Companion* (1739). Cheaper sources were also available, such as the rococo designs on trade cards which were copied from each other and led to the transfer of modish details (Figure 1).<sup>4</sup> Documentary evidence such as inventories and eighteenth-century newspaper advertisements can be used to a limited extent, especially to trace the activities of specific firms, however despite giving descriptions of size and material or finish, frame designs are rarely mentioned.

Advertisements intimate also that the size and focus of looking-glass shops varied; many 'looking-glass makers' probably just sold the finished items along with other stock made of glass (such as eyeglasses and telescopes), while others refined the plate glass into mirror and bought in frames — probably from local carvers.<sup>5</sup> As time passed, many of the craftspeople who started as glass grinders and sellers became specialist carver/gilders and looking-glass-makers.<sup>6</sup> A number of glaziers also diversified into mirror making through print-selling and from the field of woodwork some became



1. Trade card of Francis and John Booker, pasted into an album of the architect Joseph Jarratt, c. 1755

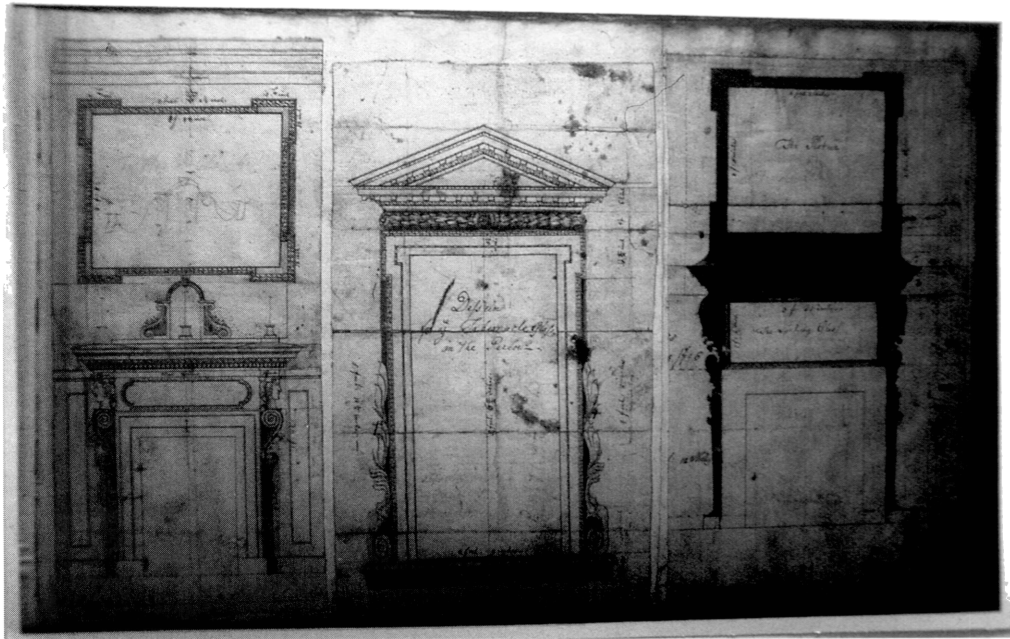
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2. Irish rococo overmantel glass with squirrel finials  
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furniture and looking-glass makers. Many seventeenth and early eighteenth-century carvers in Ireland were of foreign stock (usually Huguenot), who probably practised the styles of their native countries; of these James Tabary, carver of the chapel in the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, is the most celebrated.<sup>7</sup> However as the eighteenth century progressed the names which occur in advertisements and the corporation rolls are English or Irish, as are the names of the few glassmakers who made the plate glass and the grinders who polished it. It would be interesting to know if these makers relied more on once-off commissions, or if they kept a large supply of framed mirrors. Advertisements are not always to be read literally, as a 'large stock' is a purely subjective term and was used to attract business. Perhaps many customers preferred to bespeake their own designs while others were content to choose from those already made up; Mary Delany wrote in 1751 of having the framer out to her house to show his choice of (picture) frames.<sup>8</sup>

The making of frames was a very time consuming matter, and the lapse of time between order and delivery could be many months. Moreover the lapse of time between invoice and payment was a notorious trait of the gentry. However, many businesses prospered — mid-eighteenth-century looking glass manufacturer William Bibby told the hearings of the Wide Streets Commissioners in the 1750s that the well-known Booker firm on Essex Bridge expended £350 in re-building their premises.<sup>9</sup> Although the most up-to-date frame patterns were available from some dealers who advised their customers that they sourced designs in London, the general conservatism noted by



3. Two looking glass designs from the *Dromoland Album*, attributed to John Aheron c. 1740. The centre design is for a 'tabernacle' glass and the right hand drawing shows an ensemble with an overmantel looking glass

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historians in many fields of Irish art and architecture is evident in the favoured mirror frame characteristics. During the early and mid-eighteenth century the most innovative London developments took some years to be assimilated into the oeuvre of Dublin makers.<sup>10</sup> When the rococo was adopted, Irish carving remained chunky and flat with more wood in evidence (Figure 2). These rococo characteristics were evidently literal adaptations of the two-dimensional print or drawing in which the lines were of course much thicker in proportion than in the finished mirrors of Thomas Chippendale and his contemporaries. Heaviness and flatness was not always evident in Irish frames: some mid-century examples by their carving style appear to be made by craftsmen who had first hand experience of London rococo work. The architectural mirrors labelled by the Bookers also display proper architectonic qualities in their pediments and columns.<sup>11</sup>

#### SOURCES — PATTERN BOOKS AND DESIGNERS

While it is possible to trace the sources used by Irish looking-glass makers through designs that are based upon English publications such as those of Lock, Johnson or Chippendale, it is rare to find Irish sellers so forthcoming in their advertisements. Added to this very few Irish drawings survive and pictorial views of interiors rarely include mirrors. Three designs of the few which survive, attributed to John Aheron, an



architect who worked at Dromoland House, Co. Clare during the 1740s, are for a 'tabernacle' and two overmantel glasses (two are shown in Figure 3).<sup>12</sup> They are of interest especially as the auction catalogue of this house lists several architectural treatises including William Jones's *Gentleman and Builders Companion* and William Kent's edition of the *Designs of Inigo Jones for Public and Private Buildings* (1727) both of which contain mirror frame designs.<sup>13</sup> Aheron's tabernacle design deviates very little from contemporary designs by these authors, which lack of imagination extends to his building designs; his own *Treatise on Architecture* (published in 1754) is also heavily derivative. The overmantel glass intended for the entrance hall (not illustrated here) is of a type more associated with the late baroque or the early Palladians,<sup>14</sup> a horizontal plate with clipped corners within its own frame sitting on a lugged architectural chimneypiece.

Three other Irish mid-eighteenth-century frame designs are known, only one of which is signed; this is a baroque oval glass in a lugged rectangular frame; a second is a rococo overmantel frame while the third is a not particularly accomplished variation of the Chippendale style. The first drawing is the most important; it is by the Dublin architect Joseph Jarratt, pasted into an album of the mid-1750s (Figure 4). The overt French character of this design is unsurprising given that Jarratt also pasted many French engravings of the seventeenth-century and 1730s into the album. No similar Irish mirror is known, and this design may not have been made.<sup>15</sup> The overmantel design may date from the late 1750s, as a mirror based upon it is in the Chinese Room at Carton, Co. Kildare (decorated in 1759).<sup>16</sup> (Figures 5 and 6). It shows that the full rococo flowering was underway in Ireland by this date, following on the heels of the early English rococo publications.<sup>17</sup> The third design is not necessarily Irish, although it has been tentatively linked with the Bookers.<sup>18</sup> It resembles an architectural glass which has been given an awkward rococo treatment, and surmounted with an unwieldy assemblage containing cherubs, ho-ho birds, foliage and urn. In short it is an unsuccessful cross-over and may merely be the sketch of an imaginative amateur designer.

We are left to ponder the sources enthusiastically alluded to by Dublin looking-glass maker William Bibby who 'furnished himself with a variety of the newest designs' in 1747, or his brother Joseph, who returned in 1766 from four years in London also furnished 'with a great variety of new designs by the best masters'.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Dublin looking-glass maker William Partridge's 'newest and most excellent designs'<sup>20</sup> remain anonymous. The effects of the carver John Houghton, sold after his death in 1761, included 'some useful books for a carver, joiner, upholster such as Chippendales and Ware designs, Gibbs Architect and Aheron on Architecture in five books'.<sup>21</sup>

#### SHAPES AND STYLES OF FRAMES

Frame styles begin to be mentioned, although rarely, in Restoration era inventories such as those for Kilkenny Castle<sup>22</sup> (from the 1670s to 1700s). In 1678 there was mention of a silver and ebony frame surmounted by a crest, while other large glasses were associated with tables (which indicates either pier or large toilet glasses). Not until the mid-eighteenth century do any details emerge of the frame sizes or shapes usual in

Ireland; no typical Queen Anne pier glass (tall and narrow with a crest and usually of at least two plates, possibly separated by decorative bevels of flint glass) can yet be identified as Irish. Although many of this era survive in Ireland the English and Irish styles of carving were both quite flat and Dutch in inspiration.<sup>23</sup>

The early eighteenth-century semi-architectural, shouldered frame, surmounted with low-relief carving, appeared in the 1720s and lasted well into the 1740s, with ho-ho birds, eagles, masks, scallop shells, the occasional prince-of-Wales plumes and high, scrolled shoulders. Little corroborative pictorial evidence is found: one of the few mid-eighteenth-century Irish interior scenes is Philip Hussey's painting 'Interior with Members of A Family'<sup>24</sup> which shows a pier glass of this style. The mid-century influences of gothic, rococo and Chinoiserie also made themselves felt, all merging with a late flowering of the baroque, as seen in several glasses at Leixlip Castle, Co. Kildare which probably date from the mid-century (Figure 7). As stated in the introduction, not all frames were *retarde* in comparison with London. A set of mirrors of the 1750s from Russborough, Co. Wicklow (part of the Milltown Bequest at the National Gallery of Ireland), and attributed to the partnership of John Houghton and John Kelly, differ from any Irish frames.<sup>25</sup> (Figure 8) Their grotesque and fantastic ebullience differs from the designs published by Chippendale, Lock or Johnson, and compares with Irish plasterwork and timber furniture of this period — which is characterised by extravagant late baroque meeting capricious rococo. Indeed the crafts of framing and stuccowork merge at Riverstown, Co. Cork, where pier glasses are framed in high-relief plasterwork decoration carried out by the Swiss Francini brothers, dating from c. 1745.<sup>26</sup>

There are several Irish looking glasses which may be compared to published designs of Matthias Lock and Thomas Chippendale and many more derivations of these patterns, including a labelled late rococo mirror, by Partridge of Dublin, probably of the 1770s.<sup>27</sup> The low-relief, woodiness of baroque and rococo carving was slow to lose popularity among Irish customers; its perseverance is one of the trademarks of the Dublin trade in all types of mirror, and is often used to attribute 'Irishness'.<sup>28</sup> With the edging out of out freehand styling in the 1770s by more ordered neo-classical patterns, well into the 1770s, little visual evidence survived of a native style. The practice of depending on 'Irish' styles of carving to make attributions may suffice for the moment when dealing with most eighteenth-century baroque and rococo, but there is a group of looking glasses which defy this preliminary categorisation — the architectural or tabernacle mirror. Many of these, especially those which have accomplished proportions and carving, are — in contrast to the main body of rococo work — attributed to Irish makers, notably the Bookers. As this type of mirror is Kentian in inspiration, and many are found outside Ireland, there is no reason to assume the Bookers worked alone. Indeed Ralph Leland advertised his 'tabernacle pier glasses' in a *Dublin Journal* entry of 1743 and Joseph Bibby his 'architectural' glasses in 1775,<sup>29</sup> whereas the Bookers never claimed to make this type. It is difficult to identify a 'house style' in the labelled Booker mirrors, save the obvious similarity of composition. Unlabelled examples do not solve the problem of attribution; there are both similarities and differences in pediments, console brackets, foliage, festoons and carving styles. Most are sophisticated in their proportions but one cannot as yet isolate a source for these recurring family resemblances. It may well be that Francis or John Booker possessed such dexterity in

interpreting Jones's and Kent's prototypes that they influenced a generation of looking-glass manufacturers<sup>30</sup> but on the other hand it is probably that there were many makers of these glasses, both in Dublin and elsewhere, satisfying the public with well made examples in the fashionable style (Figures 9 and 10). Within this type of glass there are two main categories: those with and those without columns. A subsection could divide glasses with straight broken pediments; a further subdivision distinguishes those with one plate and those with a smaller top plate; glasses (labelled and not) have a mixture of these basic compositional distinctions. (Further elements include mirrored borders to the main plate, mirrored bases, urns, fluted friezes and carved friezes, guilloche banded borders, use of festoons, twisting floral ropes on the columns, console brackets, neoclassical pateras etc.) The Booker glass in figure 9 has little, apart from the fluted Corinthian columns, to tie it to the example illustrated in figure 10. It is hardly surprising given the possibilities for juxtaposition of the main elements that attributions are commonly made to the Bookers. This type of glass obviously retained its popularity for decades after the Bookers ceased trading: proof that the Dublin market was eclectic can be seen in two labelled pedimented mirrors of a late date, by Joshua Kearney (*fl.* 1797–1849) and Cornelius Callaghan, 24 Clare Street, Dublin (between 1822 and 44).<sup>31</sup> In their composition both adhere to the standard format, competently executed. There is however a certain dullness of the carving in the Callaghan mirror frieze and base. A somewhat lesser pedimented mirror with semi-circular-headed plate bordered with guilloche moulding has the label of Patrick Fenlon, who was extant in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup> The label may relate to subsequent re-gilding or re-silvering but it could also indicate a revival.

The pier glass is a type rather than a style; however, its early appearance and widespread popularity (often as a tabernacle glass) should be noted. While pier glasses occur very early in the Queen Ann period in English houses, Irish examples before the accession of George II are scarce if not impossible to identify. Queen Anne style pier glasses found in Irish houses are usually presumed to be English, but informed attribution is almost impossible due to the lack of evidence. In 1731 a ground floor room at no. 85 St. Stephen's Green had, according to Mrs Delany, 'marble tables between the windows, and looking glasses with gilt frames'. Perhaps this room was an influence in the decoration of her own drawing room, which, as described to a correspondent in 1744 had 'between the windows large glasses with gilt frames, and marble tables under them with gilt frames'.<sup>33</sup>

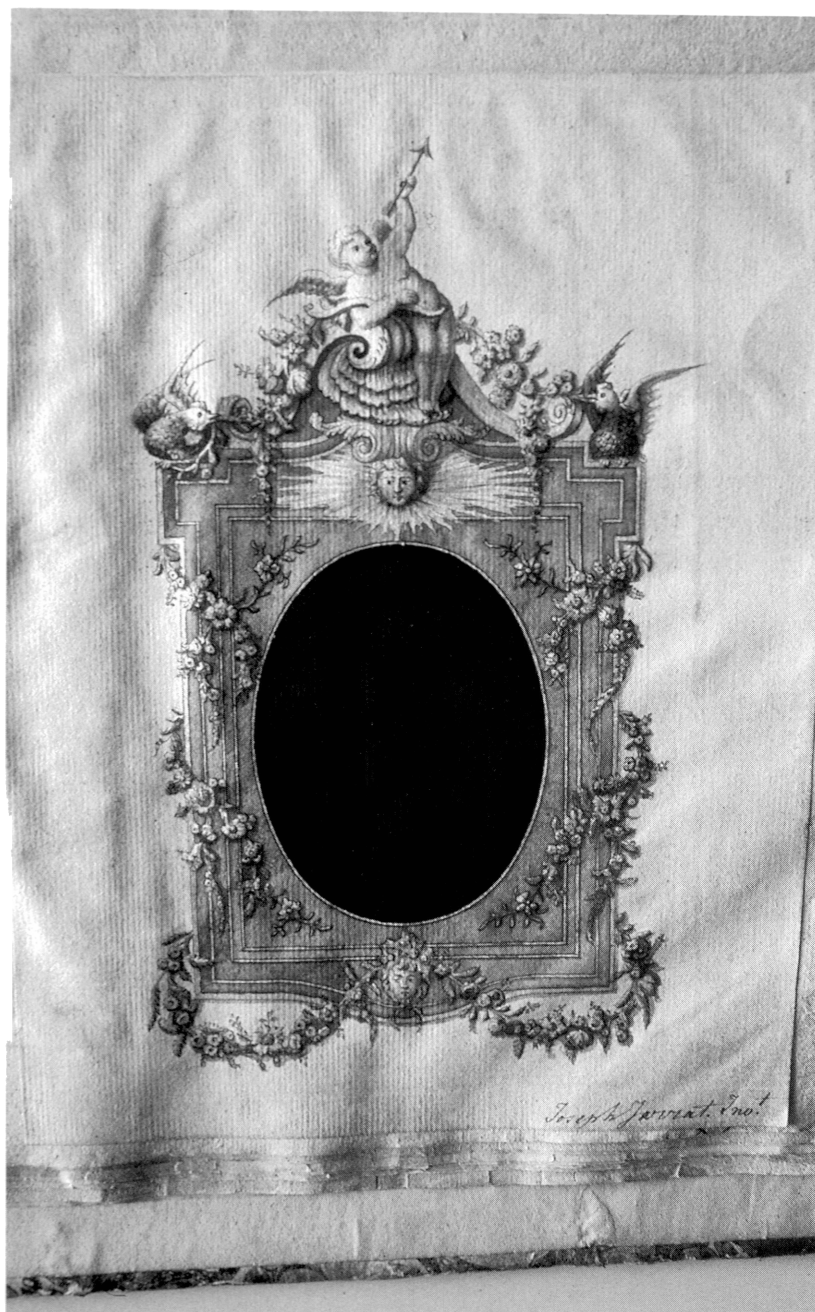
Advertisements verify the popularity of pier glasses by the mid-century; in 1743 Ralph Leland mentions pier glasses in a notice (see note 29 above). The pier glass was especially popular in the two-bay urban houses then being built in large numbers as it resolved the duality of the blank central pier between two windows. Pier glasses could be used for the more direct reflection of light and to this end branches were often attached to magnify candlelight (for a similar result mirror plate was sometimes fitted into the panels of window shutters<sup>34</sup>). Mrs Delany writes about redecorating her bedroom in 1758, 'I have now completed it by two looking glasses that fill side panels of the bow window, and reflect all the prospects . . . the glasses reach within a foot of the cornice of the ceiling, and are fastened up with double knots of gilded rope'.<sup>35</sup> The shapes of pier glass varied, and although the rectangle is most associated with the type,

ovals were also a popular shape, often with trailing gilded ropes and crossed boughs, a result of the popularity of Chippendale's and Lock's publications. Joseph Bibby mentions Architect, oval and *Palmira* Pier glasses in gilt and white frames in 1775.<sup>36</sup> *Palmira* may perhaps have been the colloquial name for oval frames with these crossed palm boughs which achieved popularity in the 1770s and 1780s. In some frames the scrolling foliage is almost completely detached from the framing of the plate and commonly the palm branches are tied in a bow at the base of the frame. A labelled Booker example was sold by Christie's in 1981.<sup>37</sup>

As pier glasses were often large, it was usual to use two plates (or more), the joints cleverly hidden under framing. However, it was increasingly possible to produce very large plates (see p. 96). Two designs illustrate the growing popularity of the single-plate pier glass. Robert Adam's only surviving Irish interior, at Headfort, Co. Meath, has grand full-height single-plate pier glasses (designed in 1771) surmounted with griffins and fronted with festooned husks, while James Wyatt designed for the library at Castle Coole, Co. Fermanagh (in the 1790s) piers of similar proportions with minimal framing.<sup>38</sup> Labelled glasses by Richard Cranfield at Castletown, Co. Kildare, have guilloche bordering, surmounted by an urn from which drapes palm boughs. Other makers — or their clients — preferred for aesthetic or financial reasons (smaller plates were far less expensive) the compartmented pier glass. Several labelled neo-classical looking glasses survive, one of which with the Jackson label has simple beaded framing under an eagle poised upon an oval patera, the eagle holding two trails of husks in his beak which drape down each side of the glass.<sup>39</sup>

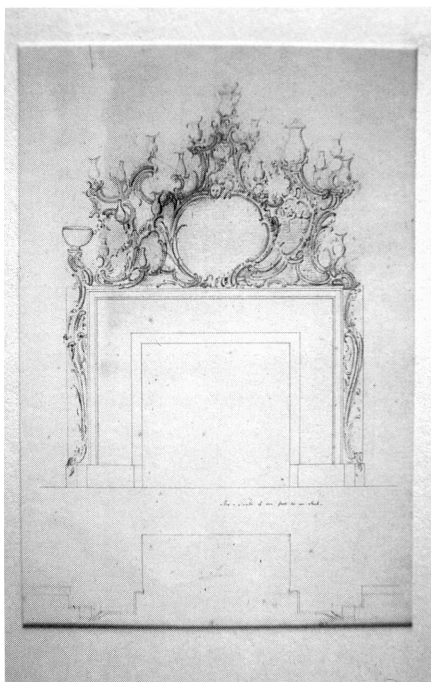
The popularisation of the overmantel glass is usually associated with the Adam brothers. However the concept was a French novelty of the seventeenth century, which transferred to England towards the end of that century, perhaps in crested form as was typical in wall mirrors of that time (but horizontal). By placing a looking glass on the (usually dark) chimney wall light was more evenly distributed throughout the room. One early example, previously at Rathbeale Hall, Co. Dublin is of a style similar to a glass illustrated by R. J. Charleston in *English Glass* and dated to 1711 (Figure 11).<sup>40</sup> There remains in some houses of the 1730s, including Westport, Co. Mayo and Rathfarnham House, Co. Dublin a combined overmantel painting and mirror where the mirror plate and surmounted painting are in the same frame; another was previously at Rathbeale Hall (no claim is made to an Irish origin for any of these). Two of the Dromoland drawings, c. 1740, illustrate two such ensembles, designed of a piece with the fireplace.

Joseph Fawcett advertised his chimney glasses in 1747, the first Irish mention of a separate glass in this position.<sup>41</sup> From the mid-century it would seem that new fashions were adopted more quickly than in previous decades. Several interesting mid-eighteenth-century landscape-format Irish overmantels survive with typical low-relief carving containing elements of Chinoiserie, gothic and rococo. The Leixlip glass (see figure 1) is unusual in having squirrels terminating the shoulders, a device seldom found and possibly denoting a particular maker.<sup>42</sup> Most chimney glasses of this period were made in three divisions, with a wide central plate and two narrow side plates. At this stage single plates of this size were routine, so the divisions are purely stylistic. The notice of sale of the effects of carver John Houghton in 1761 mention a 'curious



4. Design for a looking glass frame, signed by Joseph Jarratt, from an album compiled by Jarratt, c. 1755

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5. Anonymous drawing for a rococo overmantel glass

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6. Overmantel glass in the Chinese room at Carton, Co. Kildare. Photograph from J. O'Brien and D. Guinness, *Great Irish Houses and Castles*, 1992

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7. Looking glass in the entrance hall, Leixlip Castle, Co. Kildare  
*Reproduced by kind permission of the Hon. Desmond Guinness  
Photograph by the author*



8. Looking glass frame in the Milltown Collection, attributed to John Houghton and John Kelly, 1750s. From S. Benedetti, *The Milltowns: A Family Reunion*  
*Reproduced by kind permission of the National Gallery of Ireland*





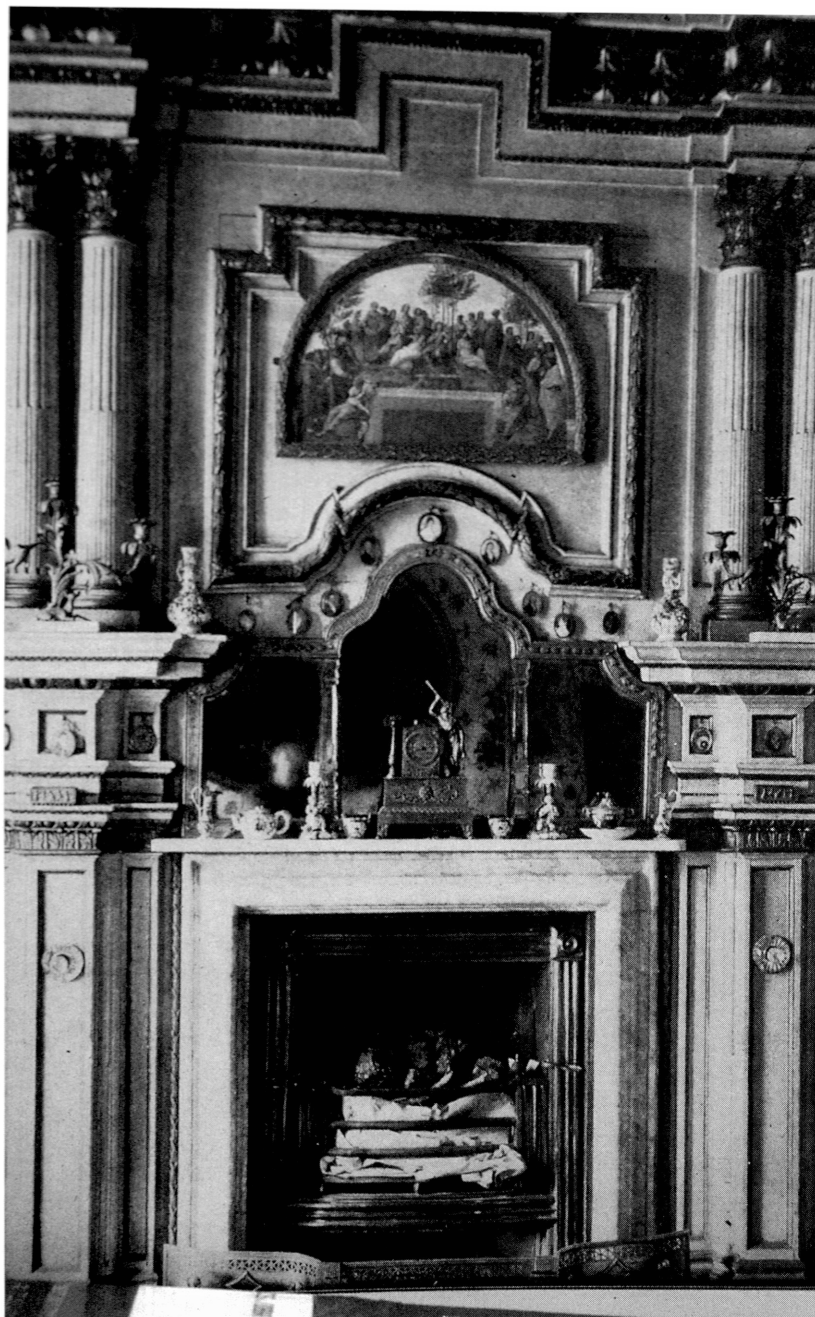
9. Architectural glass frame by the Booker Firm, in the library at Glin Castle, Co. Limerick

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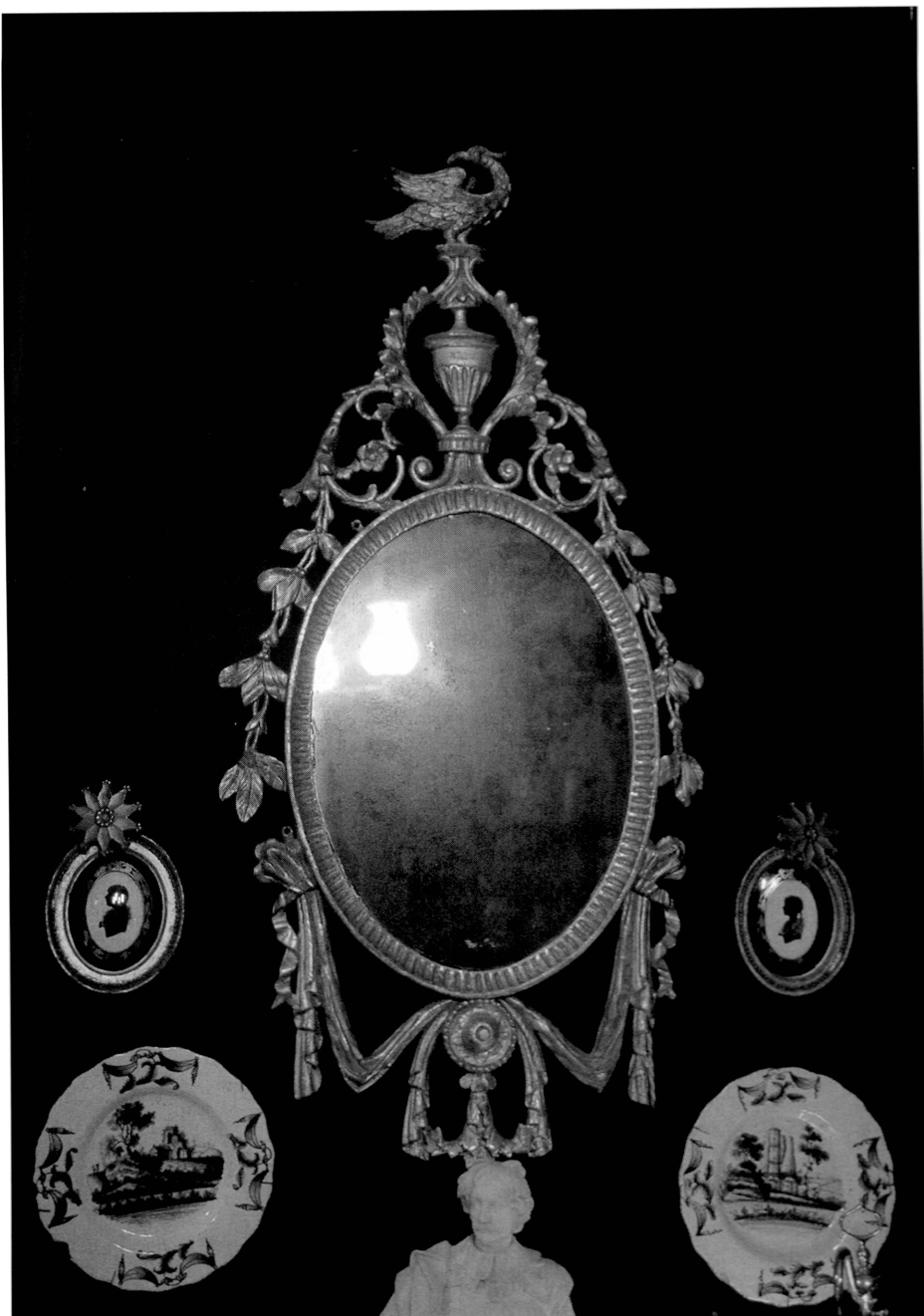
10. Architectural glass frame by the Booker Firm.

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Private collection. Photograph by the author*

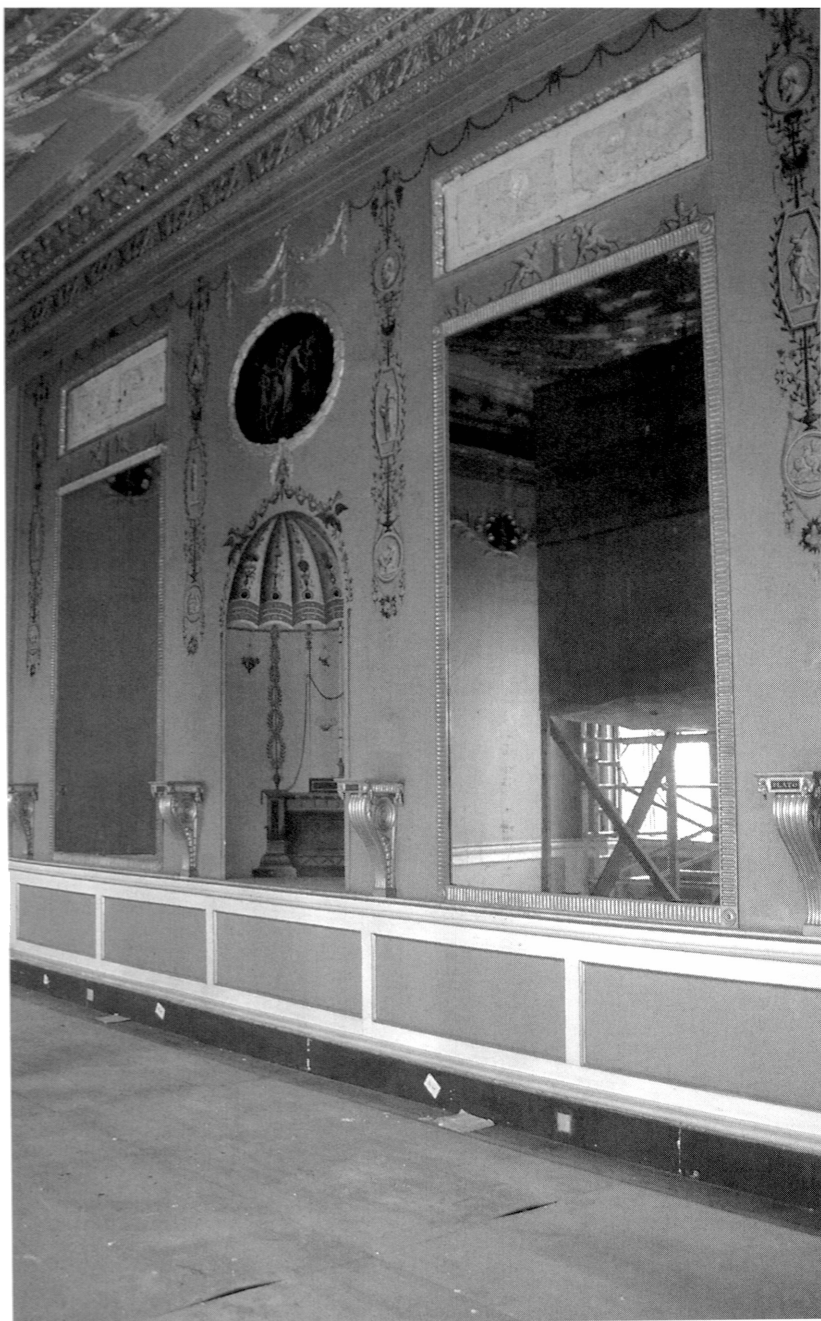


II. Early overmantel glass, formerly in the back Drawing room,  
Rathbeale Hall, Co. Dublin

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12. Neo-classical oval pier glass in the Library at Glin Castle, Co. Limerick  
*Reproduced by kind permission of the Knight of Glin. Photograph by the author*



**13.** Two of a set of four wall glasses in the Long Gallery at Castletown, Co. Kildare.

Photograph (taken during recent conservation works) by the  
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chimney glass in the Chinese manner'. The dating of this description is fortunate as it is contemporary with the fantastic gothic overmantels for the Chinese room at Carton, Co. Kildare of c. 1759 (see figure 5).<sup>43</sup>

Overmantels increased in height as time progressed, ostensibly to restore an element of verticality to the chimneypiece wall but the increased visual impact would not have been undesirable. By the end of the eighteenth century the overmantel was in portrait format, accentuating the grand heights of reception rooms with a single tall plate reaching up to the cornice of the room, a type which remained popular right through the nineteenth century framed in various revivalist styles. In the 1790s James Wyatt designed a restrained overmantel for the library at Castle Coole with fluted cornice and dropped festoons on either pilastered upright, which was not in fact realised.<sup>44</sup> An unsigned watercolour of a Dublin drawing room (illustrated by Crookshank and Glin in *The Watercolours of Ireland*; dated 1817) shows the type of design commonly associated with overmantels, with festooned or foliated frieze over narrow uprights, here placed in a pier.<sup>45</sup> Some examples are attributed to the Jackson firm which resemble this glass. The tall, corniced labelled Jackson overmantels in the University and Kildare Street Club, Dublin, illustrate a restrained use of mediaeval revival motifs in the clustered columns, with which must be among the latest produced by the firm (which is last noted in 1827).<sup>46</sup> Not all of the type were tall, in fact there was a revival in popularity of the divided landscape-format overmantel, surmounted with festooned cornice.

The arrival in Ireland of the oval frame is undocumented; the first mention comes in Ralph Leland's 1743 advertisement for oval pier glasses.<sup>47</sup> A design for the dining room at Kildare (later Leinster) House, Dublin, of the late 1750s includes rococo stucco wall drops surrounding blank ovals, apparently pier glasses (echoing the baroque work at Riverstown).<sup>48</sup> Oval looking-glasses became very popular with the advent of the rococo; quite possibly the fluid asymmetrical shapes also popularised by Lock and Chippendale were also sold here, however none of an Irish character has thus been identified by this author. The delicate contribution of the oval glass, which lent itself to dressings of gilded ribbons and crossed boughs, to the appearance of the fashionable interior may be seen in the Reinagle painting 'Mrs Congreve with her Children'.<sup>49</sup> The three Dublin makers who advertised in the 1770s mention oval glasses including girandoles, described variously as large and small, their characteristics, however, were not categorised.<sup>50</sup> A good number of oval glasses have the labels of prominent makers such as the Bookers, Richard Cranfield, James Robinson, William Partridge and the Jackson firm. Chronologically these glasses progress from flat Chippendale C-scrolls (a pleasant hint of naivety is seen in the Booker oval at Glin with its basket of flowers sitting on an open arcade) through the tighter, more defined freehand carving of Robinson's ovals at Newbridge, Co. Dublin to the Cranfield oval pier glasses at Castletown Co. Kildare, with neo-Greek key-pattern borders, which illustrate the popular use in the 1770s and 80s of crossed boughs. The elegant Jackson oval pier at Glin is a fine example of the Adamesque (Figure 12).

The apogee of the oval glass in Ireland came in the last few decades of the eighteenth century when a border of faceted stud lead crystal was applied to frame the mirror (at this time the Irish lead-glass industry was at its peak). Several different varieties of

border are found, both single and double-layered, using faceted glass and also flat, glass squares (of flashed glass), wheel-cut on the reverse in fillets through the white flashing and the fillets gilded to give a white and gold appearance.<sup>51</sup> Almost all known examples are oval, however the occasional square or oblong mirror is offered for sale.<sup>52</sup> Many such mirrors were fitted with small cut-glass chandeliers to become *girandoles par excellence*; this derivation is said to be peculiar to Ireland. Although faceted frames were probably produced by many makers of the period, the only labelled examples come from the shop of John D. Ayckbourn, glass seller (a German who had previously lived in London) who set up in 1784 on Grafton Street in Dublin and whose firm traded until 1819.<sup>53</sup> It is impossible at this remove to offer an opinion on whether or not the popularity of the oval faceted mirror chandelier declined with the closure of Ayckbourn's business, although they continued to be made throughout the century.

#### TIMBERS AND FINISHES

At Kilkenny Castle in 1678 there were looking glass frames of silver, brass and gilt, black varnish, counterfeit inlaid stone, and silver and ebony. At Dublin Castle in 1693 an inventory records olivewood, embossed, and inlaid frames.<sup>54</sup> The use of silver and silver foiling died out; the former due to expense one presumes as much as changing fashions and the latter to the tendency of silver to tarnish. There are no advertisements earlier than Ralph Leland's notice regarding mahogany, walnut and gilt mirrors in 1743; however it is unlikely that timbers other than walnut (and of course pine, gessoed and gilded) would have figured, as the appearance in Ireland of mahogany for fine fittings was roughly contemporary with this notice.<sup>55</sup> Contemporary picture frames could be more elaborate: in 1735, Paul Smith, glazier and printseller stocked pear-tree and deal frames for his prints. Fawcett advertised gilt, plain and walnut frames in 1747.<sup>56</sup> A Dublin inventory of 1751<sup>57</sup> describes walnut, japanned and gilt frames. In the same year Mrs Delany was impressed with a white and gold picture frame brought by her framer.<sup>58</sup> The only other reference to gilt and white frames occurs in an advertisement of 1775 (through numerous — not necessarily Irish — examples survive).<sup>59</sup> It is interesting to note the absence of references to parcel-gilding, although this method of decoration was a popular alternative, found on some Irish pieces such as the naive architectural glass from Adare Manor, Co. Limerick (perhaps it was not as widely employed as on chairs).<sup>60</sup> The use of *eglomisé*<sup>61</sup> in the friezes of late Georgian and Regency glasses, often depicting classical scenes or a floral arrangement occurs with no discernible regional variations. Some can be attributed to the workshop of Cornelius Callaghan, as similar picture frames with his label are known.<sup>62</sup>

#### SIZES OF LOOKING GLASS

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the sizes attained in looking glasses depended on the size of plate that glasshouses could produce, which was in turn limited by the technologies in use. There were two methods of producing a plate, either casting a sheet onto a metal table or blowing a cylindrical vessel (which was cut open along its length and the two sides laid flat when still hot). Both surfaces of the ensuing

rough glass plate were then ground and polished until it was clear, colourless<sup>63</sup> and hopefully flawless. Whichever method was used entailed enormous risks and expense and required consummately skilled workmen.<sup>64</sup> Blown plate was made in London while casting was a trade secret of the royal French manufactory at St. Gobain in Normandy (at work from 1688).<sup>65</sup> The price of the mirror plate increased almost exponentially the larger the size, due to the expense, skills and risks involved in producing commercially viable plates, so an imposing looking-glass not only held the attention of the viewer but also spoke eloquently of the wealth of the owner. The Kilkenny Castle inventories list heights of looking-glasses; whereas most were around thirty inches tall, there was one perspective glass of six feet long, remarkable for this period (most likely it consisted of several plates). Only one eighteenth-century newspaper advertisement was so detailed, and provides an indication of the sizes of mirror affordable by the growing middle classes: the looking-glass manufacturer Fawcett in 1747 mentioned the size of his large glasses in burnished gold frames as 42 in.  $\times$  27, 44  $\times$  22 and 40  $\times$  24.<sup>66</sup>

Few references exist to plate glass making in Ireland. In 1711 a glasshouse was recorded in Co. Waterford 'carrying on' a trade in plate glass.<sup>67</sup> The result of this venture is unknown, but the window-glasshouse of Richard Williams & Co. did produce plates in the 1780s at least.<sup>68</sup> An advertisement in the *Dublin Journal* in 1783 notes the intention of 'an English artist' to 'carry on the plate looking-glass manufacture, according to the approved French method, which is by rolling the hot metal with a brass cylinder. By this means plates of any size may be formed and as we have all the materials on the spot, it is productive of a great national saving'.<sup>69</sup> After 1746 the importation of any except British glass was banned, which handicapped the Irish trade and probably means that most mirrors were blown English plate. However, it appears that importation of French plate was possible at the dispensation of the administration. In 1769 Mr Loftus, the owner of Rathfarnham Castle, Co. Dublin, wished to buy two or three plates of looking-glass in Paris 'as they make them of a larger size than is made in London'. In a letter he assured the Chief Secretary that the favour of permitting this purchase surpassed even being made a privy councillor.<sup>70</sup>

The sizes of mirror plate possible in both France and England increased regularly, spurred on no doubt by inter-firm rivalry as much as by changing architectural fashions. By the 1770s English makers could produce blown plates of 82  $\times$  48 in. in contrast to the 118  $\times$  68 in. of their French competitors (using the cast method); from these figures it would appear that the mirrors at Rathfarnham were to be larger than English makers could achieve.<sup>71</sup> It would appear the Conollys at Castletown, Co. Kildare, also succeeded in gaining permission to import large French glasses, as the four gallery wall glasses erected in 1775 are cast French plate (Figure 13). They measure approximately 9 ft  $\times$  6 ft 5 inches (and undoubtedly cost a commensurate price plus 60% added for excise duty).<sup>72</sup>

In 1784 Mr Barber, joiner and upholsterer of Dublin, advertised his invention of a glass-grinding machine 'for finishing glasses of the largest dimension (ten feet or upwards) equal to those done in England or elsewhere' and he had in stock 'some very fine plates ready for inspection'.<sup>73</sup> Whether or not his machine proved to be successful, this advertisement indicates the sizes sought by the public and increasingly possible with the advent of machinery, even allowing for the huge costs involved.



Any attempt to define *Irishness* in Irish looking-glasses must take into account the fact that most designs are adaptations of published sources. Attention should be paid instead to identifying idiosyncracies of detail or carving, and the fact that favoured styles lingered on long after their banishment from London circles. It is obvious that low-relief, bulkily rendered rococo was widespread in Irish frames but this was not limited to Ireland; similarly motifs such as scallop shells, masks and ho-ho birds were part of the stylistic alphabet and iconography of the age. In the same light, the composition of architectural glasses of the 1740s onwards and the compartmented pier glasses of the Adam period cannot be said to display any semblance of national variation. For example, the tabernacle glasses of Francis and John Booker (and those commonly sold as '... in the style of ...') are Irish neither in design nor in the details of the carving. Identification of an in-house Booker style — or even Irish characteristics — to these pier glasses fails on the remarkable distinction between the carving of the tabernacle glasses — all very accomplished and the designs well-proportioned — and the labelled oval girandoles, which are similar in character to the relief work to other Irish rococo frames. The Bookers never described themselves as carvers and gilders, as did some of their competitors; they were known variously as glass-grinders, glass and looking-glass-sellers or dealers or simply as merchants. In fact the only reference in support of them possessing a framing workshop comes from an entry dated 1763 in the Account Book of Col. Eyre (the surveyor general) for official work: 'to Francis Booker, for carving, gilding to the Parliament House, £13.0.0'.<sup>74</sup>

The long-lasting family firm of Jackson also advertised merely as glass-grinders and sellers for many decades; a surviving billhead of 1747 is concerned not with carving or gilding but with articles of glass;<sup>75</sup> it is only after the start of the nineteenth century that Richard Jackson enters himself in the *Dublin Directory* as carver and gilder with a looking glass warehouse. Interestingly a labelled set of convex girandoles survives from this firm which are signed 'Arthur Williams, 1807'.<sup>76</sup>

A final footnote is necessary to caution that the paucity of documentary evidence hinders further conclusions on the question of Irish looking glass frames. Thus far the attributions of past decades, which have tended to ascribe an Irish source to many provincial frames, cannot be either substantiated or contradicted. It is hoped that further research will clarify the matter and that genuine Irish articles can be properly identified and attributed.

#### REFERENCES

1. See the Knight of Glin, 'Dublin Directories and Trade Labels', *Furniture History*, xxi, 1985, 258–72, and 'A Directory of the Dublin Furnishing Trade 1752–1800', in *Decantations, a tribute to Maurice Craig*, A. Bernelle (ed.) (Dublin, 1992), pp. 47–59. Special thanks are also due to David Griffin, Director of the Irish Architectural Archive, for pointing me in the direction of many illustrations and surviving mirrors. I am also very grateful for the help received from historians and owners of mirrors such as Susan Mulhall, Maighread McParland, Desmond Guinness, Niall Parsons, Mary Boydell, Mairead Dunlevy, The Kildare Street and University Club, John Farrington, Gerald and Mark Kenyon, Irena Boydell, and other private collectors.
2. *Letters from Georgian Ireland*, A. Day (ed.), Belfast, 1991, p. 124; *The Orrery papers*, The Countess of Cork and Orrery (ed.), London 1903, I, 157; 'A Description of the City of Dublin, 1732, by a Citizen of London', reproduced in *Calendar of Ancient Records*, Sir J. T. and Lady Gilbert (eds.), Dublin, 1889–1944, x, 520.
3. *Dublin Intelligence*, 26 June 1711; there were 756 tickets issued; *Dublin Intelligence*, 30 March, 1731.
4. See H. Young, 'An Eighteenth-Century London Glass Cutters Trade Card', *Apollo*, February 1998, pp. 41–46.

5. The Customs Books (extant from 1697–1763 in PRO, Kew and from 1764 onwards in the National Library of Ireland) are not detailed enough to show if completed furniture of any type was imported (besides timber, categories are specified for wooden ware and pictures only).
6. Sources used for this research, most of which mention trades and therefore provide some indication of a progression in fortune or expansion of a business, include the aforementioned articles by the Knight of Glin, the Dublin Franchise Rolls, Sir A. Vicars, *Index to the Prerogative Wills of Ireland, 1536–1810*, Dublin, 1897, Wilson's *Dublin Directory, 1752–1837* (bound with Watson's *Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanac*) and contemporary newspaper notices and advertisements. (Hand-written extracts of information on architecture and fine arts from eighteenth-century Dublin papers done for the Irish Georgian Society are in the Irish Architectural Archive [IAA].) The author's 'The Glazing Fraternity in Ireland in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century', *Irish Georgian Society Bulletin*, xxxviii, 1996–97, 66–94 is also of use.
7. See E. McParland, Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, Co. Dublin', offprint from *Country Life*, 9 and 16 May, 1985 (for the Irish Architectural Archive). Foreign names which appear on the Franchise Rolls are not always evidence of recent arrival, however some were enfranchised by favour and special grace, which often in the late seventeenth century was a sign of a Huguenot refugee. On the general issue of the origins of craftsmen at this time see R. Loeber, 'Irish Country Houses and Castles of the Late Caroline Period: an unremembered past recaptured', *Irish Georgian Society Bulletin*, January to June 1973, pp. 1–69 (especially pp. 35 and 42–43).
8. *Letters*, Day (ed.), p. 274. 6 April 1751: 'The frame maker has interrupted me all this morning. I should have dismissed the man for another day, but as time is precious to tradesmen I did not care to disappoint him. He has brought a white and gold frame for the large Madonna, which I think the prettiest I ever saw; and four smaller ones for little flower-pieces, as ugly.'
9. John and Francis Booker also purchased three houses nearby in the early 1760s. See the *Minutes of the Wide Streets Commissioners*, Dublin Corporation Archives, 1, 46 and 79–81. Another in the Dublin looking-glass trade, John Robinson, was awarded £270 in the 1770s as compensation for the rebuilding of his house on Dame Street. See the *Minutes*, *ibid.*, p. 154.
10. See G. Child, *World Mirrors*, London: Sotheby's, 1990, p. 154 and F. Lewis Hinckley, *Queen Anne and Georgian Looking Glasses — old English and early American*, London, 1990, p. 12, who both mention this attribute. A practical reason to prefer the known style was that it matched the prevailing interior — for example the masculine panelling of the Palladian period would be at odds with the new rococo, Chinese or gothic frames (unless complete redecoration was being undertaken sympathetic to the new fashions).
11. The division between first and second rate frames may be the outcome of direct contact with London: in the previous century it was not uncommon for English architectural patrons to send their craftsmen to London to learn innovative details such as the sash-window. See H. J. Louw, *The Origin and Development of the Sash-window in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries with Special Reference to England*; doctoral thesis accepted at Oxford, 1981, p. 103. However, by the eighteenth century there appeared to be widespread availability of competent joiners in Ireland and it may be supposed that carvers were also to be had, if not all of the standard of the Tabary carvers (see McParland, *op. cit.*). See the Burton Hall, Co. Cork, papers regarding correspondence on this point in 1710 between William Taylor and John Perceval (BM Add Ms 46964B, ff.71–72 and 107–08).
12. See the Inchiquin Album of architectural drawings (formerly at Dromoland Castle) photocopied by the Irish Architectural Archive. The author is grateful to David Griffin for bringing these drawings to her attention. Aheron's 'tabernacle' glass was also known as an 'architect' glass.
13. The house was sold in 1962. Jones's volume was lot 1221. Kent's designs of Inigo Jones was lot 1316. Other architectural volumes in the library were R. Morris, *Architecture Improved* (1755) — lot 1318 and Ware's *Architecture*, on volume, lot 1321.
14. See James Gibbs, *A Book of Architecture*, 1728, reprinted New York, 1968, plates 92–95 for chimneypieces surmounted with horizontal panels; none, however, include paintings in the ensemble. The style of Aheron's design is quite baroque, harking back to the work of earlier architects in the Restoration era.
15. This drawing and the Booker trade card in the Jarratt album in the IAA were shown to the author by David Griffin. For the date of the album see Nicholas Sheaff, 'Jarratt and Rococo' in *Irish Arts Review*, 1, no. 3, Autumn 1984, 50–51. Jarratt was in the Board of Works and may have had opportunities to commission work.
16. See J. O'Brien and D. Guinness, *Great Irish Houses and Castles*, London, 1992, p. 77.
17. A painting is reproduced (in black and white) in A. Crookshank and D. Fitzgerald, *The Painters of Ireland*, London, 1978, plate 78: Herbert Pugh, 'George, Fifth Earl of Granard' (the artist died c. 1770–80) shows a rococo oval overmantel of a similar style. No others have been sourced thus far.
18. The Knight of Glin has a copy of this design in his archives, attributed to the Bookers by its current owner.
19. *Dublin Journal*, advertisement, 14–17 November 1747; *Dublin Journal*, advertisement, 12–16 August 1766. William Bibby was one of the subscribers to Aheron's volume of 1754.
20. *Dublin Journal*, advertisement, 5–7 October 1773.

21. The text of the advertisement is reproduced in the Knight of Glin, 'Russborough, its decoration and furniture, some preliminary thoughts', in *The Milltowns: A family reunion*, Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland, 1997, p. 121.
22. See *Ormond*, New Series, xii, Historic Manuscripts Commission, 497 ff. for inventories of 1678 and 1684. As the building was comprehensively rebuilt and decorated after the Restoration it can be presumed that those listed are fairly up to date (though unlikely to be Irish). For example: p. 504, 'a looking glass, 30 inches deep, in a frame, suitable to the table' (which was of counterfeit inlaid stone).
23. F. Lewis Hinckley, *Queen Anne and Georgian Looking Glasses*, p. 11, makes a case for many of this era to be attributed to Dublin, but his attributions cannot yet be proven.
24. This painting, attributed to Hussey (1713–83) on stylistic grounds, is reproduced in B. Kennedy, *Irish Painting*, Dublin, 1993, p. 52. Some details may indicate a later date than the 1750s (ascribed to it), as the design of the grate in the fireplace is of a decade or so later.
25. There is no evidence to connect these carvers and the frames; one cannot even be sure that they were made in Ireland except that the architect of Russborough, Richard Castle, employed both carvers in several other of his buildings. An earlier labelled picture frame by Houghton's (of a more formal style) survives in St Patrick's Cathedral Deanery, Dublin, is illustrated in J. O'Brien and D. Guinness, *Dublin, A Grand Tour*, Dublin, 1994, p. 135.
26. See B. De Breffny and R. Ffolliott, *The Houses of Ireland*, London, 1975, plate III and p. 112.
27. Partridge is first listed in the *Dublin Directory* in 1768; he put his first advertisement into the *Dublin Journal* in the issue of 5–7 October 1773.
28. However, it is likely that other centres of mirror-making distant from Chippendale's London practised similar provincial idiosyncracies; detailed comparison has yet to be made between provincial English and labelled Dublin frames.
29. *Dublin Journal*, 9–12 July 1743: 'a large parcel of Tabernacle Pier glass . . .'. *Dublin Journal*, 4–6 May 1775: 'Architect, oval and Palmira Pier Glasses . . .'.
30. The question of whether or not the named sellers — especially the Bookers — were responsible for the carving of the frames is debatable; the inadequacy of documentary evidence is discussed later.
31. The Booker firm is last noted in the *Directory* of 1789; see Knight of Glin, in *Decantations*, p. 50. Both Callaghan's and Kearney's mirrors are illustrated by Hinckley (plates 125 and 126) who mentions their labels (information on addresses given by him by John Teahan of the National Museum of Ireland (Hinckley, p. 15). The Knight of Glin lists both makers in his *Furniture History*, p. 263 (Callaghan) and p. 269 (Kearney).
32. Illustrated in the *Catalogue of the Seventeenth Irish Antique Dealers Fair*, 1982 (dated c. 1775). High quality reproductions of baroque and neo-classical furniture were made in Dublin in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In this light, it might be mentioned that a tabernacle mirror now in the Casino, Marino (in State care), which resembles very closely the labelled Booker glass in figure 10, has by tradition been attributed to the Dublin maker James Hicks, extant late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. See Teahan, *Irish Decorative Arts*, p. 75.
33. *Letters from Georgian Ireland*, p. 87: letter of 21 October 1731 referring to Bishop and Mrs Clayton's newly built house on St Stephen's Green. *Ibid.*, p. 158: letter of 12 July 1744.
34. The use of mirror in shutters is found in several Irish houses: the boudoir at Castletown, Co. Kildare, one first floor reception room of no. 52 St Stephen's Green, Dublin and the state dressing room Westport House, Co. Mayo. In the first two houses the plates are limited to the lower panels.
35. *Letters from Georgian Ireland*, Day (ed.), p. 170.
36. *Dublin Journal*, 4–6 May 1775.
37. This pair of glasses is surmounted by oak leaves; see Christie's, 12 March 1981 (Glin archives).
38. The Headfort glasses are illustrated in *Country Life*; see C. Hussey, 'Headfort Co. Meath' I and II, *Country Life*, 21 and 28 March, 1936, pp. 300–05, 326–31. The Castle Coole Drawings Collection (photographs in IAA) includes all of Wyatt's designs for this house.
39. The Cranfield pier glasses are in the red drawing room at Castletown. The Jackson glass was exhibited in 1971 at the Decorative Arts of Ireland exhibition in Pennsylvania (Glin Archives).
40. Charleston, *English Glass and the glass used in England, circa 400–1940* (London, 1984) plate 47A. This glass has a cut and engraved border. It was made in London for the Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham. The Rathbeale looking glass had a more elegant shape; its present location is unknown — the only photograph is that in the *Georgian Society Records*, x, plate xcix. This picture shows two glass pilasters divisions and the frame fitting the shape of the bevelled mirror plate and the corresponding shaped indent to the base of the panelling above. This room has long been considered of the late Caroline era; the baroque panelling and chimney piece are convincing for the Restoration period. For the house in general, see R. Ffolliott and B. de Breffny, *Houses of Ireland*, pp. 59–60.
41. *Dublin Journal*, 2–5 May 1747.

42. Another Irish rococo looking-glass, c. 1760, with similar detail was auctioned by Sotherby's New York, 11 October 1996. Of course the motif could have iconographic significance, such as thrift or caution.
43. It may be preliminary to make a connection between Houghton and this looking glass, however, Carton was remodelled by Castle for the Earl of Kildare, the architect who employed him on other projects (as detailed above; see note 25). While Castle died in 1751, if Kildare liked the carver's work, he may well have been employed subsequently.
44. See The Castle Coole Drawings Collection (photographic copies in IAA) and a photograph in the IAA which shows the library as carried out.
45. See A. Crookshand and the Knight of Glin, *The Watercolours of Ireland*, London, 1994, plate 283.
46. See Glin, in *Furniture History*, p. 267.
47. *Dublin Journal*, 9–12 July 1743.
48. The architect of this house was Richard Castle (d. 1751), however these later designs for the dining room plasterwork have not been attributed. See J. McDonnell, *Irish Eighteenth-century Stuccowork and its European Sources*, Dublin, National Gallery, 1991, fig. 7.
49. Artist Philip Reinagle, 1749–1833, National Gallery of Ireland. This undated interior depicting an Irish family is said to represent their London house, but its contents could be located in either Ireland or England. It shows a pair of girandoles held with gilded rope and a larger oval pier glass, all of the 1770s or 1780s.
50. Booker: *Dublin Journal*, 7–9 May 1772; Bibby, *Dublin Journal*, 4–6 May 1775; Partridge: *Dublin Journal*, 5–7 October 1773.
51. Note that fakes are known in this type of mirror frame; the faceted studs are still produced in quantity. Blue and clear glass are more likely original colours, although green, amber and red are known. Flashed glass is the name for glass with a very thin layer of coloured glass on one surface, which can be removed by acid etching or engraving.
52. See Christie's Catalogue of the sale at Luttrellstown Castle, Co. Dublin, 26–28 September 1983 (lot 177).
53. See M. Mortimer, 'The Irish Mirror Chandelier', in *Country Life*, 16 December 1971. The Knight of Glin, in *Decantations*, p. 50, lists the progression of names under which the firm traded (William Ayckbourn succeeded his relative John Dederick Ayckbourn in 1810.)
54. See *Ormond* new series 7, p. 497 ff. The furniture in Dublin Castle belonging to the king was inventoried in May 1693, See PROI Wyche Docs 2/142.
55. Little has been published on the timber trade in Ireland. English sources indicate that mahogany began to supplant walnut during the second quarter of the eighteenth century. See R. Fastnedge, *English Furniture Styles 1500–1830*, Penguin 1955, reprinted 1969, pp. 106–07 and J. Teahan, *Irish Decorative Arts 1550–1928*, National Museum of Ireland exhibition catalogue, 1990, p. 74.
56. See the *Dublin Journal* 11–15 May 1735. In 1741 John Orpin (Smith's partner) sold prints 'finely framed in fold and pear-tree frames'. See *Dublin Journal* on 7–10 March 1741. For Leland see the *Dublin Journal*, 9–12 July 1743. Fawcett's advertisement appeared in the same newspaper on 2–5 May 1747.
57. The St Lawrence family's townhouse in St Mary's Abbey was inventoried in 1751; the list is given in the *Georgian Society Records*, IV, 3–9.
58. Day (ed.), *Letters From Georgian Ireland*, p. 274.
59. The stock in trade of Joseph Bibby which mentioned such frames was advertised after his death, in the *Dublin Journal*, 4–6 May 1775. An oval pier glass in Dublin Castle (possibly Irish) was recently regilded and finished in an off-white paint; paint scrapes may have uncovered some evidence of the original finish.
60. This glass, with outsized eagle in a broken pediment, is illustrated in the auction catalogue of the house. (Christie's 9 June 1982, lot 284, given as George II.)
61. Eglomisé is a method of decorating the underside of glass by marking out a background in colour and backing the clear design with gold or silver foil. It was popular during the Queen Anne period in geometric designs.
62. A set of six gilt and eglomisé picture frames from Bettysglen, Co. Dublin, were sold by Christies on 3 August 1979, with the label of Callaghan. Hinckley, 1990, attributes Irish rustic scenes to a number of eglomisé panels on Sheraton style mirrors (not labelled). See plates 272, 274.
63. The ingredients for glassmaking had to be mixed carefully to remove colours, which when the plate was silvered, would become evident and often reduce the selling price. Tints visible included 'a fine watery colour', red yellow and 'blackish'. See T. C. Barker, *The Glassmakers Pilkington: the rise of an international company, 1826–1976*, London, 1977, pp. 12–13, who takes these categories from *The Plate Glass Book*, written by a glasshouse clerk and published in 1757, p. xxiv. One of the boudoir shutter mirror plates at Castletown shows a distinct yellow tint.
64. See R. McGrath and A. C. Frost, *Glass in Architecture and Decoration*, London, 1937, pp. 14–16 for contemporary comments on the work and expense involved.
65. G. Child, in *World Mirrors 1650–1900*, Sothebys, 1990, pp. 17–26, gives a good overview of the plate glass trade in England and France. Successful casting of glass was started on foot of an innovation of 1687 of Bernard

Perrot and thereafter casting of glass was the preserve of the Manufacture Royale des Glaces at St Gobain. In 1773 a British concern was set up, the British Plate Glass Company, which after about twenty years began to trade successfully (it produced plates from the start but was bedevilled by financial and logistical problems until the 1790s).

66. Ormond, N. S. 7, 497 ff. Fawcett: *Dublin Journal*, 2–5 May 1747. Fawcett's other glasses were 37 × 23, 33 × 24 and 36 × 20 inches.

67. An advertisement in the *British Mercury*, 11–15 June 1711, was found by M. S. D. Westropp subsequent to the publication of his seminal book, *Irish Glass, A History of Glassmaking in Ireland from the XVIth Century to the present day*, Dublin [1920]. The notice is included in the revised edition, ed. by M. Boydell, Dublin, 1978, p. 209. 'Whereas there is a Glasswork for making crown glass and plate carrying on in Waterford . . .'.

68. The Williams' glasshouse advertised in 1780, *Dublin Journal*, 8–11 April their 'plate glass for looking glasses . . .'. The firm received premiums from the Dublin Society in 1787–88 and 1788–89 for plate glass valued at £446 and £1000 respectively. See Westropp, *Irish Glass*, p. 59.

69. *Dublin Journal*, 15–18 September 1783. No further notice was heard of this venture.

70. I am indebted to the Knight of Glin for showing me this reference, contained in an article by him entitled 'Labelled and Signed Pieces by Irish Craftsmen', 1982.

71. See Charleston, p. 196. These figures were given to a Parliamentary Committee in 1773.

72. The Conolly Papers are curiously silent on the matter. However, an idea of the cost can be gauged by the price of a French mirror plate in Chippendale's workshop in 1775, which measured by 9 ft 6 in. × 5 ft. 10 in. and sold for £450 unframed. See Child, *World Mirrors*, p. 25.

73. *Dublin Journal*, 15–18 May, 1784. The advertisement includes references to Barber's stock of pier tables, marble statuary and carved and gilded articles. The Knight of Glin notes, in *Decantations*, p. 50, that Thomas and William Barber, joiners and upholders, traded from 1782–89 in South Great George's Street, Dublin.

74. Col. Eyre's Account and Letter Books for the 1750s and 60s are in the IAA.

75. The bill-head is in the Conolly Papers from Castletown, Co. Kildare (photographed by the Irish Architectural Archive). The Jacksons also sold lamps of various types, crystal spectacles, concave glasses, 'telliscopes', opera glasses, pocket microscopes, Pocket Weather Glasses. Interestingly the last reference, almost squeezed into the bottom of the bill-head, is to concave mirrors.

76. See Knight of Glin, in *Furniture History*, p. 267, for the listing of the firm in the directories. The mirror dated 1807 was one of a set sold by Christie's, London, 13 November 1997; according to the catalogue the design is copied from Sheraton's *Cabinet Directory* of 1803. Williams was probably the framer.