

## 14 Henrietta Street, Dublin.

Our visit to 14 Henrietta Street, a grand Georgian house built in 1720, took us through the 300-year history of the house from an elite family home through its occupancy by military families and ultimately by the nineteenth century as tenement dwellings for 111 people filling basements, corridors and staircases.

Henrietta Street in Dublin's north inner city is said to be the best survival of a street of early to mid-eighteenth-century aristocratic townhouses in Ireland. Number 14 was built in the 1720s for the Anglo-Irish gentry who needed to live in Dublin to attend Parliament and for the social season for several months each year. It became the home of Richard Molesworth, 3rd Viscount Molesworth, Commander in Chief for Ireland.

Ghosts of its early grandeur survive in architraves and paint schemes, the house having lost its original fine contents. There is however a particularly fine bed made by John Kelly, Dublin cabinetmaker, for Dr Bartholomew Mosse (1712–59). It is unusually well



Bed made by John Kelly of Dublin for Dr Bartholomew Mosse in 1759. 14 Henrietta Street, Dublin. *Photo Peter Jefferies*

documented due to the survival of the bill from 15th September 1759, issued a few months after Dr Mosse's death.

The bed is in the Irish Rococo style. It features the magnificent carving for which John Kelly is known, both on the Mosse family crest on the headboard, and in the particularly fine paw feet. The bed cost £19 8s 6d (£3,750 today) of which 15% is for the crest. The bill is reported to describe the Corinthian carving which is in fact Ionic.

In 1745 Dr Mosse, surgeon and man-midwife, founded the original Dublin Lying-In-Hospital as a maternity training hospital, the first of its kind. The project was perhaps inspired by the death of his first wife and child in childbirth and the suffering arising from the devastating effects of famine and poverty in Ireland. When he died he was heavily in debt with everything he owned being either sold or mortgaged.

For further information on the bed see: The Knight of Glin and James Peill, *Irish Furniture: Woodwork and*





Detail of the bed's carved paw foot. 14 Henrietta Street, Dublin. *Photo Peter Jefferies*

*Carving in Ireland from the Earliest Times to the Act of Union* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2007).

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