

Colman O'Mahony presents a copy of new book to Passage West Town Council

Colman O'Mahony, local renown author and historian, has published a magnificent book about people and places of bygone Passage West and Monkstown. He presented a copy of the book to Passage West Town Council at their June monthly meeting last Thursday evening in acknowledgement of the contribution which the Town Council had made towards its publication.

"*Mansions and Monuments*" is written with Colman's characteristic incredible attention to detail. Eleven of the book's thirteen chapters discusses a different geographical area in Passage West or Monkstown. In Passage, the areas of Rockenham, Toureen, the town centre and Church Hill are singled out for individual examination. The historical Ferry Point in Glenbrook is the subject of its own chapter. In Monkstown, specific attention is devoted to Carrigmahon, Monkstown pier, the village centre and Strand Road.

Appendices 1 and 2 of "*Mansions and Monuments*" provide an extremely valuable reference to the inscriptions on the headstones and tombs in the graveyards of Monkstown and Marmullane, Passage West. In what must have been a painstakingly slow task, each of the inscriptions on the 77 gravestones in Monkstown are noted, some dating back to as early as 1710. Also included are, of course, the inscriptions on the tombs of the Archdeacons, first residents of Monkstown Castle. Over 140 inscriptions on gravestones in the Marmullane graveyard have been deciphered, including that on the tomb of the Brown family, founders of the Royal Victoria Dockyard, which notes with great regret the accidental drowning of Edward Daniel Brown in 1847:

"Erected by William and Anne Brown of Mount Prospect to the memory of their only and dearly beloved son Edward Daniel Brown who full of hope and in the morning of his manhood was suddenly called into eternity by accidental drowning in this harbour on Thursday July 23 1857 in the 20th year of his age. In him were combined high intellectual attainments, manliness of character, integrity of purpose and kindness of feeling as the benefactor of the poor, the friend of all, the enemy of none. His memory will ever be cherished in this neighbourhood more especially by those who found him a dutiful and affectionate son, a fond brother, an unswerving friend. In whose many virtues and heart cherished memories this tablet has been inscribed as a last sad tribute to departed worth because God loved him he whispered to the stormy winds and to the angry waves take him to his home".

Equally useful is Appendix 3's record of the inscriptions on monuments in St. John's Church in Monkstown and in Marmullane Church in Passage West and Appendix 4's fully referenced and alphabetically arranged account of the Passage West and Monkstown Marriage, Birth and Death Notices during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Colman O'Mahony has been researching and writing local history since 1970. His first book, "*The Maritime Gateway to Cork*", published in 1986, was a study of Passage West and Monkstown in the period from the late 18th century to the early years of the 20th century. This long-awaited new book, "*Mansions and Monuments*" is a tremendously valuable addition to the documented history of Cork Harbour and a must for all those resident or with an interest in the area of Passage West and Monkstown.