

TEXT OF THE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS DELIVERED BY **PROFESSOR EAMONN Ó CARRAGÁIN**, University College Cork - National University of Ireland, Cork on 6th June, 2003, on the occasion of the conferring of the Degree of Doctor of Literature, *honoris causa*, on **ROSEMARY CRAMP**

A Sheansailéir, agus a mhuintir na hOllscoile,

Rosemary Cramp is pre-eminent in Anglo-Saxon archaeology. No other living scholar can more truly be said to have transformed the subject. No one else has been more innovative in relating archaeological study to other disciplines.

Rosemary Cramp's interest in archaeology began early. At the age of sixteen, she published notes in the *Journal of Roman Studies* on her excavations near her father's farm in Leicestershire. At Oxford she read English language and literature, and for her B.Litt. thesis studied the relevance of archaeological evidence to Old English poetry. This led to her first major article, entitled simply 'Beowulf and Archaeology' in 1957. After a period as tutor in English at St Anne's College, Oxford; she was appointed to the fledgling Archaeology Department at Durham, where she spent all her teaching career. First as lecturer and later as Professor, Rosemary Cramp helped build that department into one of the best in these islands. If in the seventh century the Abbess Hild made the monastery at Whitby into a training place of bishops, Rosemary Cramp made Archaeology at Durham into a training place of such scholars as Richard Bailey, Ray Page, Deirdre O'Sullivan and the late Jim Lang. The department was particularly active in encouraging Durham city and town to become aware of the historical significance of the surrounding area. To this end, Rosemary Cramp has always been involved in the prestigious Jarrow Lectures, held yearly on or near Bede's feast-day, in the church at Jarrow where Bede once sang. She has served as a Trustee of the British Museum, and as a Commissioner both for English Heritage and for the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. She has been President of the Council for British Archaeology, and is currently President of the Society of Antiquaries of London. Truly, Bede's words about the Abbess Hild can be applied to Rosemary Cramp: 'So great was her prudence that not only ordinary people but also kings and princes sometimes sought and received her counsel when in difficulties' [HE iv.23].

Rosemary Cramp also established friendship and scholarly links with other countries: she served as President of the International Society of Anglo-Saxonists and cultivated a wide range of scholarly collaborators, such as Professor Bob Farrell at Cornell, and the late Professor Brian O'Kelly at UCC. She has always been eager to foster links with Irish medievalists, and has served with distinction as external examiner in Archaeology for the National University of Ireland. Characteristically, one of her finest achievements has been a collaborative one, the great *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*, in which a wide number of scholars have been engaged, including Dr Elisabeth Okasha of this University.

Professor Cramp has published fundamental studies on all periods of Anglo-Saxon England, from the earliest settlements down to the Norman Conquest. She has always insisted that Anglo-Saxon culture must be seen in its continental context; and has written eloquently on 'Northumbria and Ireland'. She has transformed our understanding of early medieval monastic culture: its iconography, sculpture, architecture, manuscripts, and spirituality. She has excavated at a number of crucial sites, including The Hirsfel,

Wearmouth and Jarrow. The definitive publication of these excavations nears completion, and the stream of preliminary publications and interim reports has already transformed our understanding of the significance of these sites, and of related monasteries such as Whitby. As part of her study of Wearmouth-Jarrow, her publications have made her an authority on Anglo-Saxon glass. While photographing the site at Jarrow, she suffered a serious fall; she has commemorated this mishap by vivid accounts of how she had to be carted off the site in a wheelbarrow, as part of her spoils.

Rosemary Cramp has been centrally committed to the study of Anglo-Saxon, and particularly Northumbrian, monasticism. On the first UCC study tour of the City of Rome in 1994, she entered the early medieval basilica of Santa Maria in Cosmedin for the first time. She electrified the medievalists present by explaining in vivid detail how the basilica gave one a good impression of what the church at Wearmouth must have looked like in the time of Benedict Biscop and Bede. We can truly apply to her the words which Bede used of Benedict Biscop, the founder of Wearmouth and Jarrow: ‘As often as (s)he crossed the sea, (s)he never returned, as is the custom with some people, empty-handed and without profit.’

PRAEHONORABILIS CANCELLARIE, TOTAQUE UNIVERSITAS:

Praesento vobis hanc meam filiam, quam scio tam moribus quam doctrina habilem et idoneam esse quae admittatur, honoris causa, ad gradum Doctoratus in Litteris, idque tibi fide mea testor ac spondeo, totique Academiae.