

Ollscoil na hÉireann

THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND

TEXT OF THE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS DELIVERED BY PROFESSOR MICHAEL J. O'KELLY, M.A., D.LITT., F.S.A., M.R.I.A., 22 April, 1970 on the occasion of the conferring of the Degree of Doctor of Literature *honoris causa* on THOMAS G. E. POWELL, M.A., F.S.A.

CHANCELLOR AND MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY:

Thomas George Eyre Powell was born in Dublin in a year very significant for Ireland, 1916. In due time after schooling in Dublin and later in England, he went up to Cambridge, to Jesus College, and graduated from that University in 1937. While in Cambridge, his fellow students re-christened him Terence, and it is by this name that he is now known to his friends and colleagues in various parts of the world.

I was a student of Archaeology in University College, Cork, working under the direction of the late Professor Seán P. Ó Ríordáin when I first heard of Terence Powell. In Cambridge, he had been a pupil of H. M. Chadwick in Irish- Norse- and Anglo-Saxon-Studies and of E. H. Minns and J. M. de Navarro in Archaeology. He was now in Ireland in 1937 to study Field Archaeology under Professor Ó Ríordáin of Cork and Professor Estyn Evans of Belfast.

In Ireland at that time, students seriously devoted to Archaeology were still so few that the advent of a Cambridge man was a great event indeed, and he was welcome amongst us. I remember that his principal interest then was megalithic tombs, so much so indeed, that he could not be persuaded even to look over a fence at any field monument of later date! But out of that period of intense study in Ireland—a training in excavation techniques by Estyn Evans and in field survey by Seán Ó Ríordáin—there flowed a number of publications on various aspects of the megalithic tombs. These papers were amongst the first of the modern attempts to bring order into our understanding of the megalithic cults of Ireland. They immediately became required reading for us all.

Terence Powell was caught up by war service in 1939, and from then until 1945, served in various parts of the world in Aerial Photographic Reconnaissance. This of course enabled him to widen his archaeological interests and knowledge, for aerial survey was then fast becoming an important tool of Archaeology.

In India, he came into contact with the Brahmin way of life and some of the practices of these people reminded him of things he had read concerning the Celts of Ireland during his studies in Cambridge. This drew his interest back to the later end of the archaeological time-scale and he embarked upon a study of the Archaeology of the Celts in Europe and in Britain and Ireland. Out of this came his book *The Celts*, a work which has become a basic document for university students and indeed, for university teachers too. Also an important paper entitled "The Celtic Settlement of Ireland" published in the *Chadwick Memorial Studies*, a volume in honour of his teacher in Cambridge.

In between his megalithic studies on the one hand and his works on the Celts on the other, Terence Powell's publications in various learned journals range over the whole archaeological record of these Islands seen against the European background.

In 1948, he was elected to Fellowship of the Society of Antiquaries of London and in the same year appointed Head of Department and Senior Lecturer in Pre-historic Archaeology in the University of Liverpool, where he is now Reader. He has remained devoted to Irish Studies and nothing pleases him more than to be able to help students from Ireland wherever he encounters them.

PRAEHONORABILIS CANCELLARIE, TOTAQUE UNIVERSITAS :

Praesento vobis hunc meum filium, quem scio tam moribus quam doctrina habilem et idoneum esse qui admittatur *honoris causa* ad gradum Doctoratus in Litteris, idque tibi fide mea testor ac spondeo, totique Academiae.