



*1 – Edward J. Harding (1804-1870), LADY ELIZABETH DEANE  
AND HER DAUGHTERS SUSANNA ADELAIDE AND OLIVIA LOUISE  
mid-1840s, watercolour, 18 x 13 cm (private collection; illus courtesy Bonhams, London)*

# ‘I spent all this day at Dundanion’: The journal of Eliza Deane, 1832

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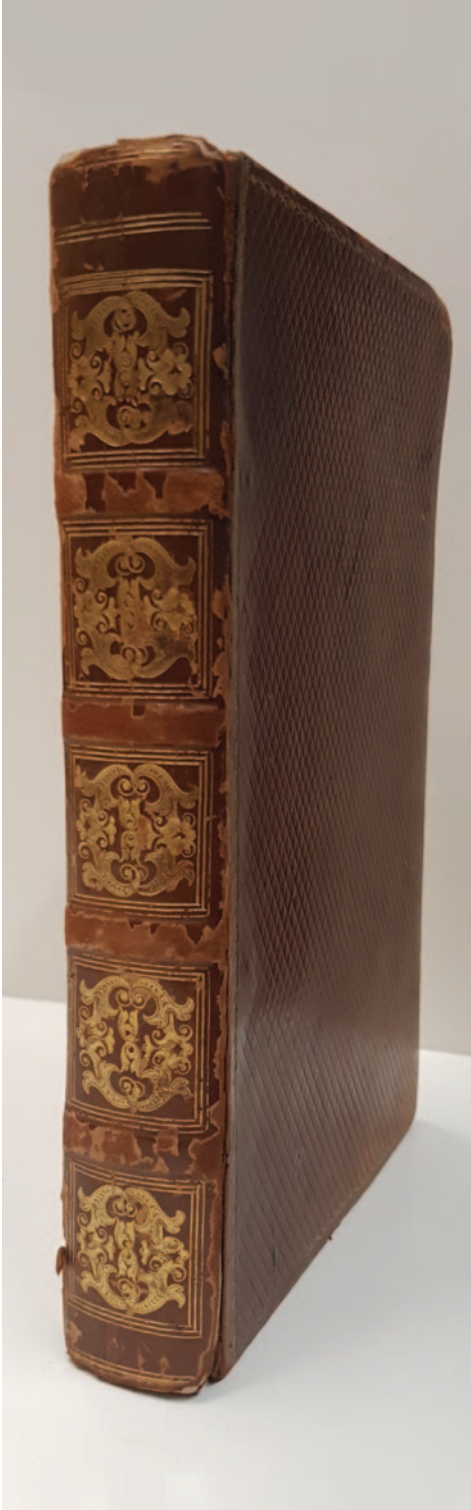
JESSIE CASTLE

IN DECEMBER 2009, CORK CITY AND COUNTY ARCHIVES ACQUIRED AT AUCTION A MODEST but finely made journal, bound in diced calf leather, having gilt borders and with a tooled gilt spine. The edges and joints are worn but the journal is intact with no visible repairs.<sup>1</sup> The journal belonged to Eliza Deane (d.1851) (Plate 1), second wife of Sir Thomas Deane (1792-1871), the Cork-based architect and builder. Irregular entries, in chronological order, are made in the journal for the year 1832, referring to family activities and events, visitors to their home and sometimes to wider current affairs.<sup>2</sup> A handwritten note on the first page of the journal was added by Henrietta Mary Falkiner (*née* Deane), Sir Thomas and Eliza Deane’s granddaughter (and daughter of architect Thomas Newenham Deane (1828-1899)), and identifies some of the family members mentioned by Eliza Deane. The beauty of the gilt leather-bound covers (Plate 2) does not prepare the reader for the heart-rending first handwritten entry, dated Sunday, 1st January:

This year has commenced I may truly say with ‘lamentation and mourning and woe’. I need go back into the past year but two hours to tell of my little Robert’s death at five minutes before ten on the last night of the year 1831. His spirit was released from his Earthly Tabernacle and entered on the new year and the Sabbath in Glory.<sup>3</sup>

The first week in January brought more grief, as Eliza’s mother, Susanna Newenham (*née* Hoare), died on 8th January.<sup>4</sup> On 11th January Eliza’s son was disinterred and taken to Brinny churchyard to be buried with Susanna Newenham. So began the year 1832 for Thomas and Eliza Deane.

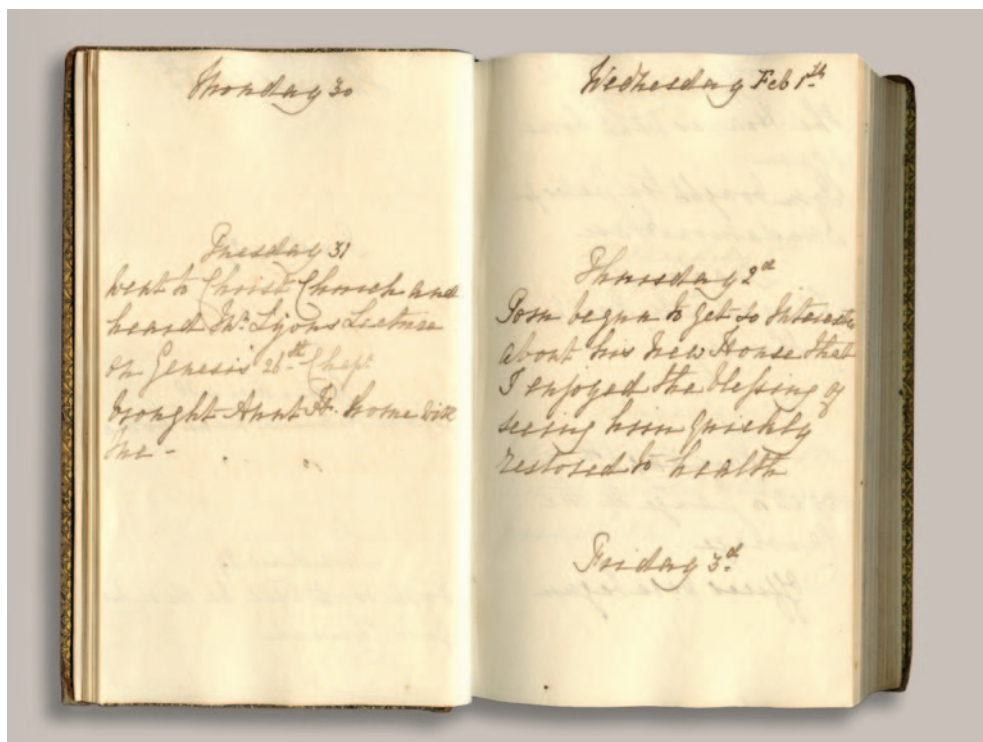
At the time of these sad events, the Deanes were resident at a house known as ‘Carrigduve’ in the suburb of Blackrock to the south-east of the city of Cork. Thomas Deane had bought the property in 1823 from the sale of a bankrupt.<sup>5</sup> The house, an unusual double bow-front Georgian house with distinctive slate-hung elevations, survives today but is sadly disused and in poor repair. In 1832, however, the bowed garden front overlooked extensive grounds which ran down to the south bank of the river Lee, and was the home in which Eliza Deane wrote the majority of entries in her journal. While the entries are not always regular, and sometimes run to no more than a line, Eliza’s journal provides an insight into the personal life of an important, well-connected and



prosperous family during a period when Cork was being transformed through civic, infrastructural and private development. Buildings such as banks, the city courthouse, a new city and county gaol and several Catholic churches were all constructed in Cork during the 1830s, transforming the streetscapes of the city.

Eliza's husband Sir Thomas Deane was an architect and builder, living and working in Cork, whose family made a significant contribution to the built environment of the city. It is difficult to walk any of the main streets of Cork without seeing a building which was either designed, built or financed by a member of the Deane family. When Deane's father, Alexander Deane, also an architect and builder, died prematurely in 1806, Thomas joined the family business at just fourteen years old, working with his formidable mother, Elizabeth Deane, who headed up the business.<sup>6</sup> He won his first architectural competition in 1811, aged 21, for the Commercial Buildings on the South Mall. Deane went on to design a number of other notable buildings in the city, often collaborating with his brother Kearns Deane (as Mrs Deane, Thomas Deane & Co, or Sir Thomas Deane & Co), including the Bank of Ireland on the South Mall (1838-40), the Cork Savings Bank (1835-42) and the main quadrangle (1845) of Queen's College (now University College Cork).<sup>7</sup>

In 1851 Deane took his assistant Benjamin Woodward and his son Thomas Newenham Deane into partnership. Having done so, he became less involved in the design of buildings, concerning himself instead with the administrative side of the business. The partnership of Sir Thomas Deane, Kt., Son & Woodward opened an office in Dublin in 1853 having been chosen to design the museum at Trinity



2, 3 –Eliza Deane’s journal of 1832  
(courtesy Cork City & County Archives)

College. Deane served as a member of Cork Corporation for many years and was elected High Sheriff of Cork in 1815 and 1830, receiving his knighthood in 1830.<sup>8</sup>

Eliza O’Callaghan Newenham married Thomas Deane in 1827, following the death of Deane’s first wife, Catherine Connellan, who he had married in 1809 when he was seventeen years of age and by whom he had two children, John and Julia. Eliza also came from a family deeply involved in the architectural and building professions. As the daughter of Robert O’Callaghan Newenham, M.P., an architect, property developer and antiquarian, Eliza would have been very familiar with Deane’s profession. Sir Thomas Deane and Robert Newenham were also both founding members of the Cork Society for Promoting the Fine Arts.<sup>9</sup> Following the death of Eliza’s mother, her father Robert lived with the Deane family at their home at Carrigduve.

Eliza and Thomas’s fifth wedding anniversary fell on 13th January 1832, a day marked with just one line in Eliza’s journal: ‘The anniversary of my marriage and the first I ever passed in sorrow.’ Throughout January, Eliza notes the ill-health of Thomas Deane several times in her journal – quite possibly a bout of depression brought on by the sad events experienced by the family. However, a visit to Carrigduve by a friend, a member of the Perry family, on 23rd January was the catalyst for change, recorded simply by Eliza as ‘... Perry has persuaded Tom to build a new house in Dundanion’.<sup>10</sup> The property associated with Carrigduve was substantial, large enough that the existing house



could retain a substantial garden, while a portion of the site was leased to Thomas Deane's brother-in-law and business partner, Richard Notter, on which a new villa was constructed.<sup>11</sup> To the west of this again, adjacent to the ruined sixteenth-century Dundanion Castle (Plate 6), was the site chosen by Deane for his new house. On 4th February Eliza noted in her journal that 'Tom begun [*sic*] to get so interested about his new house that I enjoyed the blessing of seeing him restored to health' (Plate 3). Work on the new house proceeded at a fast pace. Eliza spent 13th February 'at home marking out the site for Dundanion', while on the 14th she writes:

Went to Christchurch before excavating for Dundanion House. Planted evergreens against the boundary wall. Tom is leading such an active life and getting up so early every morning that it has been, through the goodness of our God, as effectual in restoring him to health as a visit to Harrogate could have been.

It is clear from the journal that it was not only Thomas who focused his energy on the planning and building of the family's new home. Presumably because of her familiarity with her family's business (both on her father's and her husband's side), Eliza appears to have been comfortable visiting and spending time on the building site of her future home, an activity which is unlikely to have been undertaken by many women during this period. Multiple journal entries for the month of February record Eliza's visits to the site and the rapid progress of the build. She writes on 23rd February that she 'spent all day at Dundanion seeing the men laying out the walls through the grove. I am devoting too much time to it but a fine day is such a temptation that I cannot come in.' Some of the work being undertaken in this first month involved the castle, which Eliza records they began to unroof on 20th February. Dundanion Castle is thought to have been built by the Gallwey family in the sixteenth century, and it is believed to have been from here that William Penn, founder of the British colony of Pennsylvania, made his first voyage to America in 1682.<sup>12</sup> At a dinner at Carrigduve with the Deanes on 28th February, Thomas's brother Alexander Deane (recorded as 'Sandy' in Eliza's journal) persuaded them to let part of the castle stand, and so the structure was spared and survives, at least in part, today.

Eliza continued to refer to progress on their new house in her journal as the year progressed. It is from her records that we know the excavations for the house were largely complete by 7th March 1832. Two very informative entries were made in the journal in March, but interestingly these are in a different hand.<sup>13</sup> The first relates to the event of laying the first stone of the new house and reads as follows:

This day at one o'clock the first stone of our new house was laid by my beloved son Thomas Newenham Deane. The stone that we chose was the top stone of old Dundanion Castle. The work men were all assembled, round the excavation, and after Thomas had spread the mortar, and his father hammered the stone they gave three hearty cheers.

The second entry in this other hand, dated 9th March, records that they had to go very deep with the excavations, but despite three collapses, were finally successful 'in getting in the masons' work.' On the same day they had 'five masons going on making a picturesque ruin of the castle'.



4 – CORK RIVER AND BLACKROCK CASTLE

1850-70, lithograph (Newman & Co, London). Dundanion can be seen amongst the trees to the left of the church spire.  
(courtesy National Library of Ireland)

The east suburbs of Cork, on both the north and south sides of the River Lee, were particularly beautiful parts of the city, and therefore, not surprisingly, were a popular choice of location for the villas of the upper classes. Blackrock, the area in which both Carrigduve and Dundanion Castle were located, was a fashionable area in which to live in the 1830s. Lewis, in his *Topographical Directory* of 1837, describes the scenery on the south side of the river, ‘from Anglesey Bridge to Blackrock and Passage’, as ‘pleasantly undulating and diversified; elegant houses, with lawns, gardens, and plantations sloping to the water’s edge, and commanding delightful views over noble expanse of water’.<sup>14</sup> The decision to retain Dundanion Castle as ‘a picturesque ruin’ within this landscape was an undertaking very in keeping with the sensibilities of the time. The Deanes would have been highly aware of the setting of their new house within the leafy suburbs which lined the river approach to the city, a scene portrayed in *View of Cork River and Blackrock Castle* (Plate 4). The ruined castle of Dundanion, in addition to providing a focal point within the Deane’s private garden, could also be seen in views up and down the river, contributing to what John Savage described in *Picturesque Ireland* as ‘some of the most cultivated scenery in the South of Ireland’.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the ruin may have been seen by Mr and Mrs S.C. Hall when they visited Cork in 1840 and observed that the hills around Blackrock were ‘clad from the summit to the water’s edge with every variety of foliage, and graceful villas and ... here and there some ancient ruin recalls a story from the past’.<sup>16</sup>

By 10th April 1832 the principal storey of the house had been completed, and by





5 – ‘Lady Deane turning the sod for the new Cork, Blackrock & Passage Railway in the garden at Dundanion’ (from *ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS*, 26th June 1847)

6 – Dundanion Castle, Blackrock, Co Cork (c.1564) nineteenth-century engraving

7 – The first engine on the line at Dundanion in 1850 nineteenth-century engraving



opposite, 8 – Susanna Adelaide Deane (b.1837), *DUNDANION* 1860, watercolour (detail) (Crawford Art Gallery)

9 – O.S. map of 1869 showing Cork, Blackrock & Passage Railway intersecting the garden at Dundanion (courtesy UCD Digital Library, with permission of OSI)



21st April work had begun on the construction of the roof. The masonry was considered finished by the evening of this day, except for sections that could not be built until the roof was partly *in situ*. While Eliza continued to document the progress of the new house during the months of April and May, a new matter also preoccupied her. On 12th April she records that ‘This day the cholera is declared to be in Cork.’ The *Cork Constitution* confirmed this with a short report on 14th April confirming that ‘some cases of Cholera were reported in this city yesterday’, and noting that the sense of ‘impending danger’ had prompted the fitting out of temporary hospitals.<sup>17</sup> Only two days later, Eliza writes that ‘The cholera increases awfully’, and on the 21st, ‘Forty-four new cases of cholera in Cork this day’. A large store on Lapp’s Island, formerly used as a Barracks, was planned for conversion into a place of temporary refuge for poor families at this time for the purpose of allowing people an opportunity to carry out the white-washing, scouring and ventilating of their dwellings.<sup>18</sup> The epidemic inevitably did not confine itself to the crowded city centre and eventually spread to the suburbs. On 1st June Eliza recorded that the cholera





had reached Blackrock and just over two weeks later that it was very bad in their neighbourhood. In all, the epidemic was to result in over 1,600 deaths in Cork city – a mortality rate of over 30%.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the cholera epidemic and the loss of life in the city which resulted, the work on the construction of the Deane's new house at Dundanion continued apace. During the month of June, the window frames and sashes were fitted and the external walls plastered and dashed. Eliza continued to visit regularly, often supervising work to the grounds such as the removal of trees to open up views of the river. On 16th July the back stairs was finished, allowing her to walk up to the bedrooms for the first time. The columns of the portico were put up at the end of August, and by early September Eliza had a fire lit in the bay bedroom and had begun to write her journal from the new house. Internal finishes such as cornices were carried out in November, with her final journal entry of 21st November noting that the 'princely' hall chimney piece of green marble had been installed and that the laying of the oak floor was completed.

Several travellers' accounts record visits to the Deanes' home at Dundanion. In his *A Tour Around Ireland* of 1836, John Barrow notes that the house is 'tastefully fitted up. In the hall is a mantelpiece of that green marble which is procured from the quarries of Connemara.'<sup>20</sup> Robert Graham also included a description of his dinner at Dundanion in his *Irish Journals*, noting that he had seen a very interesting book of sketches by Eliza Deane who was 'a beautiful drawer'. In his opinion the house was designed in very good taste and 'fitted up in the interim with pictures, books etc. and rich furniture'.<sup>21</sup> Eliza exhibited in Cork as an amateur artist, with some of her work included in the National Exhibition of 1852 held in the Corn Exchange on Albert Quay, the year after her death.<sup>22</sup> The focus of attention at the National Exhibition was not on Eliza's painting, however, but rather on the crochet work being exhibited by the participants of a home-working scheme she had founded in 1847 in the Blackrock area for the benefit of its most destitute inhabitants. By the time of the National Exhibition, over 500 young women were occupied in producing crochet work in their own homes based on designs provided by Eliza.<sup>23</sup>

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of Cork City depicts the new house, which the Deanes had named Dundanion Castle, and its grounds, showing the long winding avenue approaching from the west, the ruined castle, the gate lodge and outbuildings, pathways and the planting arrangements of the gardens.<sup>24</sup> Eliza Deane's journal makes many references to the cutting down and planting of trees on the grounds, work in which she seems to have taken a particular interest (Plate 8). It is interesting to note that the Deanes decided to name their house after the castle that they were, initially at least, intending to demolish, though this is in keeping with the fashion for families to connect themselves with historic ruins on their property, and, as Finola O'Kane has observed, many Irish houses 'appropriated the name of their adjacent ruins'.<sup>25</sup> In June 1847 the *Illustrated London News* included an image entitled 'Lady Deane commencing the Cork, Blackrock & Passage Railway', which depicted Eliza cutting the grass turf on the grounds of Dundanion Castle across which the new railway line was to traverse (Plate 5). The line of the new railway, which opened in 1850, effectively cut the property in half, necessitating a new bridge across the railway line in order to allow access from the main gates on the Blackrock Road to the house which remains the arrangement today (Plates 7, 9).



10 – Photograph of Dundanion post-reconstruction after the fire of 1911 (n.d.)  
(Irish Architectural Archive)

The house can be seen in the background of the *Illustrated London News* illustration, and the accompanying article noted that the gardens had been crowded with spectators.<sup>26</sup>

Eliza Deane died in 1851, but Thomas Deane continued to live at Dundanion Castle until 1860, following which it was sold first to William Wise, and eight years later to William Thornton. The *Cork Examiner* ran a short article on the change in ownership of Dundanion on 21st September 1860:

Yesterday the mansion of Dundanion, near Blackrock, having come into the possession of Mr. William Wise, by purchase from Sir Thomas Deane, the event was celebrated by bonfires and illuminations in all parts of the neighbourhood. Refreshments were distributed to the workpeople and the populace with unsparing liberality.<sup>27</sup>

William McNamara, a corn merchant, took over the property in 1878, and although he died in 1888, his widow Catherine lived there until her death in 1921, and the McNamara family remained in residence at Dundanion Castle until c.1950.<sup>28</sup> In July 1911 there was a serious fire at Dundanion which unfortunately appears to have destroyed all but the external walls of Sir Thomas Deane's former home. Several newspapers ran an account of the fire, which occurred on 10th July 1911, including the *Skibbereen Eagle* which described it as follows:

On Tuesday, about mid-day, a disastrous fire occurred at Blackrock, and resulted in the total destruction almost of the beautiful and picturesquely situated mansion, Dundanion Castle, the residence of Mrs McNamara. The fire broke out on the roof, and it is thought was caused by the ignition of some timber in a flue, and it spread with alarming rapidity. The Fire Brigade, under Captain Hudson, was quickly on the scene, and a large crowd of willing helpers assisted, but despite all efforts, the mansion was almost completely gutted.<sup>29</sup>

The house was rebuilt immediately by Messrs Sisk & Son under the supervision of J.F. Mullen, a Cork-based architect (Plate 10).<sup>30</sup> The house changed hands again in 1962 to the Mockler family for just two years, after which the Department of Posts & Telegraphs (later Telecom Éireann) took possession of the building. Telecom Éireann remained at Dundanion until 1999 when it was again sold, for office use.<sup>31</sup> After many years the house is once again in use as a private home.

The project to build a new family home was conceived and completed by the Deanes during an extraordinarily difficult year of both social and personal suffering, providing a focus for Eliza and her husband Thomas who equally poured their energy into the design of the house and grounds at Dundanion Castle. While the work and achievements of Sir Thomas Deane are well documented, Eliza Deane's personal journal for the year 1832 gives an insight into the private world of one of Cork's foremost professional families of this period. Eliza's references to the progress of the house under construction shows an understanding of the process of building and suggests an engagement with her husband's work which has possibly been underestimated.<sup>32</sup>

Despite the destructive fire of 1911, the proportions of the house at Dundanion, the stone portico and some of the mature planting of the grounds have survived, providing tangible links to the many references to Dundanion Castle recorded by Eliza Deane in her journal. Contemporary accounts of domestic building projects of this period in the city are rare, and while the references to the house in this journal are short – sometimes no more than a sentence – they do provide glimpses into the process of a very personal architectural project of an eminent Cork family in the final years of the Georgian era.

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#### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Bought at an auction in December 2009 from Mealy's Auctioneers for a price of €600. Cork City and County Archive, IE CCCA/PR27, Lady Eliza Deane MS.
- <sup>2</sup> The entries to the diary are dated but of varying length, and as the year passes they become less regular. Sometimes Eliza writes no more than a couple of lines, suggesting that she did not

- receive any particular pleasure from the process of writing, but rather felt compelled to record the personal events of that year. She rarely comments on social or political happenings in her entries, recording instead visitors to her own home and trips taken to the city, in particular regular Sunday visits to church and the contents of the sermon of that day.
- <sup>3</sup> Eliza's son Robert died at the age of eighteen months. His death notice appeared in the *Cork*



- Constitution* on 3rd January 1832. He was the second and youngest son of Thomas and Eliza Deane. Their first son, Thomas Newenham Deane, had been born in 1828.
- <sup>4</sup> The *Southern Reporter* published a death notice for Susanna on 10th January 1832, noting her death at Carrigduve, the seat of her son-in-law, Sir Thomas Deane, on the previous day.
- <sup>5</sup> Frederick O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane & Woodward* (Cork, 1997) 6.
- <sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, 5. O'Dwyer notes that Mrs Elizabeth Deane not only maintained her husband's business following his death, but expanded it, successfully completing public work contracts and building speculative housing. She is most well-known for the erection of the naval and ordnance depots at Haulbowline Island between 1816 and 1822.
- <sup>7</sup> Sean F. Pettit, 'The Queen's College Cork: its origins and early history, 1803-1858', unpublished PhD thesis, University College Cork, 1973, 270-72.
- <sup>8</sup> O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane & Woodward*, 7.
- <sup>9</sup> *Journal of the Cork Historical & Archaeological Society*, 1915, vol. 21, no. 108, 183.
- <sup>10</sup> The abbreviation used by Eliza for the first name of this member of the Perry family is frustratingly illegible, but may be John. The journal also mentions a Mrs Perry, with whom the family stay on occasion. The Deanes were related to the Perrys by marriage.
- <sup>11</sup> O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane & Woodward*, 6. This new villa was named Carrigduve House and survives today.
- <sup>12</sup> James N. Healy, *The Castles of County Cork* (Cork, 1988) 77.
- <sup>13</sup> It has been speculated, first by Mealy's auctioneers in their sale catalogue in December 2009, and subsequently in the catalogue reference information in Cork City & County Archives, that these entries may have been made by Sir Thomas Deane.
- <sup>14</sup> Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, 2 vols (London, 1837) II, 411.
- <sup>15</sup> John Savage, *Picturesque Ireland: a literary and artistic delineation of the natural scenery, remarkable places, historical antiquities, public buildings, ancient abbeys, towers, castles, and other romantic and attractive features of Ireland*, (New York, 1885) 419.
- <sup>16</sup> Michael Scott (ed.), *Halls' Ireland. Mr & Mrs Hall's Tour of 1840*, 2 vols (London, 1841; rev. ed., 1984) I, 6.
- <sup>17</sup> *Cork Constitution*, 14th April 1832.
- <sup>18</sup> *ibid.*, 21st April 1832.
- <sup>19</sup> Nigel Farrell, 'Asiatic Cholera and the Development of Public Health in Belfast 1832-1878', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Ulster, 2014, 85.
- <sup>20</sup> John Barrow, *A Tour Around Ireland; through the sea-coast counties, in the autumn of 1835* (London, 1836) 328.
- <sup>21</sup> Extracts from Robert Graham's *A Scottish Whig in Ireland, 1835-38: The Irish Journals of Robert Graham of Redgorton*, quoted in Cornelius Kelly, *The Grand Tour of Cork* (Beara, Co Cork, 2003) 91.
- <sup>22</sup> Eliza Deane is listed under Lady Amateurs, where it is noted that her 'artistic taste and elegant accomplishments were only surpassed by her practical benevolence.' John F. Maguire, *Industrial Movement in Ireland, as Illustrated by the National Exhibition of 1852* (Cork, 1853) 334.
- <sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, 210-14. A lengthy description of the School of Lady Deane is provided here, outlining the history of the scheme established by Eliza Deane and including information on the rates paid to the girls and women, the terms of their employment and the financial success of the project which enabled many participants to open their own savings accounts in the Cork Savings Bank on Lapp's Quay.
- <sup>24</sup> Ordnance Survey Map, Sheet 74, surveyed 1841-42, published 1845.
- <sup>25</sup> Finola O'Kane, *Ireland and the Picturesque: design, landscape painting and tourism 1700-1840* (Yale 2013) 3.
- <sup>26</sup> *Illustrated London News*, 26th June 1847, 405.
- <sup>27</sup> *Cork Examiner*, 21st September 1860.
- <sup>28</sup> Richard Henchion, *East to Mahon* (Cork, 2005).
- <sup>29</sup> *Skibbereen Eagle*, 10th July 1911.
- <sup>30</sup> *Building News*, 6th October 1911, 495.
- <sup>31</sup> For most of the 20th century the house was known simply as Dundanion, rather than the name Dundanion Castle, the name originally chosen for the house by the Deanes.
- <sup>32</sup> O'Dwyer, *The Architecture of Deane and Woodward*, 72. O'Dwyer notes that Eliza Deane is known to have made perspective drawings of Queen's College (now University College, Cork), which were described at the time as 'early designs'.