



This item contains the Dublin core metadata attributes and Curatescape item type metadata fields for a story from the Ports, Past and Present archived collection on the digital repository of Ireland. It has been provided in .odt format for easy copy and pasting.

For more information about the Ports, Past and Present Project, see

<https://portspastpresent.eu/>.

For more information about Omeka Classic, see <https://omeka.org/classic/>.

For more information about Curatescape, its Omeka plugin suite and this item type metadata schema, see <https://curatescape.org/>.

For a .csv containing tabular data for all stories, see the larger collection at

<https://doi.org/10.7486/DRI.ht259b362>.

For an archived snapshot of the story as it appeared between 2020 and 2023 on

<https://portspastpresent.eu/>, see the Relation field below.

Dublin Core

Title

Virginia Woolf Travels to Ireland, 1934 | Virginia Woolf yn teithio i Iwerddon, 1934

Subject

Virginia Woolf

Fishguard

Ireland

Creator

Elizabeth Edwards

Publisher

Ports, Past and Present Project

Date

2023

Rights

CC BY 4.0 International License

Relation

<https://perma.cc/8TW3-WKKC>

Format

Curatescape story

Language

English

Welsh

Coverage

52.008639713168556, -4.990154317822904

Curatescape Story Item Type Metadata

Lede

Virginia Woolf is best known as a pioneering novelist and key member of the Bloomsbury group, but her diaries and letters show that she was also an experienced traveller, and travel writer. She visited Ireland only once, but her conflicted responses to the people and places she encountered there cast some light on metropolitan British attitudes towards Ireland in the 1930s.

Lede (Welsh)

Mae Virginia Woolf yn fwyaf adnabyddus fel nofelydd Saesneg arloesol ac aelod allweddol o grŵp Bloomsbury, ond mae ei dyddiaduron a'i llythyrau'n dangos ei bod hefyd yn deithiwr profiadol, ac yn awdur teithio. Unwaith yn unig yr ymwelodd ag Iwerddon, ond mae ei hymatebion cyferbyniol i'r bobl a'r lleoedd a welodd yno yn taflu rhywfaint o oleuni ar agweddau'r Brydain fetropolitanaidd at Iwerddon yn y 1930au.

Story

Virginia Woolf travelled widely in Britain and Europe throughout her life, but visited Ireland only once. On 27 April 1934, she sailed out from Fishguard to Cork for a motoring tour with her husband Leonard, visiting the novelist Elizabeth Bowen at Bowen's Court, Kildorrery, before heading up the west coast to Galway and the Aran Islands. After a short stay in Dublin, she returned to London via Holyhead after some two weeks away.

The spring weather on the outbound journey was typically changeable. 'We've driven all across Wales today in storms and sudden blasts of sunlight when all the sheep and gorse blazed white and yellow', Woolf wrote to Ethel Smyth, as she waited at the Fishguard Bay Hotel for the overnight ferry (*Letters*, 296). Writing to her nephew Quentin Bell, she also rehearsed familiar anxieties about sea travel: 'all points to death by drowning in the Irish channel. It is pouring and howling. I can see the boat rocking even in the harbour ... how I envy you sleeping on dry land' (*Letters*, 297).

Woolf's next letters and diary entries, written from County Cork, record her initial impressions of Ireland. She was struck by its beauty and 'melancholy' (a repeated word for Ireland in her diary and letters), and by 'a sense that life is receding' (*Diary*, 209). For Woolf, the emptiness of the landscape – 'great stretches of virgin sea shore' (*Diary*, 209) – reflects the condition of Ireland's society. Ireland appears, she thinks, like Italy, Greece or Cornwall, only 'wilder', and frequently deserted – 'everybody lamenting, because nobody comes any more, and the gentry have all fled', she noted to her sister, Vanessa Bell (*Letters*, 299).

Woolf's Irish tour made a lasting impact on her. The journey back to London, recorded in snippets of observation in her diary, suggests that she spent some time weighing up what she had seen. Nostalgia, and anxiety for changing times, characterise these reflections, which she voiced via characters encountered on the tour – a verger, a shopkeeper – who 'would gladly have done with the President of the Free State' (*Diary*, 218). "'We dont [sic] want this hate – it does nobody any good"' as the porter at Holyhead said to me this morning when he remarked how few cattle now came over' (*Diary*, 218).

Story (Welsh)

Bu Virginia Woolf yn teithio'n eang ym Mhrydain ac Ewrop gydol ei hoes, ond unwaith yn unig yr ymwelodd ag Iwerddon. Ar 27 Ebrill 1934, hwyliodd o Abergwaun i Cork ar daith foduro gyda'i gŵr Leonard, gan ymweld â'r nofelydd Elizabeth Bowen yn Bowen's Court, Kildorrey, cyn troi i fyny arfordir y gorllewin i Galway ac Ynysoedd Aran. Ar ôl aros am gyfnod byr yn Nulyn, dychwelodd i Lundain drwy Gaergybi ar ôl rhyw bythefnos i ffwrdd.

Cyfnewidiol, wrth gwrs, oedd tywydd y gwanwyn ar y daith allan. 'We've driven all across Wales today in storms and sudden blasts of sunlight when all the sheep and gorse blazed white and yellow', ysgrifennodd Woolf at Ethel Smyth, wrth aros yng Ngwesty'r Fishguard Bay am y fferi dros nos (*Letters*, 296). Wrth ysgrifennu at ei nai Quentin Bell, bu hefyd yn crybwyll pryderon cyfarwydd am deithio ar y môr: 'all points to death by drowning in the Irish channel. It is pouring and howling. I can see the boat rocking even in the harbour... how I envy you sleeping on dry land' (*Letters*, 297).

Cofnododd llythyrau a chofnodion dyddiadur nesaf Woolf, a ysgrifennwyd o Sir Cork, ei hargraffiadau cychwynnol ynglŷn ag Iwerddon. Roedd wedi'i tharo gan ei harddwch a'i 'melancholy' (sef gair sy'n cael ei ddefnyddio drosodd a thro yn ei dyddiadur a'i llythyrau wrth sôn am Iwerddon), a hefyd 'a sense that life is receding' (*Diary*, 209). I Woolf, mae gwacter y dirwedd – 'great stretches of virgin sea shore' (*Diary*, 209) – yn adlewyrchu cyflwr cymdeithas Iwerddon. Yn ei barn hi mae Iwerddon yn ymddangos yn debyg i'r Eidal, Groeg neu Gernyw, ond yn fwy gwyllt, ac yn aml yn wag – 'everybody lamenting, because nobody comes any more, and the gentry have all fled', meddai wrth ei chwaer, Vanessa Bell (*Letters*, 299).

Cafodd taith Woolf drwy Iwerddon effaith barhaol arni. Mae'r daith yn ôl i Lundain, a gofnodwyd mewn pytau o sylwadau yn ei dyddiadur, yn awgrymu ei bod wedi treulio amser yn pwysu a mesur yr hyn roedd hi wedi'i weld. Hiraeth, a phryder ynglŷn â chyfnod o newid, yw nodweddion y myfyrdodau hyn, a leisiodd hi drwy gymeriadau a welwyd ar y daith – ystlyswr eglwys, siopwr – a fuasai'n ddigon bodlon gweld cefn Arlywydd y Wladwriaeth Rydd (*Diary*, 218). "We dont [sic] want this hate – it does nobody any good" as the porter at Holyhead said to me this morning when he remarked how few cattle now came over' (*Diary*, 218).

Factoid

Virginia Woolf made use of her trip to Ireland for her 1937 novel, *The Years*.

Defnyddiodd Virginia Woolf ei thaith i Iwerddon ar gyfer ei nofel ym 1937, *The Years*.

Related Resources

Anne Olivier Bell and Andrew McNeillie (eds), *The Diary of Virginia Woolf – Volume 4: 1931-35* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983)

Nigel Nicholson and Joanne Trautmann (eds), *The Letters of Virginia Woolf Volume V: 1932-1935* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979)

Jan Morris (ed.), *Travels with Virginia Woolf* (London: Pimlico, 1997)

Official Website