

GLINT



GOVERNMENT LIBRARIES INFORMATION NEWSLETTER

Number Eleven

January 1996

ISSN 0791-0738



THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS LIBRARY

by Valerie M. Ingram

On all the floors were piles of books, to the amount, perhaps of some thousands of volumes scattered singly or in heaps: not one upon the shelves which lined the walls. To these Mr. Fips called Tom's attention...

'Before anything else can be done, we must have them put in order, catalogued, and ranged upon the bookshelves, Mr. Pinch. That will do to begin with. I think, sir.'

Charles Dickens. *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843-4)

And that is how it began for me in the Office of Public Works Library, for although it was officially opened on 2nd December, 1993, only the area housing the Library is new (or to be more precise so completely transformed as to be almost unrecognizable); the books brought together in it come from a number of different collections and even include a couple of volumes which had completed their first century when Dickens was producing his monthly instalments of *The life and works of Martin Chuzzlewit*. I started working for the OPW just over a year before the official

opening so the Library was already in quite good order by that time.

The general atmosphere as a workplace is very pleasing. The main section is high and airy with open-tread stairs leading up to a mezzanine. The floor is covered with rich green carpet, which is complemented by pale green walls on which are hung some original paintings and architectural drawings from the OPW collection. Plants too add to the attractiveness of the surroundings and even though there is never a moment to talk to them, they all seem to be flourishing. The fully adaptable light oak shelving is a pleasure to use apart from the

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There is metal shelving in the Government publications room off the mezzanine which is considerably more difficult to manipulate. This room is the largest of several off the Library. The others which I am using at present contain the video and sound cassettes and a Regma microfilm reader printer intended for use with microfilms of architectural drawings. The scheme for filming these has not yet got under way.

The original Board's library

The oldest body of publications received was the former Board's library. 'An Act for the Extension and Promotion of Public Works in Ireland' was passed on 15th October 1831, and in January 1833 the first report of the Board of Works covering the year 1832 was published. There is a complete run of annual reports up to 1939 when they ceased publication and did not reappear until 1990. The early reports were very detailed and included plans and drawings of the work carried out, which could be anything from the construction of harbours to lunatic asylums.

The nineteenth century in Ireland was an era of numerous Commissions which all dutifully produced lengthy reports, and many of those covering topics relevant to the Board are on the shelves. Legislation includes the Irish Statutes 1310-1800, most of the British legislation from 1828 to 1939 and the Acts of the Oireachtas from 1922 to the present. I was able to find out little about the history of the Board's library. For many years it was housed in a basement. A member of staff held a key and people had to ask for it if they wanted to consult or borrow volumes. It was with regret that I learnt that some material had been transferred to the National Library in the sixties. I discovered a

catalogue to which additions were made up to as late as 1956. It is a ledger in which the authors were entered alphabetically with 'see' references to subject headings under which their titles were listed. The following are the headings: 'Antiquarian, Architecture, Arterial drainage, Building, Census and Concrete', which suggests that the person got tired of the job at 'C', but they already provide a good reflection of the areas of responsibility at the time.

The Technical Library

My information about the Technical Library, which covered architecture, building and related topics, is much more precise. It was set up in 1963 by Martin D. Burke, who later became Principal Architect. He told me he had consulted Maureen O'Byrne, the Dublin City Librarian, Trinity College Library, the Royal Institute of British Architects and the British Ministry of Works and read all the relevant literature. He was assisted initially by Architectural Technicians and later by Clerical Assistants. In sorting this section of the library, I discovered evidence of much hard work. Not only were the books catalogued and classified by UDC, but articles were removed from journals and put in folders by subject and catalogued also. Unfortunately the momentum was lost, and I actually found this collection the poorest in more recent books, though not I suspect because they were not purchased but because they were held by individuals rather than in the Library. The catalogue by author and classification number was on 8 x 4 1/4" sheets of paper in ring binders. I wondered why paper rather than cards, but in the days before the invention of that inky monster, the

catalogue card duplicator, remembered with less than affection by several of us in the Government Libraries Group, it would have been labour saving to be able to make carbon copies. I did not find it a particularly user-friendly catalogue and was glad when all the books were up on computer.

The Monuments Library

The Monuments Library had a similar catalogue though with a title file as well. From 1930 on the Inspector of National Monuments kept books. Harold G. Leask, known for his *Irish churches and monastic buildings* and *Irish castles and castellated houses*, helped to build up the collection, including older books; his successor, W.P. Le Clerc, also contributed. One of the treasures is a complete set of the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 1849 -. The oldest book I have discovered is *The ancient and present state of the county and city of Waterford*, by Charles Smith, 1724. Other important works include Francis Grose's *The antiquities of Ireland* in two volumes, published in 1791. When work on the Archaeological Survey began in the late seventies the National Monuments Section became subscribers to many Irish historical and archaeological societies so there are good runs of their journals. New books were regularly

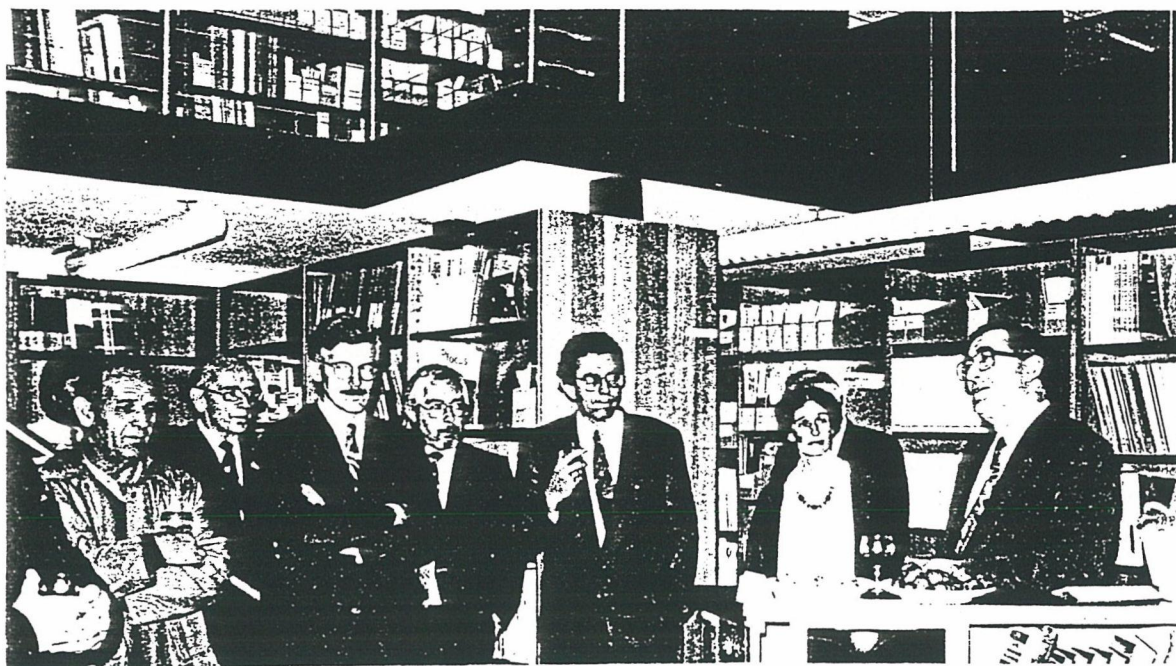
purchased from the seventies on and a large number of Irish Manuscripts Commission publications were acquired in 1988.

Waterways

Waterways had few books in comparison with the other Sections but I believe that the collection they transferred to the Library is very comprehensive as far as Irish waterways are concerned.

The Wildlife Service

The area of responsibility of the Wildlife Service is wider than the title implies, including environmental protection and flora as well as fauna. It was originally set up in the early seventies and became part of the OPW in 1987 after a history of being transferred from Government Department to Department. A good book and periodical collection was built up over the years and this was enriched by material from the former Forestry School in Shelton Abbey. From 1979 under the Department of Fisheries and Forestry, the Service benefited from a professional service provided by Mary Moore, so it is not surprising that theirs was the only computerised catalogue which was passed on to me.



The OPW Library today

As well as printed material the Library holds over 100 videos and over 200 sound cassettes. Many of these are recordings of news items relating to the OPW but there are also videos about heritage sites and some other topics such as safety in the building industry.

Libraries today hold many different media but I believe I have one which is most unusual, if not unique. Four large boxes containing paper casts of ogham stones made by Sir Samuel Ferguson in the last century and eighteen parcels of other rubbings of inscribed stones were recently transferred from the Royal Irish Academy to the OPW Library. I readily admit that I did not instantly set to work to catalogue them! I could attempt to transliterate some of the clearer ones perhaps but have serious doubts about my capacity to understand the inscriptions thereafter. However one of the OPW Archaeologists is an ogham expert and intends to work on them.

The lack of which I am most conscious in the Library is that we have no access to external bibliographic databases. I am at present exploring what is available on CD-ROM in our subject areas — when I can snatch the time! I hope to get the BILD Service shortly. This is produced by the Building Information Centre at the Dublin Institute of Technology, Bolton Street, and includes the full text and illustrations in colour of a wide range of building product literature. It is accessed via modem from a PC with Windows. A very valuable resource in the architecture, building and engineering areas which we subscribe to is the Barbour index on microfiche containing the full text of thousands of publications. We also subscribe to the RIAI (Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland) technical information microfilm. As the emphasis is slightly different, these two can complement each other for Irish publications, although the majority of items on the Barbour index would be British.

Library software

When setting up the OPW library I was saved one task which most people in my position would have had to face. I did not have to spend time selecting a software package as I had already been through that process while working with Mary Doyle in the Department of Agriculture Library. Having looked at a number of packages, we got Cardbox Plus at the end of 1979, and it turned out to be even more versatile than anticipated. As Mary wrote an article about it for *Glint* No. 8, it is not necessary to describe it again. We continued to attend demonstrations of library software packages, making comparisons and finding that Cardbox Plus could do almost everything which the more expensive packages did, and picking up ideas which could be incorporated. I was therefore sure that I was not making a mistake in choosing it for the OPW libraries. We have a three user network version, although there are at present only two PC's on it, one for myself and one for the Clerical Assistant who helps me. The latest innovation, recently announced by Business Simulations Ltd., is Cardbox for Windows, which could be of interest to me when it is fully developed, but they are still working on the network version and have not yet decided how they will treat the read only version, which I consider a particularly useful feature.

The computer catalogue

There are at present over 10,500 records in the catalogue. As I serve all OPW staff, about 10% of these are for books purchased for a number of locations around the country, such as the National Parks, and for the National Botanic Gardens Library. I have classified all new publications using DDC 20, which I chose mainly because there is no difficulty in sorting it on computer, while the symbols in UDC would create problems. Most of the older books still have UDC numbers or none but fortunately Dewey and UDC are fairly compatible for



shelving purposes and because we have the cataloguing data, type of publication (e.g. 'G' for 'Government') and accession number recorded we can find the unclassified publications quite readily as well. About 10% of the Library remains uncatalogued and it is more difficult to make progress than previously because of the increased demand from users. We are also still receiving boxes of publications from time to time— 'I was clearing out my office and wondered if the Library would like'... There are 674 periodical titles on computer at present. As with the books, these include journals we subscribe to for the National Botanic Gardens Library and other locations.

Subsidiary libraries

The National Botanic Gardens Library is an important one which it would take a full article to describe, so I will not attempt to discuss it here. I work at the Gardens two days per week. I hope bit by bit to explore the collections at the other OPW locations. Ideally the aim would be to record all the holdings on computer but that depends on the availability of resources. I recently visited the library at the J.F. Kennedy Arboretum and was pleasantly surprised by the richness of the collection. My next trip will be to the Great Blasket Island Visitor Centre with the purpose of reporting on the requirements to set up a small library there which will be open to the public. Otherwise the library service is intended for OPW staff, although I do try to facilitate outside researchers who cannot gain access to the material in question elsewhere.

Despite the fact that there is a great deal of work involved, I very much enjoy running a library which covers such a broad range of interesting topics. It was said to me, and I liked the expression, that it is a Renaissance library.

Valerie M. Ingram, 30 June 94

Credits:

The line drawings in this article have been taken with kind permission of Ciarán O'Connor from *Public Works: the architecture of the Office of Public Works 1831–1987*, edited by Ciarán O'Connor and John O'Regan, Dublin, Architectural Association of Ireland, 1987

They represent

51 St Stephen's Green, HQ of OPW since 1913 (on page 1)

The South elevation of the Custom House (on page 2)

Curvilinear range of glasshouses at the Botanic Gardens, Dublin as in 1849 (on page 5).

The photograph on page 3 shows John Mahony, Chairman of the Commissioners of Public Works, speaking at the official opening of the Library on 2 December 1993.

Note from Editors: This article was written a year and a half ago. Some changes may have taken place since in the organisation of the OPW and its libraries.

EDITORIAL

It is very satisfying to see the growing realisation of the value of Libraries to Government Departments and in most cases the realisation that these can best be run by properly qualified staff.

Since our last newsletter a number of new posts requiring professional qualifications have been created. Valerie Ingram has been appointed as Librarian to the Office of Public Works, and the new Library there was opened in style at the end of 1993. The OPW has also created the long sought post of Assistant Librarian for the National Botanic Gardens, recently filled by Sarah Ball. The Oireachtas recently appointed Mary Moore as Assistant Librarian, the first time a person with a qualification in librarianship has been appointed in that Library. Donal McSweeney and Niamh Gogan have been appointed to two new Assistant Librarian posts in the National Gallery. Joe Donnelly was appointed to a part-time post in the Judges' Library. And finally, The Review Group on the Office of the Attorney General recommended that a qualified Librarian be recruited for that Office, and Madeleine Dennison has now been appointed to that new post.

This is a vindication of the contribution of qualified Librarians in those Departments in which they are already employed and we hope the trend will continue.



RECENT LIBRARY APPOINTMENTS

Attorney General's Office: Madeleine Dennison — Librarian
Dept of Agriculture Food and Forestry: Nora Buggy — Assistant Librarian
Dept of Enterprise, and Employment: Carol Flynn — Librarian
Dept of Foreign Affairs: Tom McGrath — Librarian
Dept of Transport, Energy and Communications: Monica Wallace (appointed to set up new Library)
Judges' Library: Joe Donnelly — Librarian
National Botanic Gardens: Sarah Ball — Assistant Librarian
National Gallery: Donal McSweeney, Niamh Gogan — Assistant Librarians
Office of Public Works: Valerie Ingram — Librarian
Oireachtas: Mary Moore — Assistant Librarian
Revenue Commissioners: Paddy Kelly — Librarian
State Laboratory: Michael O'Gorman — Librarian

The development of the Library of the National Gallery is proceeding. At the end of last year, two additional staff were appointed—Assistant Librarian Donal McSweeney and Library Assistant Niamh Gogan—to form a total staff complement of five. Donal has previously worked in the libraries of Griffith College, The Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Marine; Niamh has previously worked in the Rare Books Section of University College Dublin Library.

Donal has responsibility for the book collection, the Library stock check, and conversion of the card catalogue. Niamh has responsibility for the periodicals collection and will also deal with public enquiries.

On the 13th of March, Library staff moved into their new premises in the basement of 88–89 Merrion Square. Work has commenced on unpacking books and periodicals which have been inaccessible for some time. A complete stockcheck of all Library materials will be undertaken in conjunction with the conversion of the Library card catalogue.

The TECHLIBplus library automation system has been purchased to handle departmental operations.

This issue of *GLINT* includes as a supplement the Library Software Evaluation Questionnaire which a number of government libraries have used to assist them in selecting their computer systems.

The questionnaire was originally compiled by Mary Doyle, Librarian, Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry. It is updated regularly to reflect changes in technology and the experiences of other Librarians with their systems. A seminar was held in 1993 to discuss the questionnaire which was very productive and led to many useful additions.

Not all the questions included will be relevant to every Library, but we hope the questionnaire will serve as a useful guide to others in choosing the system most suited to their particular needs.

If anyone would like a copy of the questionnaire on disk, please send a formatted floppy disk (3½" high or low density or 5¼") to Mary Doyle, Librarian, Dept of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, Kildare Street, Dublin. If the Wordperfect 5.1 format doesn't suit we can send it as a text file. (please indicate if a text file is preferred). Replies received to the questionnaire are also available. If you do want to see these please remember that systems change and replies received in 1993 may no longer be valid.

Recent article in *An Leabharlann* of special interest to Government Librarians

‘Libraries and the management of information in the Northern Ireland Civil Service’

by Kirby Porter (Principal Librarian, Northern Ireland Civil Service)

“Libraries should have an essential role to play in the provision of information to Government Departments. Yet the function they perform in this respect is not always obvious; nor are the very real skills which librarians possess always recognised for the valuable resource they are”

An Leabharlann: The Irish Library, 2nd series, Volume 11 No 1, 1994, pp 5–11

COPYRIGHT SEMINAR 10TH MAY 1995

The Government Libraries Section organised a Seminar on Copyright in the Offices of the European Commission, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2.

The Seminar was chaired by Mr **Sean Phillips**, Librarian of University College Dublin, and the leading Irish authority on copyright in relation to librarianship. The attendance of more than seventy people included librarians, writers, publishers, lawyers and academics.

Mr **Padraic Hennessy**, Copyright Unit, Department of Enterprise and Employment, spoke about the forthcoming Copyright Bill and about the European dimensions to the copyright debates.

Mr **Kirby Porter**, Principal Librarian, Department of Finance and Personnel, Belfast, spoke graphically about the experience of librarians in government departments since the implementation of the 1988 British Copyright Act.

Mr **Brian Trench**, Lecturer in the School of Communications, Dublin City University, spoke about the impact of new communications technologies on copyright, and particularly about how this was affecting the work of journalists.

Ms **Muireann Ó Briain** of the Irish Copyright Licensing Agency described the work of the agency and the principles underlying copyright licensing schemes.

Mr **Michael Gill** of CLÉ—The Irish Book Publishers' Association—explained the interests of booksellers and publishers, and the burdens imposed on publishers by the provisions of the existing legislation.

After the speakers' contributions, question and debate sessions were conducted by Mr Phillips.

A fuller account of the Seminar will appear in the next issue of *GLINT*. Two of the papers presented at the Seminar, those by Mr Porter and Mr Trench, will appear in future issues of *An Leabharlann*.

Michael O'Gorman

Offers

Contact: **Valerie Ingram** or **Sharon Doyle**, Library, Office of Public Works, 51 St Stephens Green, Dublin 2. Tel: 6613111 Ext 2159

DAIL DEBATES (bound volumes) OF vols. 1, 2, 14–17, 118, 145, 153, 186–187, 189–194, 197, 199–203, 205–207, 231–232, 236–242, 244, 246–249, 252, 255–295

BIOLOGICAL CONSERVATION v. 32 no. 4,
v. 33 no. 1, 3, v. 34 no. 1–3 1985
v. 35 no. 1–4, v. 36 no. 1–3, v. 37 no. 3–4,
v. 38 no. 1, 3–4 1986
v. 39 no. 1–2, 4, v. 40 no. 1–4, v. 41 no. 1–4,
v. 42 no. 1–4 1987
v. 43 no. 1–4, v. 44 no. 1–4, v. 45 no. 1–2, 4,
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v. 47 no. 1–4, v. 48 no. 1–4, v. 49 no. 1–4,
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v. 62 no. 1–3 1992
v. 63 no. 1–3 1993

BIRD STUDY v. 35 part 3 1988

BREIFNE v. 6 no. 22 1983–84

CLOGHER RECORD v. 11 no. 3, v. 12 no. 3,
v. 13 no. 1–2

DONEGAL ANNUAL no. 33, 39, 44

IRISH NATURALISTS' JOURNAL
v. 17 no. 6–12, index, v. 18 no. 1–12, index,
v. 19 no. 1–6, 8–11, v. 20 no. 1–12, v. 21
no. 1–12, index, supplement, v. 22 no. 1–10,
v. 23 no. 1–2, 4, v. 24 no. 2–3, 6–8

JOURNAL OF THE CO. LOUTH ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY
v. 17 no. 1 1969

ORYX v. 19 no. 4, v. 20 no. 1, 3, v. 23 no. 1–2, 4, v. 24
no. 1–3, v. 25 no. 3–4

Contact: **Eileen Gavin**, Veterinary Research Laboratory,
Abbotstown, Castleknock, Dublin 15. Tel: 8213041

PERIODICALS DISPLAY UNIT
20" x 81" x 78". 11 display shelves on each side

Offers (continued)

Contact: Ailish Byrne, Library, Dept of Agriculture,
Food and Forestry, Kildare Street, Dublin 2 Tel:
6072803

APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS 1923/24, 1947/48–
1948/49, 1950/51–1951/52, 1980–1988

DAIL DEBATES (bound volumes) v. 364

ESTIMATES FOR THE PUBLIC SERVICE 1932/33–
1947/48, 1949/50–1952/53, 1955/56–1975

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC
ACCOUNTS 1952/53, 1963/64, 1967/68, 1974,
1976–1979

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES
ORGANISATION REVIEW GROUP 1966–1969
(‘Green’ Devlin Report)

Contact: Monica Wallace, Library, Dept of Transport,
Energy and Communications
25 Clare Street, Dublin 2. Tel:604–1239

DAIL DEBATES
vols 65, 66, 70, 76, 77, 85, 102, 107, 108 (2), 111,
114, 115, 116, 117 (2), 119 (2), 120 (2), 121, 122,
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Wants

Contact: Valerie Ingram or Sharon Doyle, Library,
Office of Public Works, 51 St Stephens Green,
Dublin 2. Tel:6613111 Ext 2159

DAIL DEBATES (bound volumes)
vols 21, 28, 34, 41–41, 61, 69, 78–79, 88–98,
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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS
(bound volumes) All up to 1978, 1980

BRITISH BIRDS v. 70 no. 1–5, v. 73 no. 2, 9–12,
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v. 81 no. 9–12, v. 82 no. 1

DOMUS no. 507, 512, 517 1972; no. 530, 541 1974; no.
552 1975; no. 566 1977;
no. 585–586 1978; no. 590, 592 1979; no. 613, 622
1981; no. 642, 644 1983

IRISH NATURALISTS’ JOURNAL v. 16 no. 2–4, v.
24 no. 5

JOURNAL OF ANIMAL ECOLOGY v. 51 no. 2, v. 52
no. 1

JOURNAL OF CO. LOUTH ARCHAEOLOGICAL &
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
v. 5 no. 2–4,
v. 6 no. 1, 4, v. 10 no. 1–2, v. 16 no. 1,
v. 18 no. 1, 3

JOURNAL OF WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT
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ORYX v. 17 no. 2, v. 18 no. 1, 3

PROCEEDINGS OF THE INSTITUTION OF CIVIL
ENGINEERS
Aug. 1954, Dec. 1955, v. 35 Nov.– Dec. 1966,
v. 36 Apr. 1967, v. 37 Jun.– Jul. 1967,
v. 47 Oct. 1970, v. 49 Jul.– Aug. 1971,
v. 50 Sep.– Dec. 1971

ULSTER JOURNAL OF ARCHAEOLOGY
v. 19 1956, v. 21 1958 – v. 22 1959,
v. 33 1970, v. 42 1981, v. 47 1984 –
v. 49 1986, v. 51 1988

Contact: Monica Wallace, Library, Dept of Transport,
Energy and Communications, 25 Clare Street,
Dublin 2. Tel:604–1239

DAIL DEBATES
vols 20–64, 69, 74, 79, 80, 82, 84,
86, 88–98, 101, 139, 170–176, 178,
179, 184, 208, 209, 211, 215, 216,
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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS
(bound volumes), 1969 vol.2, 1970 vol.2,
1971 vol.2, 1974 vol.2, 1975 vol.2, 1977 vol.1

GLINT is published by the Government Libraries Section of the Library Association of Ireland
General Editor—Mary Doyle (Dept of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food)
Production Editor (Text editing, layout and typesetting)—Lisa Shields (Meteorological Service)