

WILLIAM GREGORY WOOD-MARTIN AS SCIENTIST:
EXPLORING THE TRANSITION FROM ANTIQUARIAN TO ARCHAEOLOGIST
AT THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY

by

Lydia Harris

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Thesis Committee:

Dr. Brenden Martin

Dr. Ashley Riley Sousa

Dr. Shannon Hodge

I dedicate this work to my fellow multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary,
and multipotentialites. Rise above the chatter, you can do this!

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to restore Wood-Martin to his place in the story of the development of archaeology in Ireland. Not for his contributions alone, but as an individual whose story intersects with events and movements taking place in Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Born amidst the ravages of the Great Famine, and educated in a post-Enlightenment Europe, Wood-Martin is representative of other landed men of his time. Situated within the story of Irish nationalism and the formation of twentieth-century Irish identity, he is part of the story of the formation of the Irish Republic. Integrated into a network of scientists and scholars engaged with understanding the origins of man and the formation of the world as they knew it, grappling with ideas of faith and man's place in the universe, Wood-Martin exemplifies the individuals who worked to formalize and professionalize the sciences as independent disciplines.

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INTRODUCTION

On my first day of class at the National University of Ireland, Galway, the lecturer projected a traditional map of Europe on the screen. Ireland appeared to be at the far western edge of the European world, removed and remote from the ancient bastion of culture in Rome, or the earlier centers of culture and cultivation in the Near East. He then flipped the map on its edge, with Ireland at the top of the screen and modern Israel at the bottom. This small change in perspective suggested alternative ways for we, the students, to view Ireland's place in the world, and ultimately its place in the broad sweep of history. The rest of this class went on to reveal how interconnected Ireland truly is to Europe and its history, illuminating how the inhabitants of this tiny island nation have influenced their mainland neighbors. The Irish people have produced and exported golden objects which have been found across the ancient world, challenged the Catholic Church, liberated themselves from the British Empire, inspired colonial revolt on the other side of the world, and created a global diaspora of their own people to every corner of the globe.¹ Since their migration to the island, Irish peoples have been connected to an expansive network which has exchanged goods, ideas, and practices with others across the European continent.² Ireland is not a tiny remote island in the middle of the Atlantic, disconnected from the trends of ideas and movements happening on the European mainland, but is instead an integrated part of Europe and therefore can be examined as a

¹ John Waddell, *The Prehistoric Archaeology of Ireland*, 2. ed. (Bray, Co. Wicklow: Wordwell, 2000); Richard Philip Abels 1951-, "The Council of Whitby: A Study in Early Anglo-Saxon Politics.," *Journal of British Studies* 23 (October 15, 1983): 1–25.

² Waddell, *The Prehistoric Archaeology of Ireland*.

reflection of what is going on in Europe. Researchers can examine Ireland as a microcosmic reflection of the trends and ideas brewing in Europe.³ As a student of both Irish history and archaeology, this lesson on that first day of class was well learned.

Building on the framework of Ireland as an integral part of Europe, this thesis first situates Ireland within the nationalistic and scientific network of ideas found across Europe at the turn of the twentieth century. Then, in its second section, it will turn to an examination of the Sligo antiquarian William Gregory Wood-Martin.⁴ This thesis draws primarily on Wood-Martins published works, his personal correspondence found at the Irish National Library and the Royal Irish Academy, and a portion of the material remains from his Carrowmore collection at the Irish National Museum. A close examination of these sources reveals Wood-Martins archaeological methodologies and theories, his practices and interpretations, and his interactions with his predecessors and peers. Finally, in its third section, this thesis presents the exhibition materials the author created to interpret such a figure to the public in two venues, on two continents, with two similar yet unrelated audiences.

³ Waddell; Jacqueline Cahill Wilson and Christopher D. Standish, “Mobility and Migration in Late Iron Age and Early Medieval Ireland,” *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 6 (April 1, 2016): 230–41; Lara M. Cassidy et al., “Neolithic and Bronze Age Migration to Ireland and Establishment of the Insular Atlantic Genome,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States*, no. 2 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1518445113>.

⁴ The term “antiquarian” is used throughout this thesis. The term antiquarian is used to identify an amateur or pre-professional practicing what would eventually become the disciplines of history, archaeology, anthropology, or other natural sciences. Those referred to as antiquarians can be seen as what Bryan Taylor calls the “serious amateur,” usually gentlemen with the financial means to engage in scholarly activities and the education to do so seriously and studiously. For further discussion see Schnapp in: Tim Murray and Christopher Evans, *Histories of Archaeology: A Reader in the History of Archaeology*. (Oxford ; New York : Oxford University Press, 2008., 2008). Or Taylor in: Brian Taylor, “Amateurs, Professionals and the Knowledge of Archaeology,” *The British Journal of Sociology*, 1995, edsjr. Also, Schnapp in: A. Schnapp, “Towards a Universal History of Antiquarians,” *Complutum* 24, no. 2 (01 2013): 13–20.

It is not an easy task to study the life and work of a single individual as a historical topic. This scale lends itself to the mode of biography, rather than true history, as individuals are often lost in the scope of history, and the traditional question of the significance of the subject within the larger historical narrative can be difficult to answer.⁵ The public historian, as curate of a small local museum, may get away with presenting their treasured native son as a key figure in their history to their target audience, who are presumably familiar with the importance of such a person. So, too, might the life of an academic be presented at a conference celebrating his work without providing the underlying substructure of significance and historicity to the audience. Though the author has created both such public presentations in the course of the research for this work, the requirements of the thesis itself demand more. William Gregory Wood-Martin, native son of County Sligo in Ireland, celebrated antiquarian, must also fit into the broader narrative of the development of archaeology, the formation and professionalization of the sciences, and a network of scholars that stretched across Europe during his lifetime. How does Wood-Martin fit into this narrative? To answer this question, the author first examined the history of the field of archaeology, the development of the profession, and the interaction between archaeology and nationalism at the turn of the 20th century.

⁵ Murray and Evans, *Histories of Archaeology: A Reader in the History of Archaeology*.

HISTORICIZING ARCHAEOLOGY

The history of archaeology is not as straightforward as it might seem, as professional and academic historians rarely embark on research into the history of archaeology; this is left to either popular historians or archaeologists themselves. Popular histories of archaeology read much like other popular histories, with their concentration on “key figures” in the field, “extraordinary discoveries,” and “unusual happenings.” These “histories” may help to sensationalize archaeology and draw interest to the subject from a popular audience, but they rarely provide true historical insight into the topic. Archaeologists, on the other hand, dive deep into the history of their field, but have written it primarily from an internal perspective, comparing and contrasting theoretical divergences, academic arguments, and questions of perceived “progress” within the discipline. Some archaeologists exploring their own history, particularly in North America, concentrate on marginalized groups within the discipline, highlighting these “lost” narratives and suggesting ways to include these voices in the future. Others try to follow the thread of theory or methods over time to understand or shore up their current models and practices. Regardless of the intention, these traditional narratives were written by archaeologists for archaeologists, and often lack historicity or the external perspective needed in order for the research to be considered to be true history.¹

This thesis might be seen as continuing Triggers work, as it combines the knowledge base of the archaeologist with the tools of the historian to conduct this

¹ For further reading on these issues see: Murray and Evans.

research. The author herself might be seen as a bridge between the archaeologist and the historian, trained in both fields and able to use the tools one to understand and interpret the work of the other. Though this thesis is highlighting the life and work of an individual, the author examines him historically, emphasizing his role over time in changing and developing this field using historical methods.

Since the 1970s archaeology has taken an introspective turn, and there have been notable exceptions to these generalities where either professional historians have waded into the intellectual history of archaeology, or where archaeologists have panned back from their internal disciplinary history to examine either the historiography of their field or the development of the field through the historical lens. One such exception is the work of the archaeologist Bruce Trigger, who first challenged the historicity of the history of archaeology as written by archaeologists in his 1998 book *A History of Archaeological Thought*.² Trigger continues to challenge the internal perspective so prevalent among archaeologists engaging with their history, pushing them to take a more historical perspective on the discipline and integrate historical methodologies into their work.³ This groundbreaking book sparked the creation of *The Bulletin of the History of Archaeology* in 1991, and this open-sourced, multidisciplinary, international online academic journal is dedicated to the history of archaeology.⁴ As a long-time editor of the

² Bruce G. Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

³ Bruce G. Trigger, "The Coming of Age of the History of Archaeology," *Journal of Archaeological Research*, 1994, edsjsr.

⁴ University College London Institute of Archaeology, "About," Online Journal, *The Bulletin of the History of Archaeology*, n.d., <http://www.archaeologybulletin.org/>.

Bulletin, Tim Murray serves as yet another example of an archaeologist who tackles the question of the history of archaeology through the historians' lens. In *Histories of Archaeology*, he and his fellow editor Christopher Evans take on the traditional narrative in the history of archaeology and continue the work of Trigger in goading their fellow archaeologists to consider the history of the discipline from a historical perspective.⁵ Others, both historians and archaeologists, have followed suit, transforming the history of archaeology from a discipline-specific pursuit into a properly historical one.⁶

This thesis does not attempt to be an intellectual history of the archaeological profession, but rather a look at the role of an individual, William Gregory Wood-Martin, within this history and an assessment of how his work fits into the development of the field of archaeology as a discipline at the turn of the twentieth century. This individuated approach enables the author to ask a series of interconnected questions about the subject. First, the question of William Gregory Wood-Martin himself; who he was and how he fits into the international network of scholars found across Europe in his lifetime. Next, about his antiquarian research; how does Wood-Martin and his work fit into and break away from that of his antiquarian peers? What were his tangible contributions to the

⁵ Murray and Evans, *Histories of Archaeology: A Reader in the History of Archaeology*.

⁶ For further discussion of the development of the histories of archaeology by both archaeologists and historians see: P. Rowley-Conwy, *From Genesis to Prehistory: The Archaeological Three Age System and Its Contested Reception in Denmark, Britain, and Ireland.*, Oxford Studies in the History of Archaeology (Oxford; New York : Oxford University Press, 2007., 2007); Philip L. Kohl and Clare P. Fawcett, eds., *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Andrew L. Christenson and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, eds., *Tracing Archaeology's Past: The Historiography of Archaeology*, Publications in Archaeology (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989); Paul G. Bahn, ed., *The History of Archaeology: An Introduction* (London ; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014); Elizabeth M. Croke, *Politics, Archaeology, and the Creation of a National Museum in Ireland: An Expression of National Life* (Dublin ; Portland, OR: Irish Academic Press, 2000); Nathan Schlanger and Jarl Nordbladh, eds., *Archives, Ancestors, Practices: Archaeology in the Light of Its History* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008).

development of archaeology in Ireland at the turn of the 20th century? What are the lasting contributions of this work? If this work is still used and referenced today, a century after his death, why is he not listed as one of the “fathers of Irish archaeology”? Can we consider Wood-Martin’s work as “scientific,” and does this research fill a gap in the record between the elite antiquarians researching at the end of the nineteenth century and the working-class, academically trained archaeologists that followed in the twentieth century? Finally, this thesis attempts to present an historical interpretation of this work, and its relevance to the broader narrative of history; what can Wood-Martin’s work tell us about the work of other antiquarians, and in what way does this work push us to reconsider antiquarian research and its value for researchers today? Wood-Martin, like all historical individuals, did not exist in a vacuum and cannot be understood without first being situated in the context of the time and space in which he lived. As the nineteenth century came to a close Ireland as a country was in turmoil, and the work of antiquarian archaeologists like Wood-Martin was at the heart of it all.

WHY ARCHAEOLOGY MATTERS IN IRELAND: ARCHAEOLOGY,
NATIONALISM, AND THE GAELIC REVIVAL AT THE TURN OF THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY

“Against the political background of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Irish archaeology was consistently used to provide material evidence of an ideal past that, through political change, could be resurrected. References to antiquity, archaeological sites, monuments and artefacts, as well as to museum collections, were used to reinforce and legitimize the need for political change and to create a sense of an organic and emergent community bound to the past.”¹

Any examination of the history of archaeology in Ireland would be incomplete without an exploration of nationalism in Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century. Nationalist movements emerged across the European continent in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, shaping identity and developing cultural icons which served to unify populations into discrete groups within the borders of often newly-defined states.² Ireland saw the rise of its own nationalist movement centered on ideas of a pre-colonial past, a historic “golden age,” and a deep prehistory.³ The modern concept of Irish-ness was formed by Irish nationalists who created a narrative using a heady combination of mythology, folklore, and archaeological interpretation. Irish nationalists used the

¹ Crooke, *Politics, Archaeology, and the Creation of a National Museum in Ireland*. p. 66-67

² For further reading about nationalism across Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, read: Kohl and Fawcett, *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*.

³ Lydia Harris, “At the Edge of Archaeology: Exploring the Work of William Gregory Wood-Martin at the Turn of the 20th Century” (Walker Library, MTSU, Murfreesboro, March 2018). Note that where the text of the thesis and the text of the exhibit are similar or the same that the exhibit script was drawn from existing drafts of the authors thesis.

language and imagery of Irish myth, combined with the impressive megalithic structures which are abundantly scattered across the Irish landscape, to frame their ideas about a pre- or proto-historic Ireland, a place that was rich in culture and art, and thrived independently from their British neighbors. This use of the archaeological landscape to tell stories of the cultural development of the people of Ireland created deep connections between the Irish and their prehistoric past, causing the practice and interpretation of archaeology to emerge as central, defining characteristics of the Irish national identity. Even today, archaeology and archaeological sites form the backbone of tourism in Ireland, boosting the Irish economy and shaping the international image of Irish culture.⁴

An examination of the ties between Irish nationalism and archaeology at the turn of the 20th century is the work of an entire dissertation. In fact, it was the work of internationally recognized public historian Elizabeth Croke's dissertation and eventual book, *Politics, Archaeology, and the Creation of a National Museum of Ireland*.⁵ In this volume, Croke highlights the links between nationalism and archaeology at the turn of the 20th century, revealing the many ways that Irish nationalists used archaeological sites, research, and collections to support and promote their arguments. Croke also connects the political and ideological agendas of individual archaeologists to the work they

⁴ John Hutchinson, "Archaeology and the Irish Rediscovery of the Celtic Past.," *Nations & Nationalism* 7, no. 4 (October 2001): 505; Croke, *Politics, Archaeology, and the Creation of a National Museum in Ireland*; John Waddell, *Archaeology and Celtic Myth* (Chippenham, Wiltshire: Four Courts Press, 2014).

⁵ Croke, *Politics, Archaeology, and the Creation of a National Museum in Ireland*.

conduct in the field, through their scholarly societies, and even more directly in the political arena.⁶

Crooke uses the example of the work of the antiquarian archaeologist George Petrie, often called the “father of archaeology” in Ireland, to illustrate clear historical linkages between a nationalist narrative and archaeological research.⁷ Born in Dublin in 1790, Petrie was himself a nationalist who used his antiquarian research to fuel nationalistic fires, as John Hutchinson details in his article “Archaeology and the Irish rediscovery of the Celtic past.”⁸ Hutchinson argues that Petrie intended to create a scientific foundation which would support the idea of an “independent Irish Celtic culture,” and that he used his position as the founder of a number of influential societies and publications to disseminate this idea across the country.⁹

Petrie also used his position in the public eye to battle the ingrained narrative put forth by colonizing British rulers, encapsulated by a comment he received following one of his presentations before the Royal Irish Academy from an Englishman: “Surely, Sir, you do not mean to tell us that there exists the slightest evidence to prove that the Irish had any acquaintance with the arts of civilized life anterior to the arrival in Ireland of the

⁶ Crooke.

⁷ Myles Dillon, “George Petrie (1789-1866),” *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 1967, edsjsr; Peter Murray, “19th-Century Renaissance Man,” *Irish Arts Review* 21, no. 1 (2004): 58.

⁸ Hutchinson, “Archaeology and the Irish Rediscovery of the Celtic Past.”

⁹ Hutchinson.

English?”¹⁰ This prevalent opinion of Irish barbarity and savagery was exactly what Petrie and his nationalist compatriots were fighting against.

Petrie was joined in his efforts by a host of other social reformers who sought to return to the Irish some connection to their Gaelic heritage. One such reformer was Douglas Hyde, the first president of the Irish Free State. In 1893 Hyde partnered with Eoin MacNeill, Thomas O'Neill Russell, and a handful of others to form the Gaelic League. The first goal of the League was to “de-anglicize” the Irish and to return them to an idealized past created out of shreds of archaeological research, folkloric practices, and Irish myth. They believed that one of the first steps in this process was to revitalize the Irish language as a vernacular, or first language in the country. In this capacity, the work of the Gaelic League had a lasting impact on the continued existence of Irish as a living language. Some of the enduring effects of the Gaelic League on the Irish language have been the declaration of Irish as the official state language of Ireland and the standardization of the grammar and spelling of written Irish through the Official Standard, a set of guidelines created and published by the Irish government in 1958. Today, official government signs in Ireland list both Irish and English place names, Irish children learn the Irish language as part of their early education, and there are still vernacular Irish speakers for whom English is a second or secondary language.¹¹

¹⁰ Quoted from Crooke, *Politics, Archaeology, and the Creation of a National Museum in Ireland*, p. 86., with reference to *Freeman's Journal*, 11 December 1850, p. 1.

¹¹ John Cannon and Robert Crowcroft, *A Dictionary of British History*, 2015; “Údarás Na Gaeltacht,” Government, Údarás na Gaeltacht, 2018, <http://www.udaras.ie/en/an-ghaeilge-an-ghaeltacht/an-ghaeltacht/>; The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Douglas Hyde,” Encyclopaedia Britannica, June 27, 2013, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Douglas-Hyde>.

The founders of the Gaelic League originally imagined and intended for the League to be non-partisan and apolitical in regard to British rule and the question of Irish independence. They focused instead on inspiring an interest in Irish language, art, and culture. The League provided classes for reading and writing in Irish, offered a year-round calendar of Irish-focused social events, and promoted traditional Irish arts and crafts. By the turn of the century, the League had tens of thousands of members across the country and around the globe. Their apolitical vision enabled the League to draw in members from both sides of the hot button issues of the time, and thus members were from all walks of life including Catholics, Protestants, Nationalists, and Loyalists. Despite Hyde's desire to keep the organization as separate from these issues as possible, the League and its work were hugely influential in the Irish nationalist movement, providing plenty of intellectual grist for the nationalist cause.¹²

Other Gaelic Revivalists include folklorist and playwright Lady Augusta Gregory, and the poet William Butler Yeats who, together with other Irish culture enthusiasts, founded the Irish Literary Theatre, later the Abbey Theatre. They envisioned the Theatre as a place for Irish people to come and celebrate their heritage, and themselves strove "...to bring upon the stage the deeper emotions of Ireland...". Yeats, Gregory, and their Revivalist compatriots composed and performed plays which were inspired by Irish folklore, myth, and modern life, and designed to enliven the Irish nationalist cause. Here, too, we see links between the Revival and Irish nationalism. The staff and company of

¹² Brian Ó Conchubhair, "The Gaelic League and the 1916 Rising," RTE Century Ireland, n.d., <http://www.rte.ie/centuryireland/index.php/articles/the-gaelic-league-and-the-1916-rising>.

the Abbey Theatre were heavily involved in the 1916 Rising, so much so that the actor Sean Connolly was the first of the Irish rebels to fall that day.¹³

Petrie, Hyde, Gregory, and Yeats are only a handful of examples of individuals whose work helped to create enduring links between nationalism, the Gaelic Revival, and archaeology in Ireland. By working to establish and restore a rich cultural history that excluded influences from Britain, and extended well into the European mainland, antiquarian archaeologists and their fellow Irish nationalists attempted to prove that independence should be afforded to the Irish people so that they could return to their place in the world, free from British rule, as producers of refined art and architecture. One of the ways that the Irish engaged in this discussion and disseminated these ideas was through establishing and developing scholarly societies and attending popular lectures which focused on their own history and heritage.

¹³ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Augusta, Lady Gregory," Encyclopaedia Britannica, May 17, 2013, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Augusta-Lady-Gregory>; The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "William Butler Yeats," Encyclopaedia Britannica, August 17, 2017, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/William-Butler-Yeats>; Abbey Theatre, "History," Abbey Theatre, 2017, <https://www.abbeytheatre.ie/about/history/>.

SCHOLARLY SOCIETIES AND THE ORDNANCE SURVEY

Across Europe in the nineteenth century members of the growing middle class looked for ways to improve themselves, bridging the gap between their station and that of the gentry. One popular pastime was to attend lectures, both formal and informal, on diverse topics, including history, folklore, the sciences, and archaeology. These lectures served as opportunities for both entertainment and edification and were particularly popular amongst the people of Ireland. Some such lectures were given by traveling speakers from Europe and the Americas, while others were provided by local, regional, or national scholarly societies. These societies provided the opportunity for gentlemen of means to come together and discuss all manner of academic issues, fund scholarly pursuits, and present independent research to both their peers and the public. Many had journals or other similar publications, and the opportunity to have a paper published was a benefit afforded only to society members.¹

One of the earliest bastions of antiquarian archaeological inquiry in Ireland was one such society, The Royal Irish Academy. Founded in 1785 in Dublin, this erudite society had as its explicit goal the promotion of science, literature, and antiquities, as well as the encouragement of debate amongst a wide variety of Irish scholars from a diverse set of backgrounds.² The Academy rapidly became one of the leading centers for the

¹ Enda Leaney, "Missionaries of Science: Provincial Lectures in Nineteenth-Century Ireland," *Irish Historical Studies*, 2005; Enda Leaney, "'Evanescence Impressions': Public Lectures and the Popularization of Science in Ireland, 1770–1860," *Éire-Ireland*, no. 3 (2008): 157; John Waddell, *Foundation Myths: The Beginnings of Irish Archaeology* (Co. Wicklow, Ireland: Wordwell, Ltd., 2005).

² Peter Harbison, *The Archaeology of Ireland*, A Bodley Head Archaeology (London: Bodley Head, 1976).

study of Irish antiquities, gathering in to its membership some of the brightest minds and most interesting finds in Ireland. Another foundational organization, The Kilkenny Archaeological Society, was created in 1849. Originally intended to be a local organization with the aim to find and preserve the antiquities in Kilkenny, the Society outgrew its borders, and in 1868 it became The Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland. The Association received its Royal Charter in 1869 and moved to its current offices in Dublin in 1890, when the Association made its final name change and became what it is known as today; the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. Many scholars were members of both the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland and the Royal Irish Academy, and both organizations have drawn into their membership academics from around the world.

Other societies followed in their wake, forming local or regional groups such as; The Royal Dublin Society, The Royal Cork Institution, The Belfast Natural History Society, and The South Munster Antiquarian Society. There was even an independent journal, the *Dublin Penny Journal*, created and edited by Petrie and his colleagues, which was mass-produced and widely circulated. Though short lived, this journal provided the Irish masses with articles about their own poetry, history, folklore, and antiquities.³

Another boost to the visibility and vitality of the antiquarian interest in archaeological sites appeared in 1824, when the British Government established the

³ Hutchinson, "Archaeology and the Irish Rediscovery of the Celtic Past.;" Waddell, *Foundation Myths: The Beginnings of Irish Archaeology*; Rowley-Conwy, *From Genesis to Prehistory: The Archaeological Three Age System and Its Contested Reception in Denmark, Britain, and Ireland.*; Royal Society of Antiquaries Ireland, "History of the RSAI," Royal Society of Antiquaries Ireland, 2017, <http://rsai.ie/history/>.

Ordnance Survey of Ireland to map the island so that the tax system could be reformed based on the precise value of individual land holdings. During its existence from 1825 to 1846, The Ordnance Survey produced hundreds of meticulous maps of the entire country at a scale of six inches to the mile that described in detail the lay of the land, including thousands of above-ground archaeological sites.⁴ The cohort of artists and scholars who conducted this survey included George Petrie, John O'Donovan, William F. Wakeman, George du Noyer, and Eugene O'Curry. This group recognized immediately the archaeological value of the project. Many of Ireland's prehistoric sites have a commanding presence in the landscape, from small boulder circles to enormous, multi-layered ring-forts, all of which were intended to be measured, mapped, and recorded by the survey. These men envisioned that the survey would also include written works detailing the rich history and lore found in each county of the country, an almost ethnographic or cultural history of the area. Though the initial survey of some of the northern counties did include such research, the multi-volume set was richly illustrated and costly to produce. These realities, combined with concern over political unrest which might arise from telling these Irish-focused stories, caused the British government to deem this grand scheme to be too much to fund and too much potential trouble to produce, and no subsequent volumes were published.⁵

The Survey and its ethnographic side project have been touted as the definitive point when archaeology as a discipline emerged in Ireland, and with it the preeminence

⁴ Waddell, *Foundation Myths: The Beginnings of Irish Archaeology*.

⁵ Waddell; C oil n Parsons, "The Turd in the Rath: Antiquarians, the Ordnance Survey, and Beckett's Irish Landscapes," *Journal of Beckett Studies* 22, no. 1 (April 2013): 83–107.

of George Petrie as the father of that discipline. Petrie made a name for himself through his publications in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, and his activities as a member of the Royal Irish Academy. His 1845 paper on Irish round towers is peerless among his contemporaries, correctly identifying these buildings as Christian bell-towers, rather than Pagan structures. He also worked to dispel long-held beliefs that various burial mounds were “druid altars,” or places of human sacrifice, turning instead to Irish myth and folklore for the origins, layouts, and use of archaeological sites. Petrie was an avid collector of antiquities, and at the time of his death in 1866 his collections were extensive. Unfortunately, they were also in complete disarray, and it fell to his protégé William F. Wakeman to sort, label, and catalogue the collection out after it was purchased for the museum of the Academy.⁶

Following the Ordnance Survey Wakeman himself worked independently for a time as an artist and draftsman in Dublin, eventually finding this to be an unsustainable mode of employment and instead moving to London to study art. He spent four years as a student in London and returned to Ireland when he was offered the position of Art-master at St. Columba's College in Dublin. This position allowed him to pursue his antiquarian interests in his free time, and in 1848 he wrote and illustrated *A Handbook of Irish Antiquities*. This position only lasted a few years. When he resigned from St. Columba's he took a position at Portora Royal School in Enniskillen in County Fermanagh. He taught art at Portora for nineteen years; during this time, he published a series of travel

⁶ Waddell, *Foundation Myths: The Beginnings of Irish Archaeology*; Dillon, “George Petrie (1789-1866)” p. 103-113.

journals which also served as guidebooks to Irish archaeological sites, as well as nearly 50 journal articles and essays about Irish antiquities. It appears that it was while he was at Portora that Wakeman began corresponding with and working for Wood-Martin, as their exchange of letters had begun by the time he left the school and moved to Blackrock in Dublin in 1884. Wood-Martin employed Wakeman as an artist, a finder of objects, and a manager of his images for publication. Both men were working on publications about crannógs, Wakeman about the Lisnacrogher site specifically, and Wood-Martin about the Moytirra site and Irish crannógs in general. The two men had a close friendship and maintained a steady and energetic correspondence until Wakeman's death in 1900.⁷

Wakeman and Wood-Martin were joined in their antiquarian work by the Reverend James Graves, founder of the Royal Society of Antiquaries Ireland. Graves was president of the Society, and worked to record, preserve, and protect antiquities in Kilkenny. One of his lasting accomplishments as an antiquarian was an article he wrote in 1857 which detailed the architecture and history of St. Canice's Cathedral, which continues to be of archaeological interest today. Graves was also embroiled in a hot debate over whether a particular inscription in ogham script was of Pagan or Christian origin, which was part of a larger debate about the dates of use for ogham script and their associated sites. Graves worked closely with Wood-Martin for the Society's journal and edited both Wakeman's Lisnacrogher paper and Wood-Martins Moytirra paper. Graves

⁷ William Wakeman, "Statement by W.F. Wakeman, Hon. Fellow," *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland* 8, no. 77 (1889): 486–90; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, October 6, 1883, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; John Waddell, *Foundation Myths: The Beginnings of Irish Archaeology* (Bray, Co. Wicklow: Wordwell, 2005) p. 103–145.

was a friend to both men and appears to have excavated Carrowmore with Wood-Martin. When Graves died in 1886 Wood-Martin took over for him as editor of the Society's journal and Honorary Provincial Secretary for Connaught.⁸

Wood-Martin was a member of a few academic societies, including the Royal Irish Academy and the Royal Society of Antiquaries.⁹ Wood-Martin became the Local Secretary for Sligo for the Royal Society of Antiquaries in 1883, and in October of 1884 he hosted a meeting of the Society in Sligo, where Wakeman and Wood-Martin together read a paper about their work on the Moytirra site in County Sligo. The Society had never held a meeting in County Sligo, and this event created interest in the archaeological heritage of the County and drew to the Society many new members. Wood-Martin's surveys and excavations in the Carrowmore passage tomb complex, along with other prehistoric sites in Sligo, were also underway at this time, which may have served as the inspiration for the Society meeting to be held in Sligo at that time.¹⁰

⁸ Waddell, *Foundation Myths: The Beginnings of Irish Archaeology* p 116-122; Martin A. Timoney, Richard James Wood-Martin, and Richard Gregory Wood-Martin, "William Gregory Wood-Martin, Sligo Antiquarian, Some Notes and Images," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 2006, edsjsr; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, January 13, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, November 9, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, December 3, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, December 5, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, December 20, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; James Graves to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, August 3, 1885, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland.

⁹ Aideen Ireland, "Colonel William Gregory Wood-Martin Antiquary, 1847-1917," *The Journal of Irish Archaeology* 10 (2001): 1-11; Timoney, Wood-Martin, and Wood-Martin, "William Gregory Wood-Martin, Sligo Antiquarian, Some Notes and Images."

¹⁰ Timoney, Wood-Martin, and Wood-Martin, "William Gregory Wood-Martin, Sligo Antiquarian, Some Notes and Images"; Ireland, "Colonel William Gregory Wood-Martin Antiquary, 1847-1917," 2001.

Wood-Martins membership in the Society was a troubled one. His Editorship only lasted for three years, and a quiet fog of scandal hangs over his departure. There were ongoing issues between Wood-Martin and the Council of the Society about the size and contents of the journal, as well as his apparent misplacing of some valuable wood blocks which belonged to the Society.¹¹ He resigned as Editor in 1889 and ceased publishing in the journal. He left the organization in 1892 and began publishing in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* as a member of the Ulster Archaeological Society, which had just been founded.¹²

These society journals functioned much as academic journals do today, highlighting exciting new work in the field, introducing new members, and providing a vehicle for debates on contentious topics. The field of antiquarian archaeology was young and growing and as the discipline came to define itself there arose heated debates about a variety of subjects, particularly those of religious belief, evolution, and the relative dating of artifacts and sites.

¹¹ James Graves to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, February 15, 1885, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; James Graves to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, February 16, 1885, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; James Graves to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, March 3, 1885, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; James Graves to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, February 23, 1889, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; James Graves to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, July 5, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; James Graves to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, November 13, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; Timoney, Wood-Martin, and Wood-Martin, "William Gregory Wood-Martin, Sligo Antiquarian, Some Notes and Images"; Aideen M. Ireland, "Colonel William Gregory Wood-Martin Antiquary, 1847-1917," *The Journal of Irish Archaeology*, 2001, edsjsr.

¹² Timoney, Wood-Martin, and Wood-Martin, "William Gregory Wood-Martin, Sligo Antiquarian, Some Notes and Images"; Ireland, "Colonel William Gregory Wood-Martin Antiquary, 1847-1917," 2001.

SCIENCE AND ANTIQUARIAN THOUGHT IN NINETEENTH CENTURY IRELAND

The nineteenth century was a bustling time of transition and discovery. The separation between religion and science which had begun over a century before was growing, and the many subdisciplines of scientific inquiry were solidifying. The sciences had developed from their pre-modern foundations in the questions of the ancient Greeks about the nature of themselves and the universe around them and were now being divided into discrete and definable academic and professional fields of research. The natural sciences had begun to split into disciplines such as Geology, Biology, and Chemistry, and the social sciences divided into disciplines such as History, Anthropology, and Archaeology. In the first decades of the century foundational ideas about the nature of the world, the chronology of its creation, and the processes by which it was formed had emerged.

One of the major controversies across the British Isles amongst those who studied the past throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the question of how to date archaeological sites and their associated artifacts. There was at the time a strong belief in a chronology of man which calculated the age of the earth based on the contents of the Christian bible and set the purported “date of creation” between 5509 and 4004 BC. This system of dating allowed others to “set” the dates of major historical events along a timeline from the present backwards to the supposed “dawn of time.” There was a secondary belief in Ireland in the historical veracity of the *Annals of the Four Masters*, which was a chronicle of the history of Ireland through a series of invasions, beginning

with the descendants of Noah, who were defeated by the Femorians, who were supplanted by the Firblog, who were ousted by the Tuatha De Danaan, who were then overcome by the Milesians. This chronology logically tied in with existing creationist ideas, offering an apparently sound timeline of Irish history. Indeed, George Petrie and his peers all used these chronological systems in conjunction with relative dating for their sites.¹

The most common method of relative dating for any objects within a site was to use the concept of stratigraphy. Borrowed from the discipline of Geology, simply put, stratigraphy is the idea that objects found deeper in the earth had to be deposited in the ground first and were thus older than objects found closer to the ground surface. Thus, when a site was excavated one could expect to find the newest artifacts first, older objects deeper, and the oldest things at the deepest levels. This method of dating enabled excavators to relatively date objects within sites but failed to provide relative dates between sites or definitive dates on a national or international timeline. This system of relative dating is what helped to eventually lead C. J. Thomsen to his development of the three-age system.²

C. J. Thomsen was the curate of the national museum of Scandinavia in the 1830s when he developed the concept of a three-age system. This system offers a method of dividing artifacts based on the material they were made of in order to understand their

¹ Rowley-Conwy, *From Genesis to Prehistory: The Archaeological Three Age System and Its Contested Reception in Denmark, Britain, and Ireland.*; Waddell, *Foundation Myths.*

² Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 49–83.

development and the chronology of the site in which they were found. Thomsen proposed that the oldest and crudest tools would be those made of stone, followed by those constructed using early metallurgical methods in the form of bronze, and finally those made using more complex metallurgical processes of iron. Each of these materials were then considered the markers of each of these ages. This is how the concept of the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age came to be. In 1865, Sir John Lubbock refined this system by further dividing the Stone Age into early, middle, and late periods, calling them the Paleolithic, or old stone age, Mesolithic, or middle stone age, and Neolithic, or new stone age. Though these divisions are recognized and used throughout the world today, the theory was hotly debated in the British Isles at the time, and most Irish antiquarians refuted and rejected its use in their work.³

The three-age system is a foundational theory to modern archaeologists, it is the framework which makes it possible to relatively date not only within a single archaeological site, but across all archaeological sites. While a spread of lithic tools within a site might have suggested to an antiquarian the idea that the people who had inhabited that site had “devolved” from an earlier, more refined stage of tool making, the archaeologist working within the three-age system may solidly say that the site dates to the Stone Age, and was thus occupied much earlier than the site beside it with signs of copper smelting. The use of the three-age system in archaeology also signals the acceptance of a deep human past, a difficult idea for those individuals who believe in a

³ Rowley-Conwy, *From Genesis to Prehistory: The Archaeological Three Age System and Its Contested Reception in Denmark, Britain, and Ireland.*; Waddell, *Foundation Myths*; Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 49–83.

literal interpretation of the bible and a “creation date” only 6,000 years in the past. This may be seen as a final transition or significant waypoint along the journey from a religious-based or “biblical” understanding of the origins and development of our human ancestors to a more scientific one.

It was the turn of the twentieth century when Irish antiquarians and early archaeologists began to accept the veracity of this pivotal system. Though Wakeman, Graves, and a few others make mention of relative dates of objects based on their material types, it is not until Wood-Martins’ concurrent publications *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland* and “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland” do we first see the three-age system as an official chronological foundation for archeological research in Ireland.⁴

⁴ William Wakeman, “Trouvaille from the Crannog at Lisnacrogghera, near Broughshane, County Atrim,” *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*, 4th, no. 6 (1884): 375–406; W. G. Wood-Martin, *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland: Or, Ancient Lacustrine Habitations of Erin, Commonly Called Crannogs*. (Dublin, Ireland: Hodges, Figgis & Co., 1886); W. G. Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland,” *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*, 4th, 7, no. 67 (July 1886): 470–87; Rowley-Conwy, *From Genesis to Prehistory: The Archaeological Three Age System and Its Contested Reception in Denmark, Britain, and Ireland.*, 228–34.

WOOD-MARTIN AND HIS RESEARCH

In 1877 Wood-Martin became High Sheriff of County Sligo and returned to his native county. He took up residence in Cleveragh House, his mothers' family home in east Sligo town, where he cared for his ailing father. Supported by the revenues from his land holdings, his income as an Aide-de-Camp to three successive British monarchs, and as a Lieutenant Colonel in the 8th Brigade, North Irish Division of the royal army, he was free to begin his antiquarian work. Over the course of his research Wood-Martin published seven books, including the three-volume set of *History of Sligo, County and Town*, and seven articles published in *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland* and the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*. His publications ranged in topic from local history and archaeology to national questions about the traces of pre-Christian belief in modern folk practices and the origins and use of the man-made islands called crannógs. Of these writings, those that best highlight Wood-Martin's place in history as a bridge between antiquarian and archaeologist are; 'The Rude Stone Monuments of Sligo and the Island of Achill,' and *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland*. Written concurrently, and with the assistance of his friends William Wakeman and Rev. James Graves, a close reading of these two publications reveal Wood-Martins research and excavation methods, his theoretical perspectives, and his feelings about the research methods and theories of his predecessors and peers.

Wood-Martins series of four articles entitled ‘The Rude Stone Monuments of Sligo and the Island of Achill’ were published in the *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland* between July 1886 and October 1887. There are essentially two underlying arguments or reasons Wood-Martin wrote this collection of articles. The first was to highlight the haphazard work that was being conducted under the guise of archaeology at the time in Ireland. The second was to juxtapose Wood-Martins own work against that of his peers. Wood-Martin separates himself from his contemporaries by challenging the work of his predecessor who excavated the very same set of monuments just a decade before. Wood-Martin describes this work as “wanting” and “deficient,” causing “irreparable damage” to archaeology. Wood-Martins dissatisfaction with his predecessors work in Sligo served as a justification for performing a second survey, excavation, and analysis of a number of Sligo monuments. In doing so, he ultimately revealed the large quantity of materials that had been overlooked in previous excavations at these sites which would have been lost to looters or the ravages of time and left out of the archaeological record were it not for the careful work of Wood-Martin.

In the first installment of this series Wood-Martin provides the reader with a solid background overview of the prehistory of Ireland, from the carving of the land by glaciers to the arrival of humans, as well as a timeline of their tool development as it relates to the division of archaeological “ages” in Irish pre-history. Wood-Martin also offers a typology for, and specific definitions of, the “rude stone monuments” under discussion. He sets these monuments within a wide global context, considering the time

in which he is writing, and offers a preliminary migration theory for the monument builders' arrival to Ireland. Wood-Martin defines the physical boundaries of his research as the Cuil-Irra peninsula, which is found in County Sligo in the west of Ireland. Wood-Martin also takes the time to dismiss the then-popular notion that these "rude stone monuments" were "druid altars" or "temples," preferring instead to outright define them as "sepulchers," or burial chambers, and refers to them as such throughout.

The second, third, and fourth installments primarily consist of excavation and survey reports for the work that Wood-Martin conducted in and around the Carrowmore Megalithic Complex in County Sligo. These portions read much like modern archaeological reports, as Wood-Martin includes a detailed catalog of both human and faunal remains for each of the monuments, accompanied by scale drawings of the more complete monuments, either in plan or profile view, and scale drawings of specific noteworthy artifacts. Wood-Martin is careful to give credit to the individual specialists he collaborated with for the examination of human remains, faunal remains, and artifacts. When offering commentary on his assemblages, Wood-Martin is careful to provide cited support for his conclusions. In these commentaries, he demonstrates the depth and breadth of his knowledge as he compares the various artifacts he has collected with similar objects found across the country and around the world. Throughout this series of articles, Wood-Martin liberally sprinkles remarks about how the standards of excavation at the time were low, and the approach unscientific, often paired with pointed comments regarding the lackluster excavations performed by others.

His second book, *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland*, is a comprehensive exploration of crannógs, the hut-topped timber or stone-framed islands found in rivers and lakes across the country. Modeled after *The Lake Dwellings of Switzerland and Other Parts of Europe* written in 1866 by the Swiss archaeologist Ferdinand Keller, and *Ancient Scottish Lake Dwellings, or Crannogs* written in 1882 by the Scottish archaeologist Robert Munro, Wood-Martin sought to “lay before his readers a distinct and comprehensive view of the Ancient Lake Dwellings in Ireland.” In *Lake Dwellings* Wood-Martin combines the existing work of other antiquarian researchers such as William Wilde, Wakeman, and Graves, with his own research, creating a single book which becomes more than the sum of its preexisting parts. As the first nation-wide examination of all the known crannóg sites in Ireland, this work was foundational to the ongoing academic study of crannógs in Ireland and continues to be read, referenced, and cited by researchers today.¹

Wood-Martin separates this 260+ page book into two parts, the first consisting of the “Origin, construction, and civilization of the ancient lacustrine habitations of Ireland, as illustrated by their remains and the antiquities found in or around them,” and the

¹ “Google Scholar,” Search Engine, Google Scholar, n.d., https://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=william+gregory+wood-martin&hl=en&as_sdt=0,43; Wood-Martin, *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland: Or, Ancient Lacustrine Habitations of Erin, Commonly Called Crannogs.*, vi.

second containing a “Description and geographical distribution of all known lacustrine sites in Ireland, with an account of the antiquities found in or around them”.²

There are historical records that reference the existence and used of these crannógs, and the prevailing theory among Wood-Martin’s peers was that crannógs had been used by pre-Christian Irish peoples as places of retreat during times of war. In his research Wood-Martin found an assortment of everyday objects which overturned this theory and solidly proved that these places were actually used as year-round settlement sites. Wood-Martin also used the three-age model extensively to establish that crannógs had been built much earlier than originally thought, and were in continual, or at least successive, use for much longer than had previously been considered possible. The oldest artifacts found at the deepest levels of excavation revealed that the first Irish crannógs were constructed as early as 4500 BC in the late Mesolithic or early Neolithic period for Ireland. This first phase of use coincides with the first farmers clearing land and the construction of the Carrowmore monuments which Wood-Martin had discussed in “Rude Stone Monuments.” The youngest artifacts and related historical records showed that crannógs were still in use as late as the twelfth century AD, well into the Medieval period and over 600 years after the arrival of St. Patrick and christianity to Ireland.

Many of these crannógs were preserved in situ beneath bogs, which created the perfect environment to preserve much of the timber which made up the pilings, frames,

² Wood-Martin, *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland: Or, Ancient Lacustrine Habitations of Erin, Commonly Called Crannogs.*, iiiiv, xi; The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Ferdinand Keller,” Encyclopaedia, Encyclopaedia Britannica, July 20, 1998, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ferdinand-Keller>; Adam Black and Charles Black, “MUNRO, Robert,” *Who’s Who 1907* (London, 1907).

and joists which made up both the crannógs themselves and some of the buildings which stood upon them. Wood-Martin describes the various construction methods employed by the crannóg builders, revealing a level of sophistication in the engineering that was needed to construct, maintain, and reconstruct these man-made islands. He found that the crannóg builders used piles of stones to raise the water level in the river or lake, that they based the foundations of the crannógs on the makeup of the lake or riverbed, and that there were many phases of construction, maintenance, and reconstruction on these unique structures. With the assistance of his friend and employee Wakeman, Wood-Martin was able to reconstruct what the buildings that stood on these crannógs may have looked like and hypothesized based on the archaeological evidence that some of these homes may have stood two stories tall. Cut marks on successive layers of timbers revealed that the upper levels of these islands were shaped using iron or bronze tools, while the deepest levels were made using stone tools, reinforcing the ongoing use or reuse of crannógs from the earliest phases of settlement in Ireland.

Each of Wood-Martins revelations in *Lake Dwellings* overturned many of the prevailing ideas about Irish crannógs. His was the first book of its kind in Ireland, and the ideas he presented became the foundations of modern crannóg research across the country and throughout the Western Façade. Additionally, his research was the first time the law of superposition and the three-age system were used in Ireland to provide not only relative dates for each individual crannóg site, but also to provide relative dates between sites across the country and even into similar sites in England and Scotland. This placed Wood-Martin at the forefront of antiquarian research and at the cutting edge of archaeological thought.

WOOD-MARTIN ON THE EDGE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL THOUGHT

Unlike the ambiguous writing of his predecessors, Wood-Martin is clear in his acceptance and support of the three-age system. He goes so far as to dedicate an entire section of *Lake Dwellings* to a precise and well-written explanation of the system, describing tool development over time and their resultant deposition in archaeological sites. His descriptions, complete with references to ethnographic examples of the day and the cooccurrence of tool types as skills develop over time. Wood-Martin provides here the first comprehensive description of this approach to chronology in Ireland.¹

Many antiquarians used Irish myths and local folklore as a framework for their explorations and explanations of the archaeological record. These myths were compiled and recorded long after the construction of these monuments in the monastic period in Ireland, around 1200 AD. The immense interval of time between the creation of these monuments at the earliest in the Neolithic around 4,000 BC, and at the latest in the Iron Age around 420 BC, and when these myths were recorded limits the viability of using them to interpret and understand the monuments themselves. Though many a 20th century archaeologist has used the corpus of Irish myth as a “window into the Iron Age,” there are difficulties with stretching the use of these stories even this far.²

Though Wood-Martin does occasionally refer to these tales when discussing the monuments throughout this series, he uses such stories to create a narrative or human

¹ Wood-Martin, *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland: Or, Ancient Lacustrine Habitations of Erin, Commonly Called Crannogs.*; Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland.”

² Waddell, *Archaeology and Celtic Myth.*

element within each article, rather than drawing on these unreliable sources to frame his questions or drive his conclusions. Wood-Martin even goes so far as to discount some of these myths within his analysis, citing historical sources and more modern origins for some such myths.

Wood-Martins writing both incorporated and rebutted the work of his peers and his predecessors.³ Though in *Lake Dwellings* Wood-Martin states simply that “the learned” have accepted the three-age system, his arguments throughout his writings are well supported, both with the evidence from his excavations and from his references.⁴ In fact, his references and appendices are extensive, with few original copies of the latter available to the modern researcher, as these appendices had been so often stolen out of his books as valuable source materials.⁵ Wood-Martin cites over 70 individuals in his “Rude Stone Monuments,” and over 150 in *Lake Dwellings*. His references include his peers, such as the Reverend James Graves and William Wakeman, his predecessors such as George Du Noyer, Eugene O’Curry, and George Petrie, and even eyewitness accounts of individuals lost to history such as Mr. Morant and M. Hackett. He cites historical writers such as Tacitus, Herodotus, and Pliny, and a wide variety of his contemporaries in scientific research including the French Historian Henri Jubainville, the German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann, Danish archaeologist J. J. A. Worsaae, Scottish antiquarian John Stuart, English archaeologists John Evans and Cannon Greenwell, and,

³ William Gregory Wood-Martin, *Sligo And The Enniskilleners: From 1688-1691* (Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2010).

⁴ Wood-Martin, *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland: Or, Ancient Lacustrine Habitations of Erin, Commonly Called Crannogs*.

⁵ Personal communication with the head librarian, Sligo Co. Library

of course Thomsen and John Lubbock. Wood-Martin himself claimed in the bibliography of *Pagan Ireland* that he had referenced over 1,000 papers and books from over 300 authors. Though his citation techniques were rudimentary, there is no doubting that Wood-Martin had a wealth of information at his disposal and used it generously to support his analyses.⁶

Hand in hand with the depth of his understanding of the current literature was his willingness to buck the traditions of his intellectual predecessors and take them to task for their backward ways. Despite the prevailing acceptance of the *Annals* as *the* history of Ireland, Wood-Martin flat-out rejected them as acceptable historical documents, relegating them to the status of folklore, only to be used if independently supported by hard evidence found elsewhere. In *Pagan Ireland* he asks:

*“The mythical stories by Geofferey Monmouth, and other scribes of that school, relative to the colonization of England, have long been relegated to the literary waste-paper basket; why should the extravagant legends related of Ireland be treated with more leniency?”*⁷

He goes on to say “...the spade is a great solver of problems, and destroyer of fantastical theories...”⁸ These quotes are emblematic of his approach to archaeology; his rejection of the fantastical in favor of the firm. That which may be observed, recorded, and tested served as the foundation of his work, with folklore appearing only if it could be supported by material fact.

⁶ Wood-Martin, *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland: Or, Ancient Lacustrine Habitations of Erin, Commonly Called Crannogs.*; Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland”; W. G. Wood-Martin, *Pagan Ireland: An Archaeological Sketch* (London, UK: Longmans, Green and Company, 1895).

⁷ Wood-Martin, *Pagan Ireland: An Archaeological Sketch*.

⁸ Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland.”

In the same vein, Wood-Martin opens the second installment of his “Rude Stone Monuments” with this quote from his friend and fellow researcher Rev. James Graves:

“Often, it is true, have the barrow, the cist, or the tumulus been rudely torn open by the hand of the spoiler, or the idly curious; but how seldom have they been intelligently examined? It reflects but little credit on the archaeologists of Ireland that no systematic attempt has ever yet been made to read this page of its 'prehistoric annals'! Why have we not a society established with such an object for its aim? . . . Why not have a club of 'delvers' . . . with its corps of engineers, draughtsmen, and scientific observers, whose business it should be to examine the primeval sepulchers of the country . . . with due care, circumspection, and caution, noting down every peculiarity, making accurate measured drawings, and depositing in a central museum the crania the arms, the implements, and ornaments sure to be discovered in abundance?”⁹

Wood-Martin goes on to say: “Five-and-thirty years have passed since this was penned, how little has been done!”¹⁰ This exclamation comes on the heels of his closing statements of the preceding installment of “Rude Stone Monuments” in which, while commenting on the lack of materials found during previous ‘explorations’ at Carrowmore:

“It seemed a pity that more information could not be drawn from such a rich field of research, and the idea naturally occurred, can nothing be done? May not something have been left behind or been overlooked by the original explorers?”¹¹

What a polite yet pointed chastisement of his predecessors for their “explorations” in Carrowmore from which it is clear Wood-Martin lacks good records of what was found, who found it, or where it went once it was removed from the site. Though Wood-Martin

⁹ W. G. Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland (Continued),” *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland* 8, no. 71/72 (October 1887): 118–59.

¹⁰ Wood-Martin.

¹¹ Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland.”

makes it clear elsewhere that he respects Petrie as a researcher, these pointed barbs highlight Wood-Martins general disgust at the practices of his fellow archaeologists in Ireland at the time he began his excavations.¹²

Wood-Martins own excavations appear to have followed the plan set forth by his friend Graves. He was assisted by his team of ‘delves,’ who appear to have been directed to dig according to his specific instructions. He makes it clear in “Rude Stone Monuments” that he had his workmen carefully screen all of the excavated soil, retrieving and recording the smallest artifacts. Wood-Martin appears to have even re-sifted backfill piles, in the hopes of finding something which might have been “overlooked”.¹³ Wood-Martin and his crew took notes about the origins of each artifact, created plan and profile drawings of the monuments, took precise measurements, and made clear descriptions. He ensured that, once excavated, all artifacts were sorted according to type and presented to the appropriate expert. He sent bones to a surgeon or other medical doctor to determine if they were human or animal, and then faunal remains were reviewed by a veterinarian. When needed, he called upon a geologist to examine stones to determine their makeup or origin.¹⁴

¹² Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland (Continued),” October 1887.

¹³ Wood-Martin.

¹⁴ Wood-Martin; Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland”; W. G. Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland (Continued),” *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*, Fourth, 8, no. 73/74 (April 1888): 254–99; W. G. Wood-Martin, “The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland. On Certain Rude Stone Monuments in the Island of Achill (Continued),” *The Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland*, 1888.

Once they completed the site excavation, the sorting and analyzing of the objects, and the drawings of both site and artifact, the write-up must be done. Wood-Martins “Rude Stone Monuments” reads much like a modern archaeological report, and *Lake Dwellings* like a dissertation. Both contain a running narrative about the site history and condition, a discussion of the relevant literature in the field, detailed descriptions of the process of excavation, a recounting of the artifacts uncovered, and an analysis of what it all means. All that is missing in his publications are the inevitable pile of tables and graphs which typically round out such a report today.

Wood-Martins Carrowmore collection is now stored in the archives of the National Museum of Archaeology. It is striking how well documented the objects were within this collection. Wood-Martin must have ensured that the boxes were labeled, often with his own distinctive purple pencil, suggesting that he performed the work himself, and whomever was labeling the boxes and contents usually included the tomb number and a description of the contents. Inside the boxes one typically finds a slip of paper with additional information identifying specific objects contained within. It is hard to say if this organization is the result of his military training, or a response to the chaos found in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, the state of which Wakeman bemoans in his

letters to Wood-Martin, with Wakeman often spending days attempting to find an artifact. Either way, Wood-Martin's finds are clearly identified.¹⁵

Modern techniques for sorting and identifying archaeological collections are highly formalized and rigorous, providing location information down to the smallest detail. Each item or item type is placed in its own bag with the bag number, site name or number, the location of the find, the level of stratigraphy at which it was found, the date of the find, and the initials of individual or group of individuals who found it written both on a small slip of paper inside the bag and on the bag itself. Bags are grouped together according to the feature or excavation unit they were removed from and placed in a box which is also labeled with the site name and number, the unit or feature information, and the year or date of the excavation. Accompanying this information within the collection is

¹⁵ "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), C35:22, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), BC641, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), BC641, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), BC641, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), BC641, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), BC641, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), BC641, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; "Wood-Martin Collection" (Carrowmore, 1887), BC641, National Museum Ireland, Museum of Archaeology; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, May 28, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, November 28, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, December 4, 1884, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, July 12, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland.

a register of bag numbers which is created and maintained in the field, the daily log and field notes for each excavation unit, and the final site report for the excavation.¹⁶

This detailed information about the three-dimensional location of where each object was found on the site enables both the initial team and future researchers to be able to envision the object within its context. Archaeological excavation is, by its nature, destructive. The excavation itself removes important information about the site and destroys the context in which the objects are found. If the excavator does not keep good notes about this contextual information, or worse does not take any notes at all, future research about that site or those objects is difficult if not impossible. An object out of context is just an object, and the researcher's ability to understand, connect, and interpret, any object without its contextual information is extremely limited. Antiquarian collections, while often very large and interesting, typically lacked any of this contextual information. Some objects might have labels such as "found in a crannog" or "found near a giant's grave" along with the name of the township or county it was found in, but it was not common practice to keep detailed information about excavations or "finds." While Wood-Martins notes and labeling are not nearly as specific as modern archaeologists, they were far ahead of their time. His careful notetaking has helped to make his collections of continuing use to modern researchers, as they can examine his collections with some idea about the context in which the objects were found.

¹⁶ E.B. Banning, *Archaeology Laboratory, Overview* (Elsevier Inc., 2010).

Wood-Martin was a publishing member of no less than three different academic societies; the Royal Irish Academy, The Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland, (later the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland), and The Ulster Archaeological Society, and served as an officer and editor for the journal of the RHAAI. He published seven articles between the journal of the RHAAI and that of the Ulster Archaeological Society, published seven books, and presented his work at the RIA and at other meetings of his peers. Wood-Martin received many positive reviews of his books and, according to google scholar, his work has been cited at least 300 times since their publication, with over one third of those citations from research that was published between 2000 and 2017.¹⁷

¹⁷ “Google Scholar.”

WOOD-MARTIN AS ARCHAEOLOGIST: HOW TO PROVE A SCIENTIST

One question that has appeared again and again throughout this research has been a seemingly simple one: “How do you prove a scientist?”. This is a fraught question, and one that leads down a series of rabbit tracks; this seemingly simple question is far more complex than it appears. including questions about the nature of science, the so-called “scientific method” is not just one method but rather a circular set of logics which may or may not include the inductive reasoning so important to conducting both historical and archaeological research, and how or why archaeology itself sits at the edge of hard science as the most humanistic of the sciences and the most scientific of the humanities.

Ultimately, all these avenues of research led to a single destination; If it looks like a scientist and it acts like a scientist, it must be a scientist. One does not need a PhD or a master’s degree or any degree at all, really to be recognized as a scientist. Albert Einstein never completed elementary school, and no one would argue that he may comfortably wear the title “scientist.” One does not need to adhere to some twenty-first century textbook idea about how to develop a hypothesis or test a theory to be considered a scientist; one simply needs to conduct scientific research, based on the principals of unbiased observation, contextual analysis, and reasonable testability. These criteria hold true across the sciences, both social and natural, and may be applied by historians across

the boundaries of time and culture to determine if an individual or their work is truly scientific.¹

The first hurdle, that of bias is often the most difficult. Every scientist, either social or natural, must take every measure to ensure that both data collection methods and the resultant analysis are as free from personal bias as possible. Though it is impossible for all bias to be removed from any scientific work, it is imperative that those who claim to be scientists attempt to both remove and recognize bias in their work. We do this through clearly stating the source of our data, and the limiting factors which influenced its collection and recording, and through the revelation of the methods or theories which helped to create our data and analyses. For the antiquarian set this is often the most difficult hurdle to overcome, as it seems that they so often set out to *prove* a conclusion, as seen in the examples above, whether it be the validity of their religiously-based chronology, the veracity of heroic tales, or the nationalist superiority of their people.²

Proper contextual analysis is the downfall of many a researcher, past and present. Context may be seen in the social sciences as a historiography or literature review, which provides a comprehensive review and analysis of the ways in which our work fits within the body of existing research. It may also appear as a historical, site, or medical background preface for either the social or natural sciences. Failing to set the scene or identify the research area are two excellent ways of removing the subject of research

¹ William F. McComas, "The Principal Elements of the Nature of Science: Dispelling the Myths.," *California Journal of Science Education* 5, no. 2 (2005): 37.

² McComas.

from its context. In the case of the archaeologist, removing material objects from their original context without first recording all that you can about their position, orientation, and stratigraphy is the surest way to destroy the context of the object. Maintaining the context of the information or objects under study and grounding the research in the context of a wide pool of existing sources is the only way to meet the challenge of contextual analysis. Many antiquarians were little more than collectors, pulling together “finds” from anywhere and everywhere, picking and choosing which objects were to be used with little regard for their original context, and removing objects from their original locations without taking the time to record their dispositions. This haphazard treatment of research materials prevents most antiquarians from achieving, as Wakeman says, “a truly serious and I may add scientific work.”³

The final criteria, that of testability, may be the trickiest of all to meet. Many of us in the “softer” sciences can’t aim for true “reproducibility,” but rely instead on the peer-review process for journal articles, in book reviews, and even at academic conferences where our peers have the opportunity to question and critique our work. I argue that the greatest validation to testability, the one with which no one can argue, is the test of time. If an individual researchers’ work continues to be valuable, used, and quoted by others thirty, forty, or fifty years after it is printed, there is no question that it has jumped the hurdle of testability. Few antiquarians have had their work stand the test of time as their

³ William Wakeman to William Gregory Wood-Martin, Letter, February 7, 1885, O Casaide Collection, National Library Ireland; McComas, “The Principal Elements of the Nature of Science: Dispelling the Myths.”

work has largely faded into obscurity, overturned by new developments in the field, further research, or shifts in theoretical perspectives.⁴

Wood-Martin has overcome each of these hurdles. He rejected the biases of his time, believing that the spade was the answer to all questions archaeological. He kept detailed and specific records of his excavations and grounded his work in the research of his peers, both friend and foe, both foreign and familiar. He published in peer-reviewed journals and received largely positive reviews for his books. His publications have been read across the globe and have continued to be read for over 100 years; they have withstood the test of time. Wood-Martin's work continues to be valued and relevant amongst researchers today, and his insights into the past have not been substantially blunted by the passage of time.

Though his analyses are steeped in the language and prejudices of his time, Wood-Martin emerges as a researcher at the leading edge of his field, diving deep into the literature, engaging in a lively discourse with both his contemporaries and his forbearers, openly debating their ideas and theories unapologetically, with the weight of evidence behind his arguments. Were he with us today, I believe he would be welcomed among us as a peer.

⁴ Edward O. Wilson, "Macroscopic: Scientists, Scholars, Knaves and Fools," *American Scientist* 86, no. 1 (1998): 6–7; McComas, "The Principal Elements of the Nature of Science: Dispelling the Myths."

INTERPRETING WOOD-MARTIN FOR THE PUBLIC

Two exhibits were created to interpret the life and work of William Gregory Wood-Martin in the course of this thesis. Both exhibits were created by the author in conjunction with a designer, Whitney Wilkerson, who was at the time a student at MTSU and working to complete a Bachelor's in Fine Arts degree. The first, entitled "Sketches of Sligo: The Antiquarian Perspectives of Wakeman and Wood-Martin," was created to be displayed at the Yeats Library at the Institute of Technology, Sligo in Sligo, Ireland for the 2017-2018 academic year. This exhibit was designed to coincide with the Crannogs, Cromlechs, and Cures conference held in November of 2018 to honor William Gregory Wood-Martin and commemorate the 100th anniversary of his death.

The author worked with Lisa Moore, one of the librarians at the Yeats Library, and Sam Moore, the author's internship mentor, the coordinator of the Crannogs, Crannogs, and Cures conference, and a lecturer at IT Sligo, to create the Sketches of Sligo exhibit. The five interpretive panels below were accompanied by an additional fifteen panels that were prints of watercolors created by William Wakeman, which required the inclusion of Wakeman in the text panels. The panels were printed and paid for by the Yeats Library, and the text panels were displayed in a large alcove just inside an entrance to the library adjacent to the lecture hall where the conference was held. The size of the panels, European paper size A2, was chosen as it was the most cost-effective size for the panels. Larger panels would have nearly doubled the cost, and the funding for this project was limited. This size of panel limited the scope and execution of the interpretation and constricted the balance of images and text to be used on the panels. The

intent of the exhibit was to interpret for both the students, faculty, and staff, and the conference participants the antiquarian work of both William Gregory Wood-Martin and William F. Wakeman. While the majority of the interpretation focused on Wood-Martin's work, the presence of so many of Wakeman's watercolors required an interpretation of his work as well. This intensified the need for text-heavy panels and required some careful editing and word choice to convey the needful information.

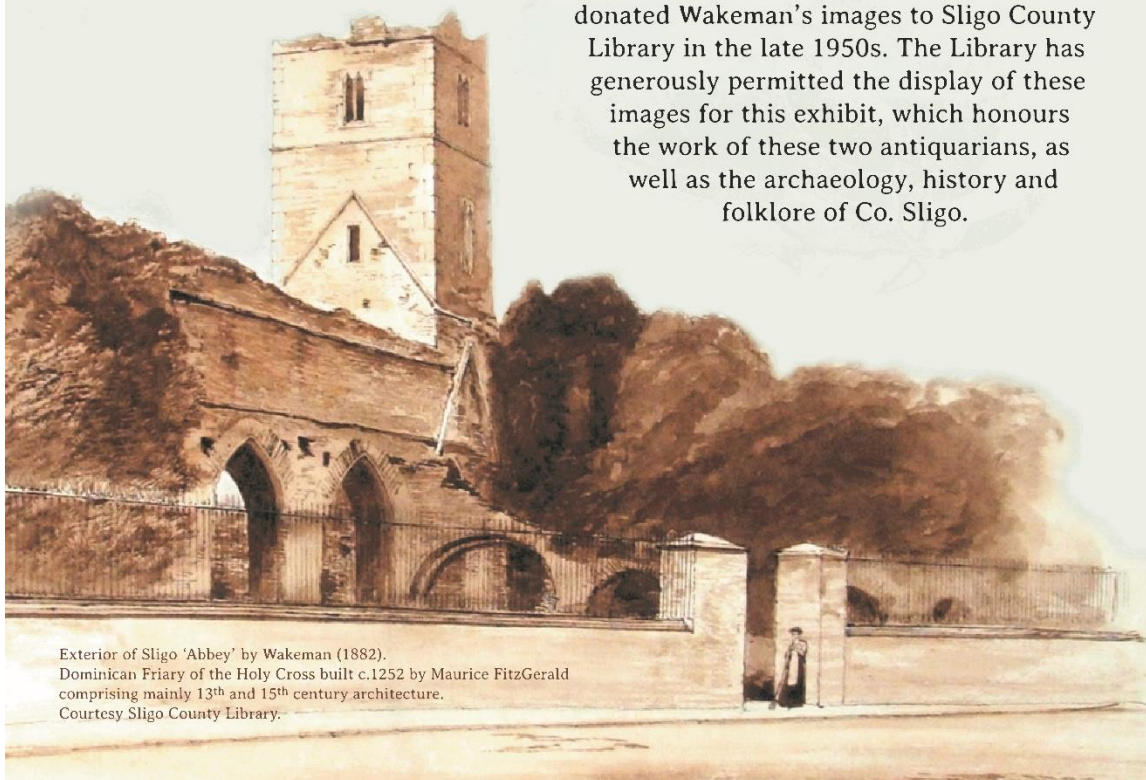
Sketches of Sligo

The Antiquarian Perspectives of Wakeman and Wood-Martin

In 1876, aware that antiquities in the country were disappearing through neglect, agricultural development, and quarrying, Edward Henry Cooper of Markree Castle, Co. Sligo, commissioned William F. Wakeman to draw them before they vanished. Wakeman created almost 200 drawings of archaeological sites in the region.

These drawings are not merely a unique and invaluable visual record of Sligo's rich built heritage but are also beautifully crafted examples of Wakeman's art at its finest and an intrinsic part of that heritage. Wakeman worked with Sligo antiquarian William Gregory Wood-Martin and used some of his drawings in Wood-Martin's publications, including *History of Sligo* and *The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland*.

Cooper's grandson, Edward Francis Cooper, donated Wakeman's images to Sligo County Library in the late 1950s. The Library has generously permitted the display of these images for this exhibit, which honours the work of these two antiquarians, as well as the archaeology, history and folklore of Co. Sligo.



Exterior of Sligo 'Abbey' by Wakeman (1882).
Dominican Friary of the Holy Cross built c.1252 by Maurice FitzGerald
comprising mainly 13th and 15th century architecture.
Courtesy Sligo County Library.

Figure 1- Sketches of Sligo



Image courtesy of the Wood-Martin family.

William Gregory Wood-Martin

William Gregory Wood-Martin was born in County Sligo in 1847 and was heir to the Woodville and Cleveragh estates.

He studied at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. He was Lt-Colonel in the Sligo Artillery and Sligo Rifles Militia, as well as Aide De Camp to three successive monarchs.

His antiquarian research made significant contributions to the areas of archaeology, history, and folk traditions.

His publications include: *The History of Sligo*, *The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland*, *Traces of the Elder Faiths of Ireland*, and *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland*.

He died 16 November 1917 and is buried in St Anne's churchyard, Strandhill, Co. Sligo.

William Frederick Wakeman

William Frederick Wakeman was born in Dublin in 1822, the son of a bookseller and publisher. At the age of 15, he became an artist and draughtsman for the Ordnance Survey.

Later, Wakeman taught art at St. Columba's College in County Meath and at Portora Royal School in Enniskillen.

Though best known for his illustrations, Wakeman was an antiquarian in his own right. He published articles, assisted in excavations, and worked in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy.

His academic publications include: *Three Days on the Shannon*, *A Guide to Lough Erne*, and *Account of the Island of Inishmurray*.

He died in Coleraine, Co. Derry 15 October 1900.



Image courtesy of the Navan Historical Society website.

Figure 2- Biography of WGWM and WFW

Cromlechs

In his publication *Rude Stone Monuments*, Wood-Martin offers up Wakeman's definition of a cromlech:

"...three or more stones... form a small enclosure. Over them a large stone is laid, the whole forming a kind of rude chamber."

This definition covers a wide variety of megalithic monuments, including those at the Carrowmore Passage Tomb Complex and Deerpark Court Tomb, both found in Co. Sligo and possibly dating from around 3750 BC.

Wood-Martin and Wakeman partnered on the excavation of some of these tombs, including Carrowmore No. 7 pictured above. Wood-Martin was systematic in his work, dividing these tombs into quadrants which were individually excavated. He had his workers carefully sift through the dirt, removing artefacts and bone as they went. A doctor then examined these bones, identifying if they were from humans or animals, males or females, adults or children

Though these practices are commonplace among archaeologists today, Wood-Martin's methods stood out amongst his antiquarian colleagues.

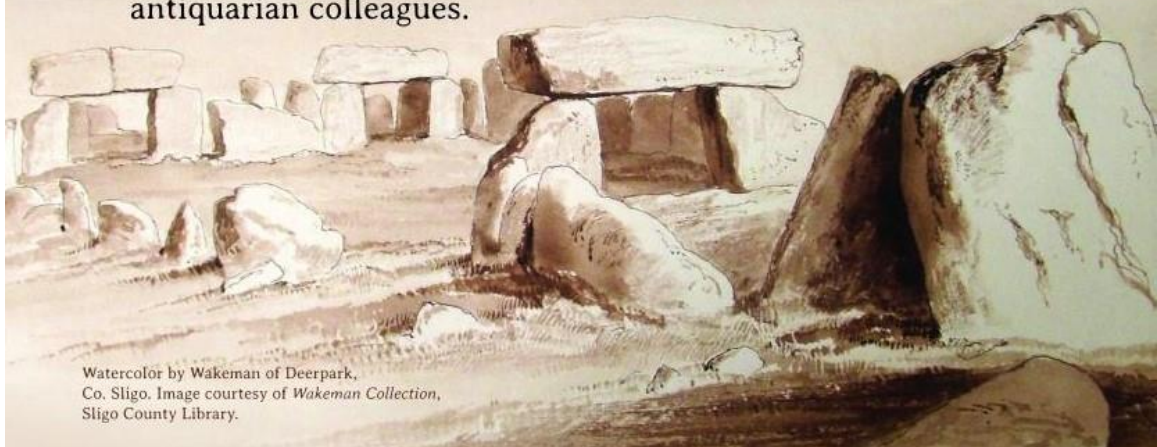
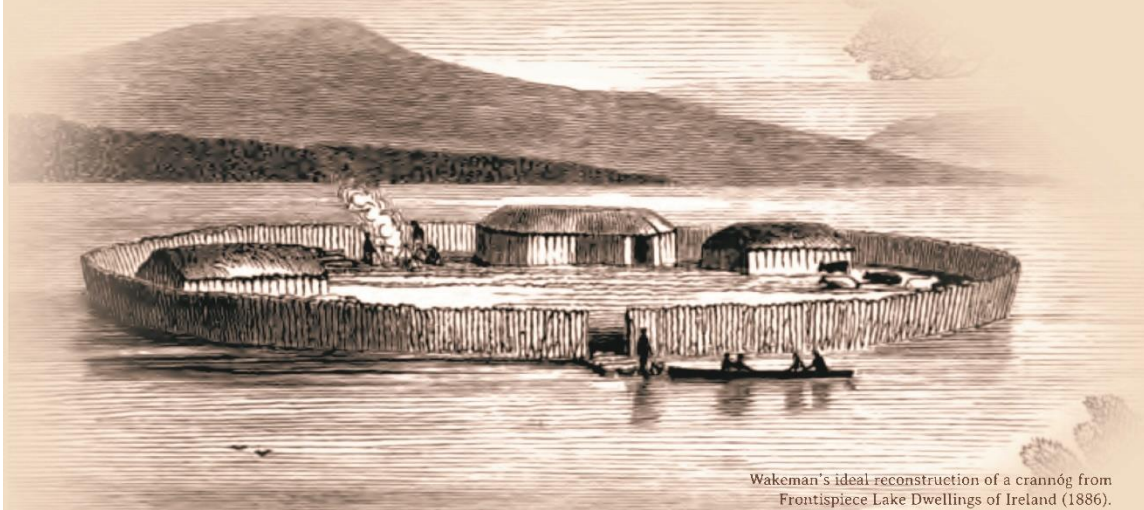


Figure 3-Cromlechs

Crannógs

In 1886, Wood-Martin published his third book, *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland*, which explored the origins and remains of the man-made islands like those shown here which are found in lakes and rivers across Ireland.

The earliest of these islands, popularly called crannógs, were constructed in the Mesolithic, most were constructed in the Early Medieval period, and records show that they were still in use into the 17th century AD.



Wakeman's ideal reconstruction of a crannóg from Frontispiece Lake Dwellings of Ireland (1886).

Wood-Martin began to question common ideas of racial progress to shed new light on these sites.

Wakeman searched for as-yet unpublished sites and objects to be included in the book. He also wrote his own well-received article, on Irish Crannógs, entitled: 'The crannogs of Drumdarragh, otherwise Trillick, and Lankill, Co. Fermanagh'.



Drawing of a curach by Wakeman, in 'The Land Dwellings of Ireland', plate V

Figure 4- Crannogs

Cures

In 1902 Wood-Martin published *Traces of the Elder Faiths of Ireland* in which he documents a range of folk traditions found in Ireland. The book contains much information on folklore relating to sacred wells, trees, and stones, along with various folk practises, many of which have associations with healing and cures.

Speckled Stone

This limestone slab is known as Clochbhreac or the 'Speckled Stone'. It acts as a boundary marker between three parishes at Tobernavean (The Well of Giants), west of Sligo town. Wood-Martin recorded that children suffering from measles, rickets, and other infant illnesses were passed through the aperture for a cure.



Clough Breac or the 'speckled stone' near Sligo by Wakeman (1882) Courtesy of Sligo County Library.

St Attracta's Well

St Attracta's Well (Tober Araght) near Monasteraden, Co. Sligo, contains a holy well, which cured various ailments including poor eyesight; a crucifixion plaque (c.1660s) showing Christ with symbols of the crucifixion; 13 'praying stones' or 'cursing stones' known locally as 'the serpent's eggs' which were used by women who wanted to have children, and a bullaun stone (a hollowed out boulder) which contained water that cured children of rickets.



Altar of St Attracta at Tober Araght: by Wakeman (1895). Courtesy of Sligo County Library.

Figure 5- Cures

The second exhibit, “At the Edge of Archaeology: Exploring the Work of William Gregory Wood-Martin at the Turn of the Twentieth Century,” was created to be displayed at the Walker Library at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, TN for two weeks in the spring 2018 semester. This exhibit was designed to coincide with the submission and defense of this thesis and to demonstrate the authors application of the principals of best practices in museum design and interpretation.

The author worked with her thesis chair, Dr. Brenden Martin, to create the At the Edge of Archaeology exhibit. The eight interpretive panels below were printed in the Research Center at MTSU, and the mounting and boards were paid for by the author. The author and artist worked together to mount the printed posters on the mounting boards using duramount. The panels were displayed in a small alcove beside the technology information desk at the library, beyond the atrium and elevator bank. The size of the panels, 32” x 40”, was determined by the size of the easels provided by the library for the exhibition. Larger panels would not have fit on the easels and mounting the panels on the walls was not an option. The intent of the exhibit was to interpret for both the students, faculty, and staff the antiquarian work of William Gregory Wood-Martin. While the majority of the interpretation focused on Wood-Martin’s work, William Wakeman and his work with Wood-Martin was also highlighted.

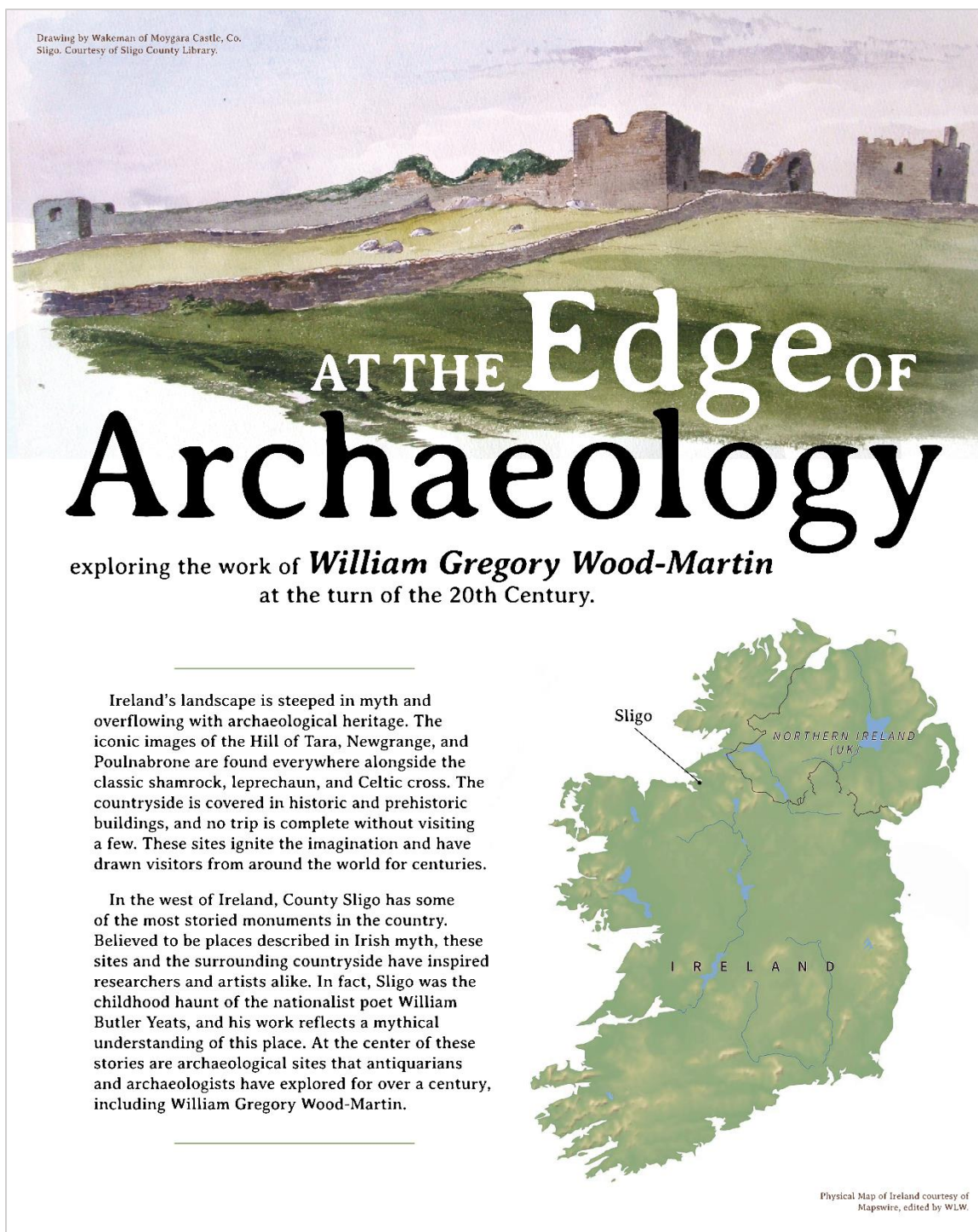


Figure 6-At the Edge of Archaeology

The Antiquarian William Gregory Wood-Martin



Image courtesy of the Wood-Martin family.

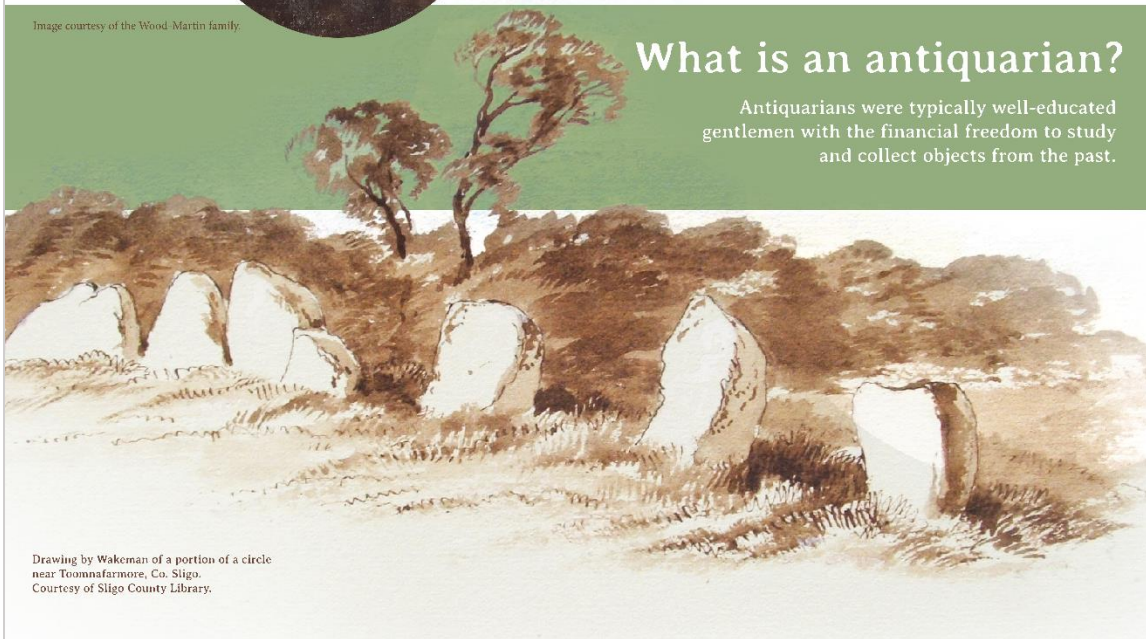
William Gregory Wood-Martin is best known for his articles and books which focused on the history, archaeology, and folklore of Ireland.

Born in Sligo in 1847, Wood-Martin was a member of the landed gentry and heir to two large estates. He attended Sandhurst Military College and had a distinguished military career. Though he returned to Sligo in 1877 and began to study the rich and storied landscape of his youth, he continued to serve three successive British monarchs as Aide-de-Camp and a Colonel in the Sligo Militia.

As a supporter of the British crown, Wood-Martin was unlike many of his fellow antiquarians, who were often key figures in the Irish nationalist movement. He believed that excavation was the answer to all archaeological questions and rejected his peers' use of myth to interpret archaeological sites.

What is an antiquarian?

Antiquarians were typically well-educated gentlemen with the financial freedom to study and collect objects from the past.



Drawing by Wakeman of a portion of a circle near Toomnafarmore, Co. Sligo. Courtesy of Sligo County Library.

Figure 7- The Antiquarian William Gregory Wood-Martin

Archaeology at the Turn of the 20th Century

In the 1800s the Irish people struggled with the question of independence from the United Kingdom. This sparked a nationalist movement centered on the idea of an Irish “golden age,” rich in culture and art, long before the arrival of the English in the 12th century. Irish nationalists used Irish myths, combined with archaeological sites and research, to support these “golden age” arguments. Nationalist antiquarians wanted to show that Ireland possessed its own deep cultural history to promote Irish independence.

Linking archaeology to nationalism created lasting connections between the Irish people and their prehistoric past, and the practice and interpretation of archaeology emerged as defining characteristics of the Irish national identity. Today archaeological sites form the backbone of tourism in Ireland, boosting the economy and shaping the international image of Irish culture.

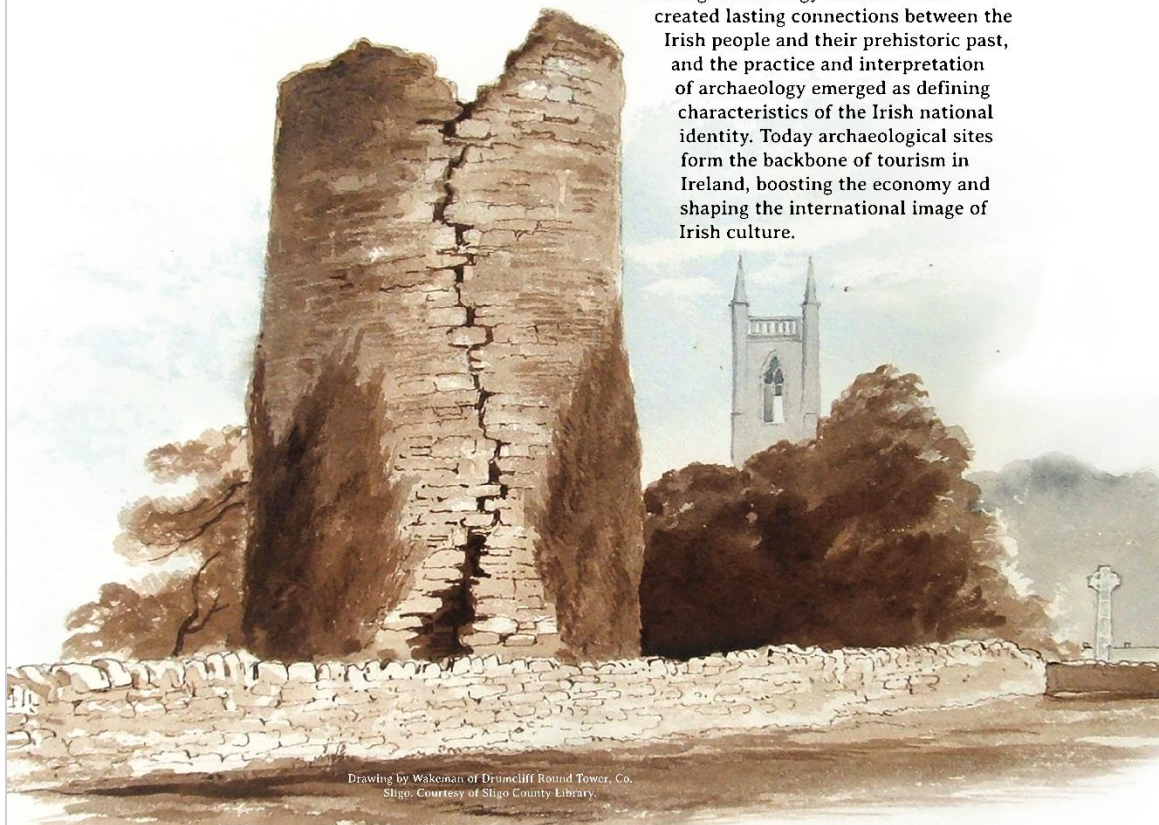


Figure 8- Archaeology at the Turn of the 20th Century

The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland

Wood-Martin published "The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland" in four parts between 1886 and 1887. In these articles Wood-Martin shared the results of his excavations in and around Sligo. While his interpretation of these sites was important, his excavation techniques and his criticisms of his peers did more to reveal him as a researcher at the cutting edge of archaeology at the time. (63)

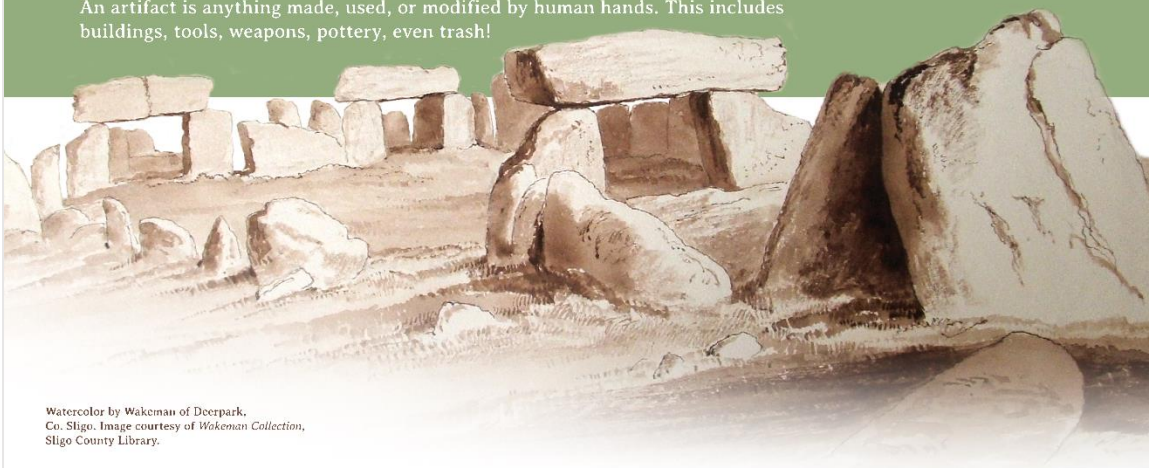
Unlike the haphazard excavations of others, Wood-Martin was systematic in his work. He divided sites into quadrants which were individually excavated. His workers carefully sifted the dirt, removing artifacts and bone. A doctor examined these bones, identifying if they were human or animal, male or female, adults or children. Though these practices are familiar to modern archaeologists, Wood-Martin's methods stood out amongst his peers.



Drawing by Wakeman of Carrowmore Tomb No. 7, Co. Sligo. Courtesy of Sligo County Library.

What is an artifact?

An artifact is anything made, used, or modified by human hands. This includes buildings, tools, weapons, pottery, even trash!



Watercolor by Wakeman of Deerpark, Co. Sligo. Image courtesy of Wakeman Collection, Sligo County Library.

Figure 9- The Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland

The Artist William F. Wakeman



William Frederick Wakeman worked for Wood-Martin finding and illustrating artifacts and drafting plans of archaeological sites for his publications, but their relationship went beyond that of employer and employee. They enjoyed a close friendship, exchanging letters and assisting each other in their research.

Wakeman created many of the images in this exhibit for the County Lord-Lieutenant, who hired him to draw the antiquities of Sligo. Not one to waste effort, Wakeman used these drawings as references for illustrations in publications on antiquities, including Wood-Martin's.

Though best known for his illustrations, Wakeman was an antiquarian in his own right. He published articles, assisted in excavations, and worked in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy.

Image courtesy of the Navan Historical Society website.



Drawing by Wakeman of Court Abbey, Lawagh, Co. Sligo. Courtesy of Sligo County Library.

Figure 10- The Artist William F. Wakeman

The Lake Dwellings of Ireland

In 1886, Wood-Martin published his celebrated book, *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland*, which explored the origins and use of man-made islands like those shown here. Popularly called crannógs, the remains of these structures are found in lakes and rivers across Ireland.

Believed to be places of retreat during times of war, Wood-Martin found an assortment of everyday objects which proved that these places were actually used as year-round settlement sites. The oldest artifacts revealed that the first crannógs were constructed in Ireland as early as 4500 BC. The youngest artifacts and related historical records showed that crannógs were still in use as late as the twelfth century AD.

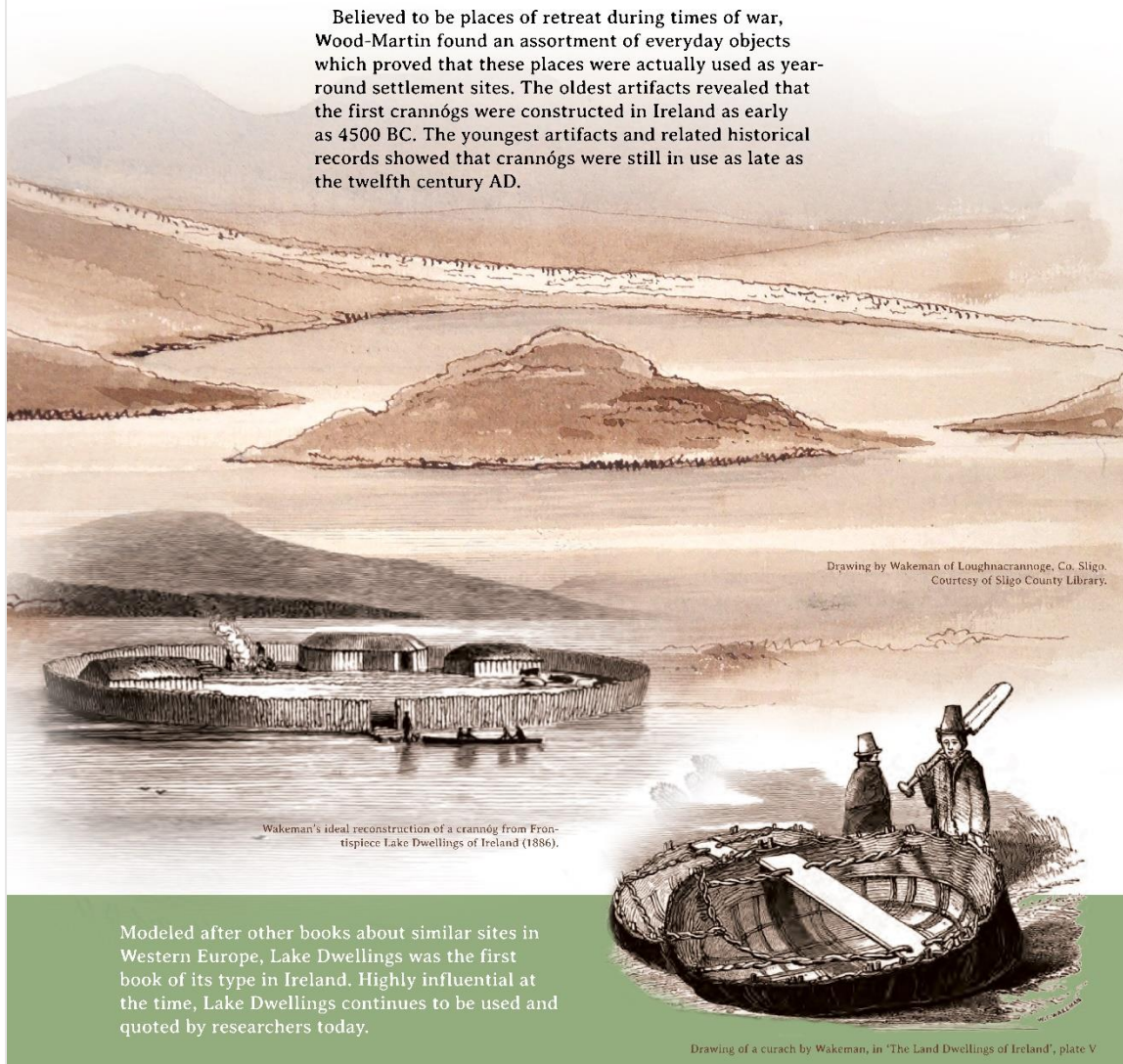


Figure 11- *The Lake Dwellings of Ireland*

Wood-Martin and His Legacy

Wood-Martin's research is familiar to us today because it is so like that of modern archaeologists. He was systematic in his excavations and rejected mythological explanations for his finds. He believed that excavation was the answer to archaeological questions and kept detailed records of his digs. He grounded his work in the research of his peers and published in peer-reviewed journals.

Emblematic of a time of transition between the antiquarian practices that came before him and the scientific methods that would follow, William Gregory Wood-Martin is an important figure in Irish history. When he died in November 1917 he had published over a dozen articles and books. Over 100 years later, his publications continue to be used by researchers and in classrooms across Ireland. Though his name is not listed amongst the founding fathers of Irish archaeology, his work endures.

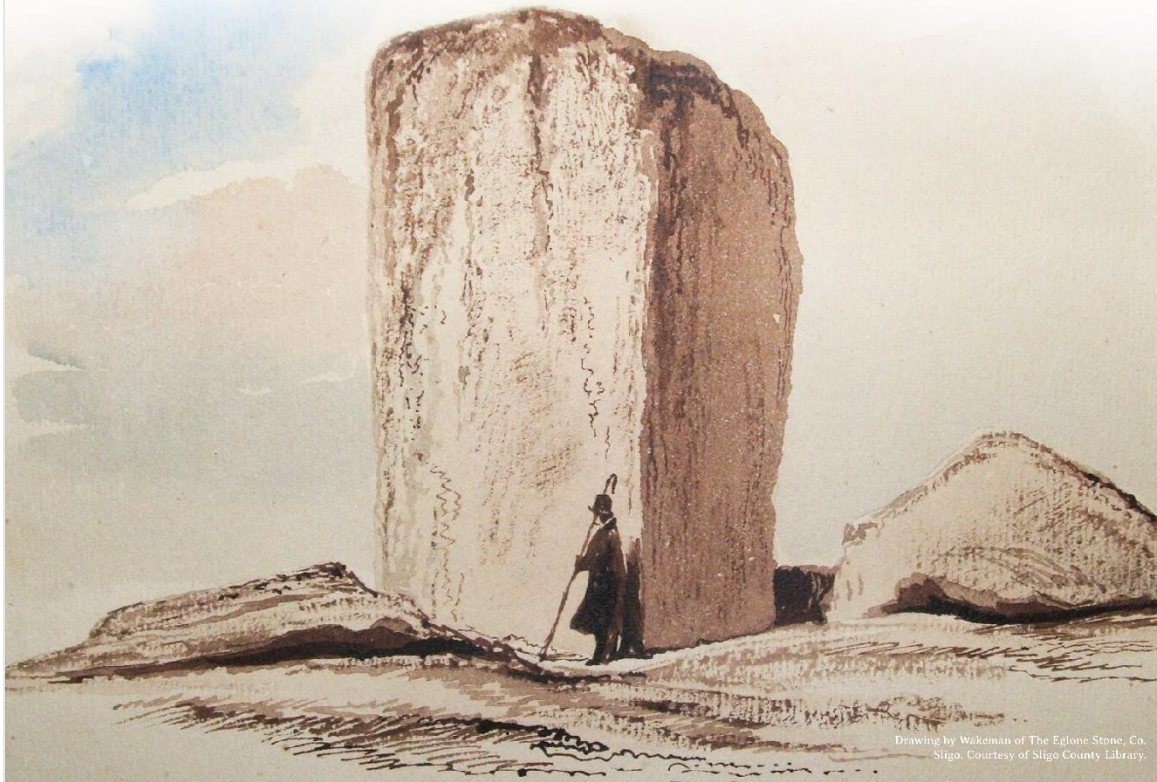


Figure 12- Wood-Martin and His Legacy

About the Creators of this Exhibit:

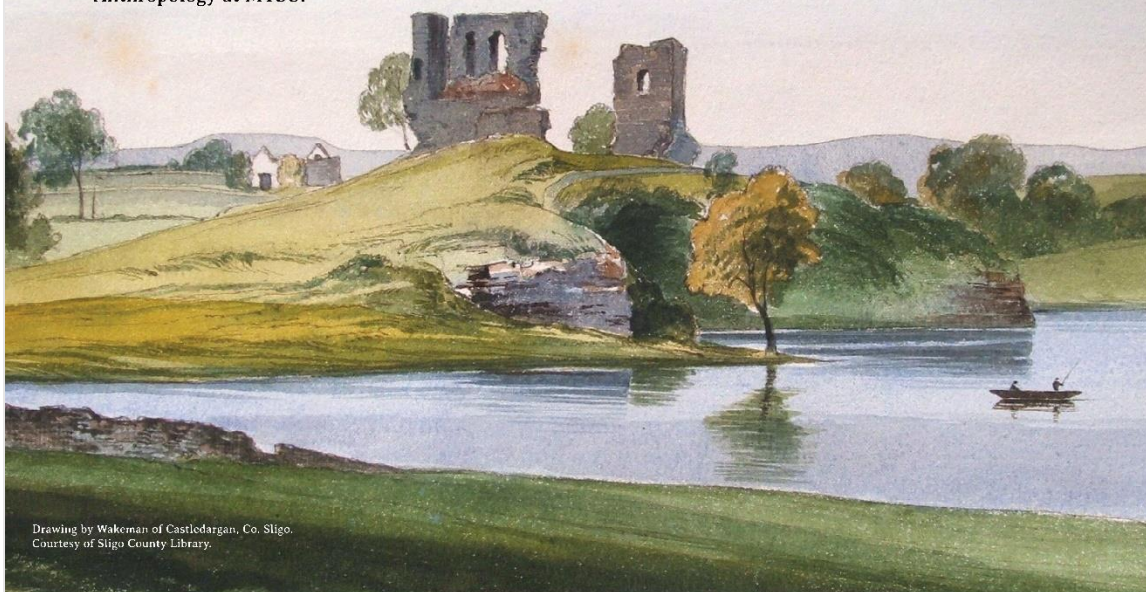
Lydia Harris

is a master's student in the Public History program at MTSU. This exhibit is a key piece of her thesis which interprets the research she conducted during her internship in Ireland last summer and mirrors an exhibit she created for the Yeats Library in Sligo, Ireland.

This project has been a blending of history, archaeology, and art. The relationship between Lydia, as the historian and archaeologist, and Whitney, as the graphic artist, reflects the relationship between Wood-Martin and Wakeman, working together to interpret the past for their academic community.

Whitney Wilkerson

designed these panels and the Yeats Library panels in cooperation with Lydia. She is earning a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Studio Art, with a concentration in Printmaking, and a minor in Anthropology at MTSU.



About the images in this exhibit:

The Sligo County Library has generously permitted a portion of their Wakeman watercolors collection to be displayed for this exhibit.

Figure 13- About the Creators of this Exhibit

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