Fairview Park 1900 – 1930: forgotten achievements and landscapes

Noel Carolan

At Fairview imperial, national and local government shaped the landscape in various public endeavours. They were joined by private entrepreneurial agents of landscape change as different as railway entrepreneurs, house builders and Lord Charlemont's creation of his eighteenth-century demesne. This article is focused on the first three decades of the twentieth century, a pivotal time in the formation of the Fairview Park landscape of today. Within this period, Dublin Corporation purchased the tidal mudflats of Fairview Slobland from Dublin Port and Docks Board and gradually transformed the mudflats into parkland. Three landscape types featured in this transformation: (i) that of 1900, shortly before corporation intervention, (ii) some subsequent but important interim landscapes, each of several years' duration, and (iii) the landscape that was Fairview Park by 1930.

The continuous downriver development of Dublin city into the Liffey estuary over several centuries is also reflected in the Tolka estuary, although on a smaller scale and over a shorter period. Annesley Bridge Road was, for example, in the early nineteenth-century, the most seaward embankment crossing of the estuary, having water on each side. Before the creation of the embankment the area was known as 'The Little Sea' and 'Fairview Strand really deserved its name'.[1] The railway embankment of a few decades later crossed the Tolka estuary about 300m seaward. Each embankment, in turn, became a catalyst for the containment of the Tolka river. It became a narrow flow of water imprisoned within man-made walls following several extensive land reclamation projects which continued well into the twentieth century. Houses were subsequently built on land reclaimed from the Little Sea, and a public urban parkland landscape replaced the Sloblands. Figure 1 summarises the activities which gave rise to these interim landscapes. It was a landscape change process in which Dublin Corporation exercised five different, but complementary functions at Fairview — cleansing authority, topsoil disposal, war-time food production, welfare/relief provision and, finally, its public amenity role in developing urban parkland landscapes.

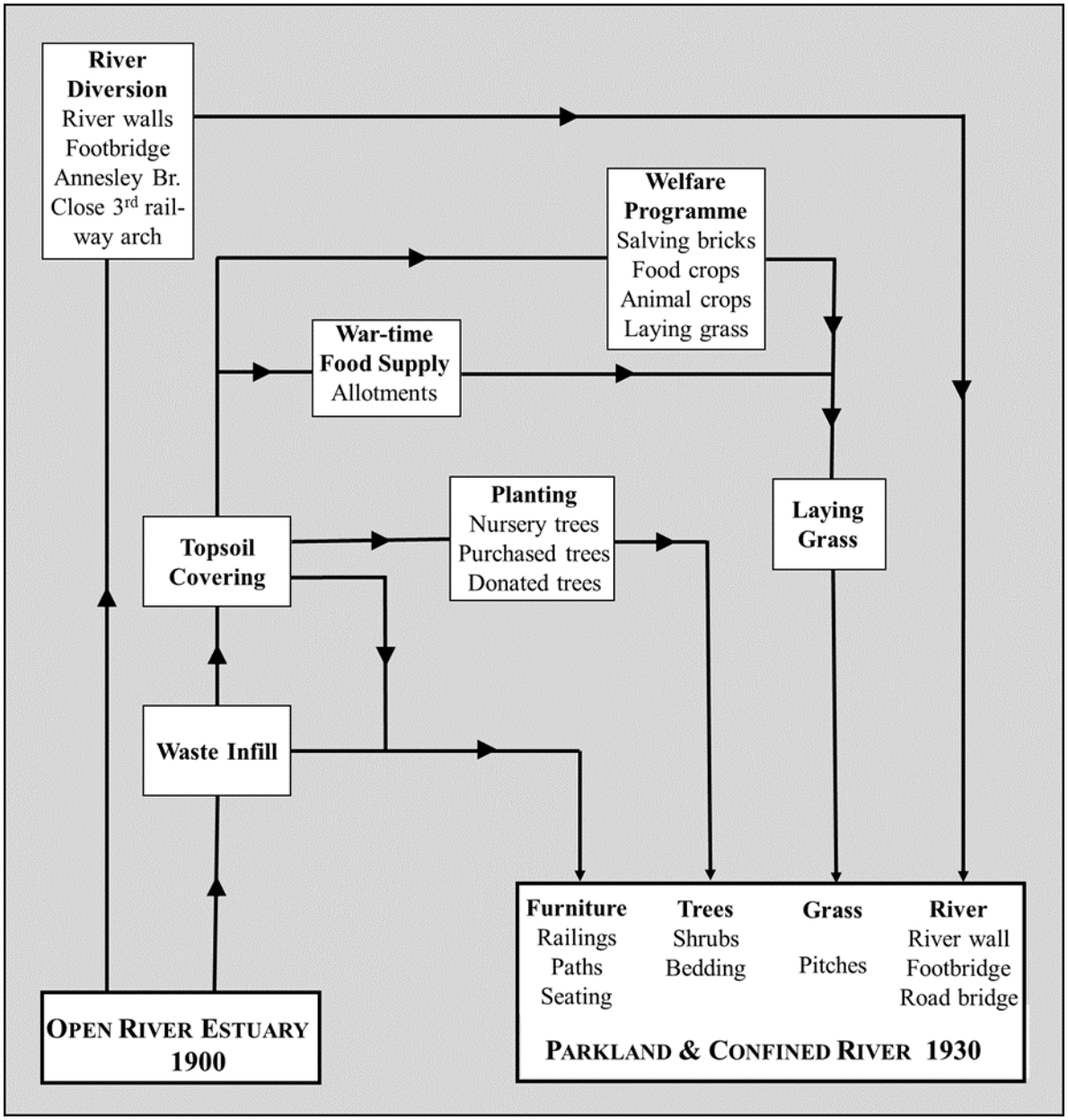

Fig. 1 Fairview landscape as a change process 1900-30, integrating Dublin Corporation functions (cleansing authority, topsoil disposal, war-time food production, welfare provision and public amenity).

An early twentieth-century book, *The neighbourhood of Dublin* (Dublin, 1912), presents useful descriptions of Fairview during the century before 1912. A recent and comprehensive Office of Public Works publication, *Charlemont's Marino: portrait of a landscape* (Stationery Office, 2014), has information on the entrance gates to the splendid opulence that was the eighteenth-century Marino Demesne. Corporation plans to relocate the gates to the emerging Fairview Park in the 1920s fell through, but the gates are also of interest given their location on the immediate hinterland of the Fairview Sloblands. Buildings erected on both sides of the gates in the 1920s (and the associated Marino garden city created

by the corporation) are well-treated in *Dublin 1910-1940: shaping the city and suburbs* (Dublin, 2002). A research article on war-time (WW I) allotments sponsored by the corporation at Clontarf and Marino has relevance, especially its description of the women's school of horticulture operating in Marino House from 1917-8.[2] Girls, as they were generally called, spent afternoons working on the Fairview relief farm colony, operated, in part, by Dublin Corporation.

The *Irish Historic Towns Atlas* treatment of Dublin city and the Clontarf suburb alike are invaluable in their literary and cartographic contexts. On the cartographic front, the original 6" and 25" Ordnance Survey of Ireland series are definitive sources for any examination of the landscape change at Fairview during the modern era. The 25" survey, in 1911 for Fairview, is used in this article as a well-timed base map (to which some manual additions have been made). Two maps provide useful insights into Fairview landscape before 1900. John Roque's survey of County Dublin in 1760 (figure 2) shows the location of the Little Sea of Fairview (marked as 'X') before the construction of the Annesley Bridge and its associated embankment. An 1860 map of Dublin City and Suburbs (figure 3) shows Annesley Bridge and the embankment

Fig. 2 Survey of County of Dublin by John Roque 1760. (Source: Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Clontarf, RIA.)

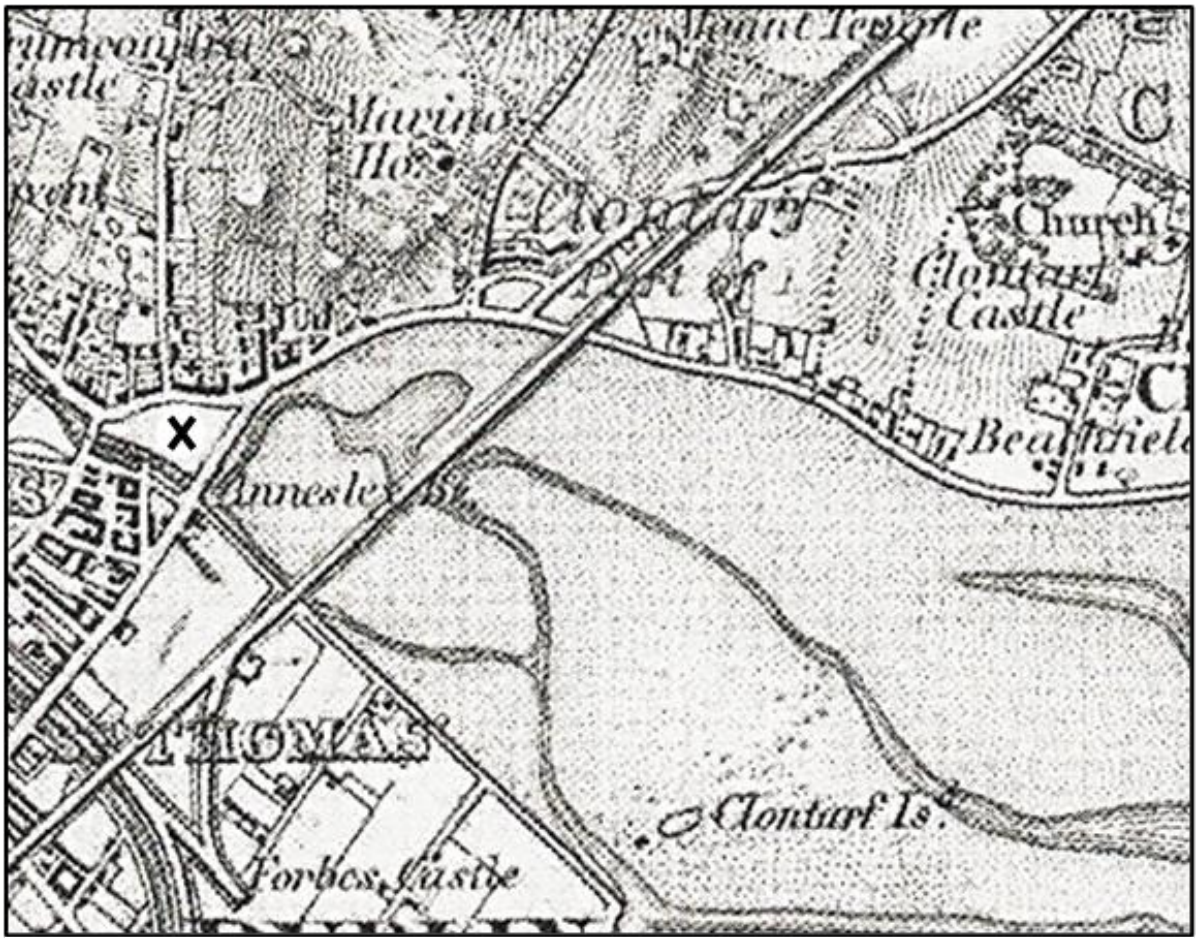

Fig. 3 Dublin city and suburbs, 1860. (Source: Irish Historic Towns Atlas, Clontarf, RIA.)

which became Annesley Bridge Road with its enclosure of the Little Sea area. Furthermore, the 1860 map shows the railway embankment across the estuary. Bystanders in Edward McFarland's 1853 landscape painting of the northern end of the embankment (figure 4) must have been as much impressed with the embankment as with the trains which travelled on it. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the railway was the most imposing man-made feature in the landscape. However, the Fairview railway embankment was the precursor to yet more significant landscape change in the new century.

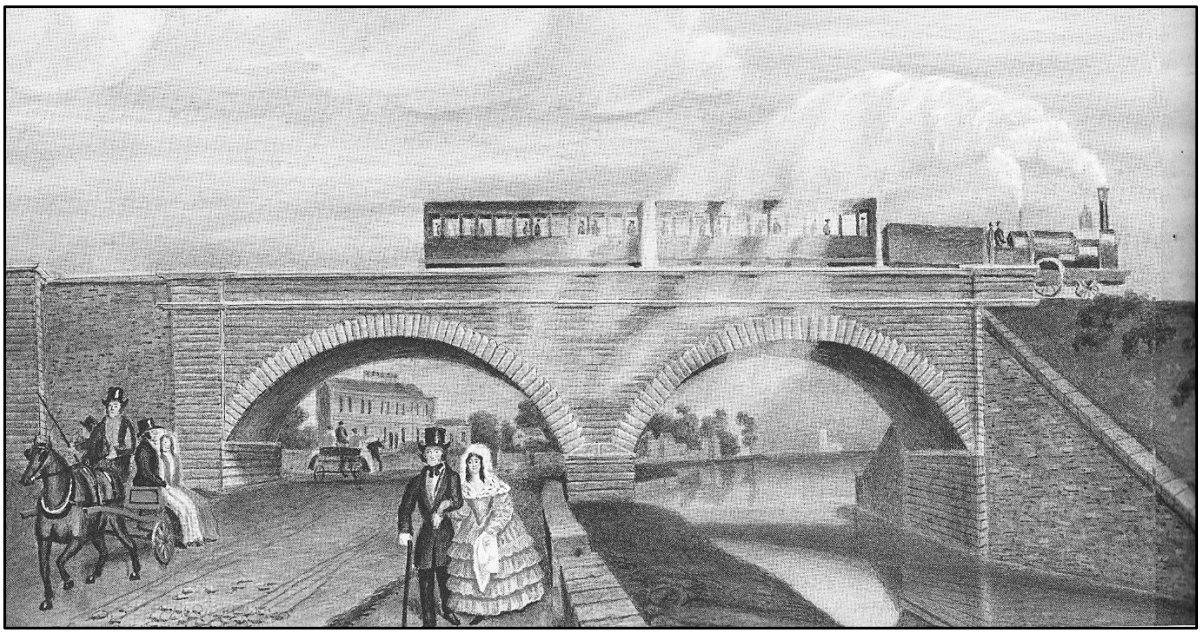

Fig. 4 Clontarf end of embankment, 1853 by Edward McFarland. (Source: *Irish Historic Towns Atlas*, Clontarf, RIA.)

A new agent of landscape change at Fairview

Fred Allan, secretary of the Cleansing Committee of Dublin Corporation, was instrumental in the creation of Fairview Park to solve the city's waste disposal issues: he oversaw a programme of incinerating rubbish (the Refuse Destructor Plant at Stanley St) and its role in the reclamation of the Sloblands.[3] However, this waste disposal programme was dependant on an earlier modifier of the Fairview landscape. The most exceptional agent of change in Victorian cities was the arrival of the railways. It is estimated that three to five percent of urban land was occupied by rails, stations and works.[4] Moreover, it often acted as a barrier to further development in some urban localities by cutting off land from the remainder of a city. It had the opposite effect on the Fairview landscape, and provided Dublin Corporation with an opportunity to address two pressing issues simultaneously.

The city waste incineration program did not remove the need for the corporation to acquire additional landfill capacity in the city. An Act of Parliament which incorporated Clontarf township into Dublin Corporation in 1900 required the corporation to erect a sea wall within 100 feet of the road (and much else in the realm of drainage). While the seawall provided landfill opportunity, the corporation abandoned plans for the seawall by 1905.[5] Instead, it purchased the mudflats on the landward side of the railway embankment from the Dublin Port and Docks Board for landfill use and subsequent conversion to parkland.

The map in figure 5 has been modified to illustrate the extraordinary sequence of landscape change which the corporation initiated in the early years of the twentieth century. It shows the course of the Tolka river through the central arch of the railway embankment at low tide. Shaded areas show green spaces (fields and woodland). The map also shows the entrance to the Marino Demesne (marked 'A') and the avenue leading to Marino House (partially shown at the top border of the map).

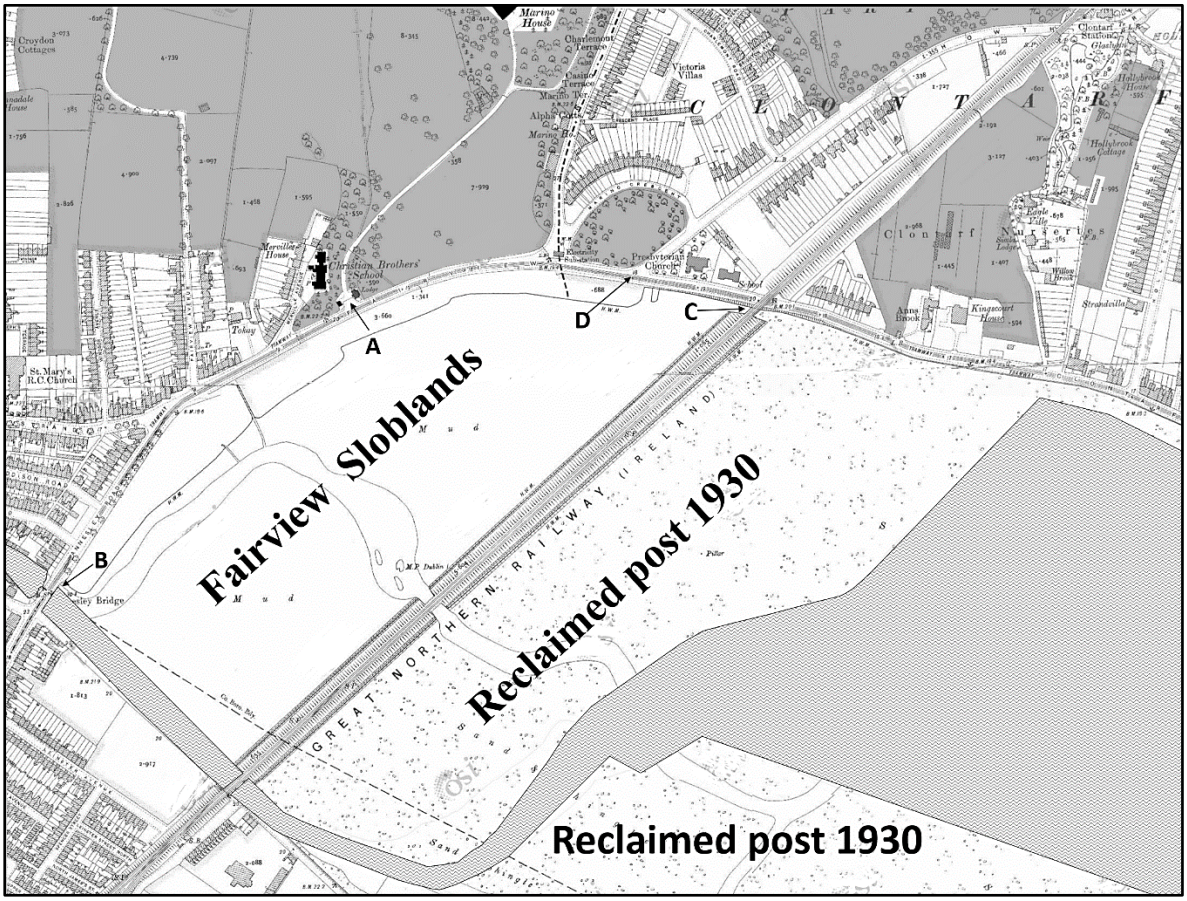

Fig. 5 Fairview Sloblands, showing passage of the Tolka river through the sloblands and railway embankment (at three points) in 1900 and the altered course of the river by the end of the century.

Marino House was demolished in 1925, having stood in a demesne originally comprising 200 acres. From the splendid entrance gateway (which was taken down when the Marino house building operations commenced a few years earlier) there was a 'well laid out carriageway to the house, while close by were the beautifully kept gardens'.[6] By 1923, the corporation was considering the 're-erection at Annesley Bridge and opposite the Howth Road of the gates and stone piers removed from Marino', but this did not come to pass.[7] The proposed locations for the gates are marked as 'B' and 'C' on the map. The piers were eventually erected at Malahide Road at the entrance to the Casino. By 1918, the entrance

still had a continuity role on the perimeter of the new fast-changing landscape of rubbish, grass and imported topsoil: it served as a landmark reference point in the measurement and layout of that new landscape. A portion of land allocated for growing young trees was described (partly) in 1918 as being between Merville Avenue and 'a point opposite Charlemont Gate'.[8]

Figure 6 shows a painting of the demesne entrance reinforcing the suggestion that it had a major presence in the 1835 landscape. A photograph of the location from the 1880s (figure 7) includes a Christian Brothers' School located just inside the entrance to the demesne. The painting and photograph both show the frequently defining and prized feature of demesne lands — Charlemont's trees. It is not clear when the felling of trees commenced, but the corporation received £192 for trees sold from the Marino Demesne in early 1919.[9] The school dominates the background of the photograph, but the tramway can be seen in the foreground. The Ordnance Survey left a benchmark near the entrance, although it was denied permanence in the changing landscape of the twentieth century.

Fig. 6 Entrance Gate to Marino Demesne, 1835, by Edward McFarland. (Source: National Library of Ireland.)

Fig. 7 Entrance Gates to Marino Demesne post 1880, with Christian Brothers' School, tramline and trees. Source: *Charlemont's Marino: portrait of a landscape*, (Stationery Office, 2014).

The school remains in today's landscape as shown in figure 8. Nevertheless, continuity is not confined to the school: the long-time avenue to the demesne has been widened to become Fairview Avenue. The gates were moved initially to Griffith Avenue and thereafter to their present location on the Malahide Road.[10]

This part of the Fairview landscape was transformed by the corporation in the 1920s, with its decision to reserve the main frontages of the Marino housing scheme for better-class residences and business premises.[11] The corporation 'reserved area', to the east of the demesne gates, is shown in figure 9. The gates with their adjoining lodge and the Christian Brothers' School are shown in black. Buildings in the reserved area are shown with a dotted

Fig. 8 Christian Brothers' School today where the demesne avenue continues continues as Fairview Avenue, with location of the demesne gates superimposed. (Source N. Carolan.)

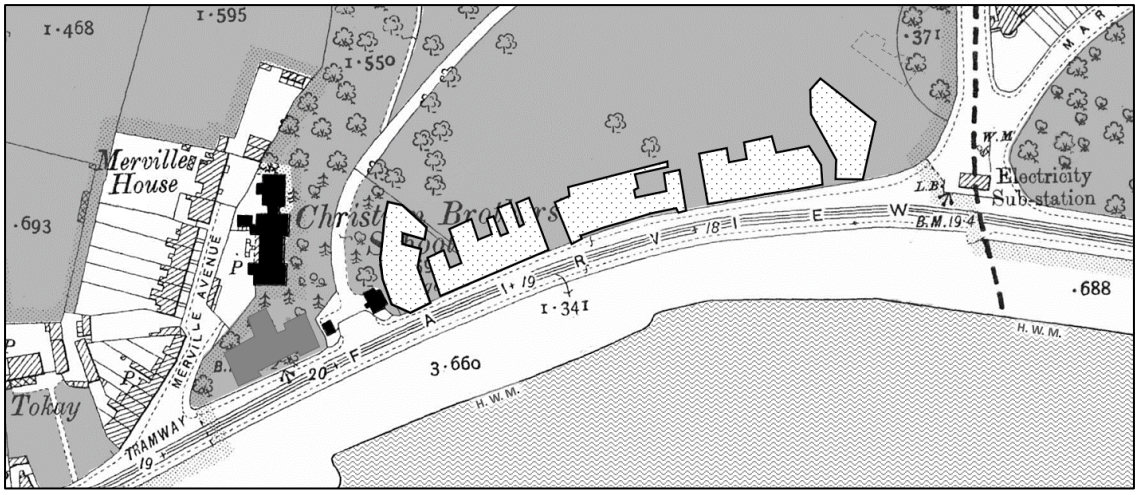

Fig. 9 Corporation 'reserved area' for residences and business premises in 1925.

infill. The tramway is also shown on the map, and the inclusion of the high water mark (HWM) is a useful reminder of the proximity of the seawater at full tide. A newspaper report in July 1926 informed readers that the 'newly laid-out Fairview Park offers pleasant prospect both to the business firms which will occupy the ground floors and the tenants who will occupy the upper portions'.[12] The corporation sponsored buildings at Marino Mart are shown in a recently taken photograph (figure 10). Overhanging leaves of a Fairview Park tree, in the right of the photograph, act a reminder of the prospect held out in the newspaper article of 1925. Today, the buildings are an enduring and visible legacy of landscape change sponsored by the corporation, almost a century after their construction. That said, visible continuity was not a characteristic of all the quite different and complementary achievements of this agent of landscape change at Fairview.

Catalyst for landscape change at Fairview

Clontarf waste obligations, the statutory requirement to build a seawall at Fairview already mentioned, and restrictions on mooring the *Eblana* hopper barge in the Liffey opposite Tara

Fig. 10 Corporation sponsored buildings at Marino Mart almost a century after construction. (Source N. Carolan.)

Street railway station combined as the catalyst for landscape change at the Sloblands. Until 1906 some 300 tons of 'all kinds of slops and filth' were taken out to sea in 'one of Dublin's less pleasing attractions', the *Eblana*, while nearby noxious heaps of waste awaited removal from Tara St.[13] Daily, some 500 men and 160 horses of the 'scavenging department' emptied over 20,000 dustbins (supplied to householders by the corporation at cost) and conveyed the refuse from them, and from the streets and ashpits to the Refuse Destructor at Stanley Street.[14] Ashpits were outbuildings with a half-door high in one side, which received kitchen and other domestic waste, and when full with some 30 cwt (1½ tons) of 'ghastly offal', the corporation men and horses would remove it.[15] Operating the *Eblana* further down river from Pigeon House was not a cost-effective alternative to its operation from the more centrally located Tara St. The corporation commenced plans in 1904 to increase the capacity of the Refuse Destructor (costing £7,401), to use the tramways to build an electric-powered waste transport capacity (costing £7,700) and to acquire the Sloblands at Fairview from its owner, the Dublin Port and Docks Board (costing £15,000).[16] The acquisition included the purchase of the Sloblands for £8,000, and included an estimate to defray the additional dredging costs to be incurred by the Port and Docks Board, in consequence of the reduced scouring effect of the volume of water in Dublin Bay. The corporation reckoned that the city could dispose of 60-70,000 tons of refuse annually at Fairview for twenty years.

The corporation's choice of refuse transport changed the tramway landscape both at Fairview and beyond. All transport options in 1904 were examined - electric, steam, horses and motor. Motor was still poorly developed and the corporation was advised that Messrs Arthur Guinness, Son & Co. had 'made a very exhaustive trial of motor wagons at great expense, but were obliged to give them up as a failure'.[17] Several new tramline spurs led off into the Sloblands to transport the refuse.[18] Yet other networks of temporary lines were used within the Sloblands as the filling operation moved along its way. By 1910 the complexity of the rail landscape at Fairview was such that the corporation agreed with the Dublin United Transport Company to construct a tramway crossover there.[19] The corporation also requested the tramway company to erect a shelter at Fairview Corner on a small portion of the new park adjoining the footpath.[20] However, three major reports received by the corporation, which outlined the development of the new refuse disposal system at Fairview, pointed to transformative change of the tramway infrastructure itself.

Electric locomotives were purchased to haul an initial fifty refuse wagons, each of ten ton capacity.[21] Half were tipping wagons and half were tanks, capable of removal at Fairview by crane given the soft ground of the Sloblands. A dedicated branch line was laid from Fairview to the Refuse Destructor at Stanley Street, to take some thirty tons of clinker nightly from the incinerator to its resting place at Fairview. The line was laid from the North Quays along Queen Street, Redcow Lane and North Brunswick Street and to Fairview: a portion of the line is preserved at Stanley Street. This site is of considerable social and technological significance, as the last vestiges of a new waste-disposal service in Dublin city, and as one of the few remaining sites in the country where early tram lines remain in situ.[22] The corporation had the use of DUTC tramlines from midnight until seven am although the curfew in 1920 'completely upset the night cleansing work on the street'.[23] Thus, for two decades a night-time waste carriage system trundled its way out to and from Fairview. Years later, a 'returned old Dubliner' spoke of his sleep having been 'broken by the clanging of the dirt trams hauling the city's refuse from Stanley Street to the stinking sloblands to make a park at Fairview'.[24] Fairview visitors and residents alike were at least spared the noisy intrusion of clanging dirt trams in their landscape for 14 hours of the day: the intrusion of a stinking Sloblands proved to be more enduring.

Emanations from a changing landscape

An *Irish Times* editorial, effusive in its welcome of the corporation's new waste disposal system in 1905, wryly noted that the departure of the *Eblana* would also take with it 'one of the floating jokes of Dublin humourists'.[25] Ceasing its waste operations in 1906, the *Eblana* stayed in Corporation ownership until 1911, when it was eventually sold for £365.[26] Emanations from the waste disposal landscape at Fairview ensured, however, that there would be no shortage of related material for humourists. In 1913 the *Lepracaun Cartoon Monthly* featured the cartoon shown in figure 11. But there had been consistent and severe problems at Fairview during several earlier years.

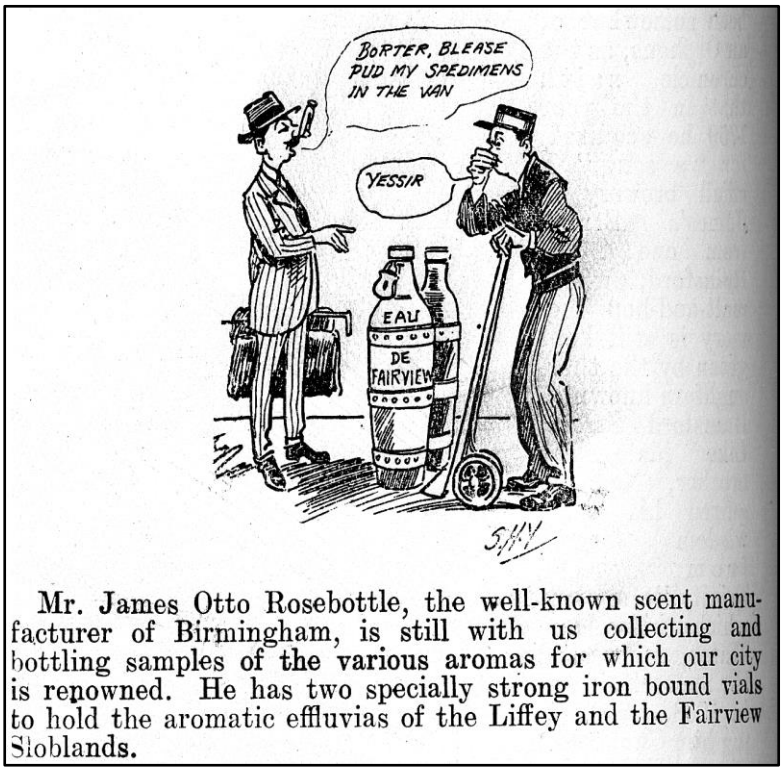

Fig 11 Eau de Fairview, *Lepracaun Cartoon Monthly*, 1913. (Source: Lepracaun Cartoon Collection, Dublin City Library and Archive.)

In 1906, some fifty to sixty claims for compensation were made by Fairview residents arising from the nightly tram deliveries and other waste disposal work at the Sloblands.[27] James Doyle claimed loss to his butchery business at Fairview and a tenant, in one of his properties, Lucan Dairy Company, threatened rent surrender.[28] Additionally, Dr Donnelly claimed that it was 'impossible to obtain rents that he formerly received' for houses that he had built at Turlough Terrace.[29]

Such issues echoed in legal proceedings taken two years later, by Thomas Picton-Bradshaw, resident at Mount Temple, Clontarf, who argued that his property interests at Fairview, and those of his wife at Clontarf, were damaged.[30] He pointed to the impact it had on people travelling through Fairview to Clontarf. The landscape had some competition however in this

respect: the journey to Clontarf also 'took the aspiring suburbanite past the additional discomfiture of the Vitriol works at Annesley Bridge'.[31] Picton-Bradshaw stated that 'the most abominable filthy stuff', which had previously been taken to sea in the *Eblana*, was instead making its way into the Sloblands.[32] The court ruled in his favour, preventing the disposal at Fairview of vegetable matter from the corporation markets or the corporation baskets in which such refuse was collected from city vegetable shops.[33]

Yet more problems were attributed to the emerging landscape at Fairview while Picton-Bradshaw's court proceedings were in train. Among several newspaper articles on the subject was a letter-writer who connected a typhoid outbreak in Clontarf to the stench from the waste and chloride of lime at Fairview. The writer contrasted early assurances of road sweepings alone going into the Sloblands with the extent to which it was then 'crowded with rag and bone pickers'.[34] Sir Charles Cameron, the city's Chief Medical Officer (for many previous decades and another to come) asserted that the origins lay in a Clontarf dairy rather than the corporation's new landscape at Fairview.[35] A local government report to Parliament agreed. It concluded that although much objectionable vegetable and other refuse had been deposited at Fairview for some time previous to the outbreak, the emanations from the sloblands had no connection with the outbreak, as no case of fever occurred at Fairview or in its immediate vicinity. Some 142 cases of fever arose in Clontarf, from mid-September to early December, with 119 in October alone.[36]

Constructing a landscape of trees

Little has been published on the tree planting at Fairview.[37] A ceremonial planting of trees on the afternoon of Saturday 31 October 1908 was advertised at the 'Fairview Improvement Grounds' to celebrate Arbor Day with the lord mayor and 'other distinguished Citizens'.[38] Given the delicate balance of local authority functional roles in this landscape, the recency of complaints, and the proceedings that Picton-Bradshaw had underway at the time of the ceremony, it is not surprising that some negative publicity arose. As figure 12 illustrates, *Lepracaun Cartoon Monthly* did not miss the opportunity to connect the Sloblands to the significant typhoid outbreak then raging in nearby Clontarf. It featured a satirical chorus, titled 'A Municipal Tree-o' featuring the 'Lord Mayor (Gerald O'Reilly), Mr Charles Dawson and Sir Charles Cameron', which mused that Dublin township rivalries, Home Rule, Irish industrial issues, and much more might be resolved by the time 'When the trees are grown in

the Slobland'. It is worthy of inclusion here, not alone for its caricature of contemporary politics, but to consider its predictions today when the trees from 1908 are fully grown.

A Municipal Tree-o

Lord Mayor, Mr Charles Dawson, Sir Charles Cameron

Dublin's rates shall go down and be paid with goodwill,
Rathmines and Proud Pembroke submit to Cork Hill,
And the pen of McWalter rest silent and still,
When the trees are grown in the Slobland!

John Dillon, with joyous and mirth moving mien,
Linking Limerick's Bishop by all will be seen,
And Asquith will ope the Old House in the Green,
When the trees are grown in the Slobland!

Ireland's overtaxation so cleverly revealed,
"My Lords" to nation united will yield,
And some barber may mow for 3*d*. our big Field,
When the trees are grown in the Slobland!

Employer and worker together will pull,
Irish clothing be worn, poplin, linen, wool,
Restitution, perchance, will be made by John Bull,
When the trees are grown in the Slobland!

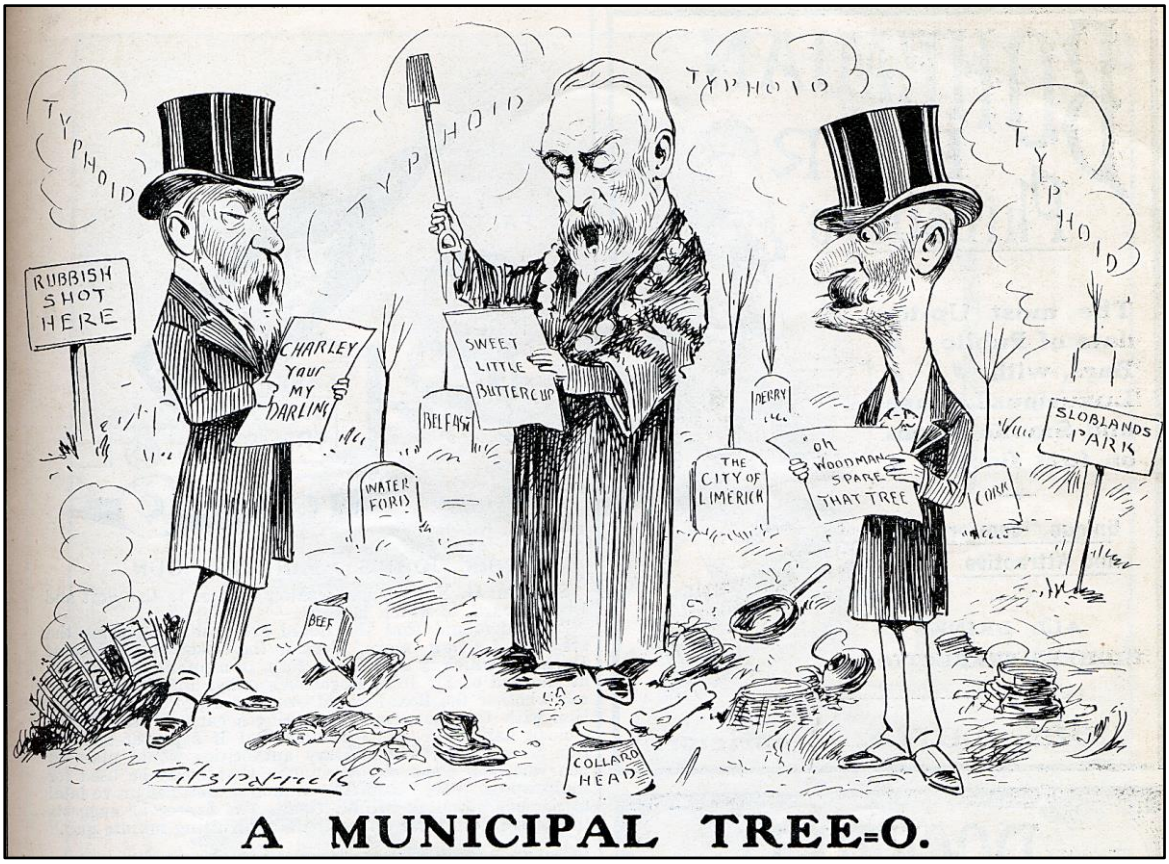

Fig 12 Planting trees on Fairview Sloblands in *Lepracaun Cartoon Monthly*, 1908. (Source: Lepracaun Cartoon Collection, Dublin City Library and Archive.)

The event was captured with a greater degree of accuracy in the photograph in figure 13. A year later in 1919, there was widespread newspaper coverage of the corporation receiving a donation of shrubs and trees from Thomas Picton-Bradshaw for the new park at Fairview.[39] Picton-Bradshaw's extensive local property interests stood to be enhanced. His political fortunes in Bray (where he was a town councillor for many years) may also have benefited, but he was eagerly pursuing election to Dublin Corporation: in 1913 he was successful, having failed on four previous occasions. His trees were planted inside the 'road wall of the sloblands from

Fig. 13 Arbor Day tree planting at Fairview Park, 1908. (Source: http://eastwallforall.ie/?p=3720.)

Fairview to the Malahide road (*sic*)'.[40] The wall remained in place for more than a decade thereafter, until the widening of Annesley Bridge Road took place. The corporation secured advice of a forestry expert from the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in 1910, and drew up plans for a nursery to shelter small trees before planting out to their final positions.[41] Some progression of this plan seems to have taken place: by the end of the war, shrubs from the Sloblands were available for planting at the Tuberculosis Hospital, Ringsend.[42]

An emerging park landscape

On a visit of the lord lieutenant to the Sloblands in 1909, it was reported that 'great improvements have been effected in levelling the grounds and in the planting of shrubs'.[43] The same year, the corporation approved plans for a seawater pond with sluice gates. It also, optimistically, hoped to include 'much needed Municipality (*sic*) regulated sea bathing beside the City' when the Fairview Park would be completed.[44] Corporation minutes acknowledged that it would have to await resolution of the (not inconsiderable) blight of sewage pollution on the Clontarf foreshore landscape. Neither materialised — despite the inclusion of a pond in subsequent plans. However, by July 1910 about a quarter of the fifty-six acre Sloblands was filled in, and a quintessential feature of contemporary urban parks was in place: bands were playing there.[45] The Dublin Metropolitan Police band was advertised to play 'in the new park at Fairview' as part of a series of concerts by various bands in city parklands.[46]

In 1910, the corporation accepted the objections of 'Sinn Féin Society, Dublin', received by letter, to the park being named 'after the appointed representative in Ireland of the British Government'.[47] By the end of the project, several corporation members believed the park should have been named in the memory of Fred Allan, given the pre-eminence of his role in its development.[48] The strong nationalist representation in the corporation was also visible in its acceptance in 1913 of a proposal to erect a Celtic cross in the park to commemorate the Battle of Clontarf in 1914, but their referral of the issue to their Cleansing Committee to cost the proposal seems to be as far as the matter proceeded.[49] Like so many other plans - of private and public enterprises alike — a forthcoming long war would change everything. Bands played in Dublin parks during the war years although, as Pádraig Yeates

noted, 'Fairview Park fell victim to allotment fever'.[50] 'Allotment fever' was only one part of a complicated network of inter-related local government initiatives at Fairview, as the corporation was drawn far beyond its peacetime relief activities. It ultimately accomplished a great deal more than waste disposal or the creation of a new public parkland.

A landscape of corporation relief measures

Employment of persons in distress due to the war was preferred to the provision of welfare payments. Local authority welfare (distress and relief) activities for women involved training in domestic economy at the technical schools, training in munition making, training at toy and doll making, training in Irish needlework and embroidery. The earlier mentioned women's school of market gardening which opened in 1917 in Marino House was such a corporation initiative, receiving funding from the National Relief Fund.[51] The women also worked on Fairview farm colony, an unemployed men's relief project operated under the same auspices, which was established on the Sloblands in 1915.[52] Relief employment for men included, clearing spaces in the city, preparing the site for the shell factory, clearing debris after the 1916 Rising, preparing land for the corporation use as allotments and salving bricks at the Sloblands.

Artist, advocate of workers' rights and secretary of the Vacant Land Cultivation Society, Sarah Cecilia ('Celia') Harrison, had obtained for the society a small portion of reclaimed land at Fairview in 1914. [53] The VLCS was a private philanthropic society that obtained land on which city dwellers could grow vegetables: it was the earliest cultivation landscape on the Sloblands. Harrison was by then the first female member of the corporation, but also a member of the Local Representative Relief Committee of the National Relief Fund, which obtained other reclaimed land at Fairview to establish with the corporation the Fairview relief farm colony in 1915. The National Relief Fund (established in Britain at the outbreak of war) and the corporation's Lord Mayor's Fund were used to provide employment projects as various as the farm relief colony at Fairview, clearing derelict sites and knitting socks for troops.[54]

The early stages of the farm colony landscape were recorded in a politically and socially biased, but detailed *Irish Times* report in March 1915. Readers were assured that

'scarcely any of the men were of robust constitution … none engaged in the work would make acceptable additions to Kitchener's Army'.[55] Some thirty of the fifty-six acres at the Sloblands were reclaimed when the reporter visited. Upwards of fifty men (and some women) were then working there, picking stones and using wheelbarrows. Several acres of potatoes were already planted, ploughmen were at work, and the soil was described as 'smelling somewhat rank, [and it] appeared to be a good, dark friable loam'.[56] The loam, readers were told, was a topsoil mixture of road sweepings of two feet in depth with about eight feet of mixed rubbish beneath it. Such reports apart, this Fairview landscape of recent mudflats populated by farm horses, ploughmen, labouring men and women (and as will be seen below, significant acreages of various crops grown for several years) is all but forgotten: there are no photographs or other visual record of these activities.

Horses, men and women were busy over these years at the Sloblands: in 1915 there were 8 acres of potatoes and 3 acres of mangolds.[57] Some 6 acres of mangolds were grown in 1916 but these insights are based on advertisements for sale, and thus not reflecting all of the crops grown in this remarkable food production scheme. Fairview was one of just two farm colonies operated in Ireland using the National Relief Fund. A second relief farm colony operated in Killester, until 1919, bringing the combined colony total to thirty-five acres in 1917, when their sales of 'potatoes and other vegetables, realised close to £2,000 and formed a most valuable addition to the food supply in the City'.[58] Two Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction inspection reports from 1919 the final year of the farm colonies survive. Figure 14 provides details of almost twenty-four acres of crops at the Sloblands in June 1919. This indicates that 42% of the available land there was under cultivation by the farm relief colony. A substantial area of additional ground at the Sloblands was under cultivation by allotment holders. The department's inspectors found the crops at the Fairview Sloblands to be 'remarkably free of disease; potatoes and mangolds were remarkably good; and the 2½ acres of grass was well grazed'. [59]Relief farm colony workers were also employed during 1917 'salving bricks at the Sloblands, Fairview'.[60] During the previous year, such men had also been employed 'clearing debris after the rebellion'.[61] Alongside the final farm colony sale of six acres of mangolds and turnips in drills in 1919, some thirty tons of old bricks were also offered for sale.[62] The remains of one landscape were, it seems, likely to feature in another elsewhere in the city.

Crops	Acres*	Roods	Perches	Yards
Potatoes: British Queens	7	-	4	28
Potatoes: Early Rose	-	2	-	-
Patatoes: Arran Chief	-	3	-	-
Potatoes: Shamrock	1	2	-	-
Mangolds	8	-	1	9
Turnips	1	2	8	16
Cabbage	-	3	13	16
Carrots	-	3	12	3
Parsnips	-	-	21	12
Beetroot	-	-	14	13
Cabbage plants	-	-	14	18
Cauliflower	-	-	8	-
Sundrioes	-	-	3	25
Grass	2	2	-	-
Total	**23**	**3**	**22**	**19**

*Statute measurement (1 acre = 0.405 hectare)

Fig. 14 Crops grown up to June 1919 at Fairview Farm Colony. (Source: Minutes Dublin City Council, no. 677, (Dublin, 1919).

The corporation began providing allotments across the city in early 1917. By the end of 1917, there were almost 5,500 allotments in Dublin — a 17-fold increase over the previous year.[63] The first record of allotments on the Sloblands occurred in 1918, when eight acres were occupied by sixty allotment holders who paid a reduced rent due to the quality of the soil at the Sloblands.[64] They are likely to have been there during 1919 given the high levels of demand for allotments and the continuation of the farm colony was in doubt from the last days of the war. The cleansing committee made the Sloblands available for allotments for three years from the beginning of 1920.[65] An area of at least nine acres (amounting to about seventy allotments), previously in possession of the Relief Committee 'at the Tolka end of the Sloblands' was turned over to allotment holders in January 1920, in order to accommodate many who were dispossessed of their allotments at nearby Marino and Croydon Park due to house building needs.[66] A photograph published in 1917 in the Journal of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland (figure 15) is representative of the allotments at Fairview. Pedestrian and tram passengers saw such an interim landscape from 1918 to 1923 as people cultivated their vegetable plots.

Fig. 15 Allotment plots in Belfast, similar in content and layout to those in Dublin. (Source: D.A.T.I. Journal, xvii (Dublin, 1917), p. 429.)

A landscape of boundaries

The new park at Fairview was enclosed by boundaries of water, rail and road. The diverted course of the Tolka and its retaining wall enclosed the park on its southern side, as demonstrated by the low tide view shown in figure 16. The railway embankment enclosed the park on its eastern side. In a peculiar twist of landscape change, the closure and infilling of the third arch near the midpoint of the embankment removed a visible feature from the landscape by burial. Thus, a masonry bridge in the centre of the embankment of a single segmental stone arch of 43 feet span and 12½ feet rise, has been lost to the contemporary landscape.[67]

The remaining boundary was formed by the widened road from Annesley Bridge to Clontarf Road and the erection of wrought iron railings as recommended by the city engineer. Messrs Smith and Pearsons, a nearby ironworks company, successfully tendered for the supply and erection of iron railings. Their tender was the lowest of six at £672, although they departed slightly from the tender specification to use 3 x 1½ inch steel uprights in place of the 3¼ x 1½ inch wrought iron specified.[68]

Fig. 16 Down river view from Annesley Bridge showing retaining wall at Fairview Park at low tide. (Source: N. Carolan.)

One proposal, had it been implemented, would have changed the boundaries and the park forever. A plan to extend a new roadway from Annesley Bridge to Howth Road met with substantial local objections, and was abandoned in favour of replacement by a walkway. The proposed road ran from point 'B' to 'D' in figure 5, and would have cleaved the park in two. A yet more unusual proposal also failed to materialise, although it proved impossible after the spring of 1966. Some forty years earlier Myles Keogh TD suggested in a letter to the *Irish Times* that the new park was a suitable place for the relocation of Nelson's Pillar.[69]

Conclusion

The transformation by Dublin Corporation of the Fairview Sloblands into public amenity parkland was a major accomplishment. However, much more than what is seen today was achieved in those three decades of landscape change. On its way, the corporation delivered many public service outcomes at Fairview, despite encountering a world war, a national revolution, partition, a civil war, and having to learn to live with a friendly, but near bankrupt, national government. In doing so, it created enduring and interim landscapes, that were equal in importance, but different in their potential to be remembered. This article is a modest attempt to recover those forgotten interim landscapes of early twentieth century Fairview.

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Endnotes

[1] Weston St John Joyce, *The neighbourhood of Dublin* (Dublin, 1912), p. 245.
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[3] McGee, Owen, 'Fred Allan (1861-1937): Republican, Methodist and Dubliner', in *Dublin Historical Record*, lvi, no. 2 (2003), p. 211.
[4] Kellett (1969) cited in Joseph Brady, 'Dublin at the turn of the century' in Joseph Brady, and Anngret Simms, (eds), *Dublin through space and time* (Dublin, 2001), p. 241.
[5] Cleansing committee report, *Reports of Municipal Council,* no. 92 (Dublin, 1904).
[6] *Sunday Independent*, 18 Oct 1925, p.4.
[7] 'Report of the streets committee', *Reports of Municipal Council,* no. 217 (Dublin, 1923).
[8] Cleansing committee breviate report, for the quarter ending 31 Dec. 1917, *Reports of Municipal Council,* no. 68 (Dublin, 1918).
[9] Land cultivation committee breviate report, for six months ending 31 Mar. 1919, *Reports of Municipal Council,* ii, no. 144 (Dublin, 1919).
[10] Douglas Bennett, *The encyclopaedia of Dublin* (Dublin, 1991), p. 97.
[11] Ruth McManus, Joseph Brady, and Anngret Simms, (eds), *Dublin 1910-1940: shaping the city and suburbs* (Dublin, 2002), p.249.
[12] *Irish Times*, 01 Jul. 1926, p. 5.
[13] Joseph V. O'Brien, '*Dear dirty Dublin: a city in distress*, 1899-1916 (London, 1982), pp 120-1.
[14] Ibid.
[15] F. W. R. Knowles, *Old Clontarf* (Dublin, 1976), p. 4.
[16] Report of the cleansing committee, *Reports of Municipal Council*, ii, no. 133 (Dublin, 1905).
[17] Cleansing Committee Report, *Reports of Municipal Council,* ii, no. 135 (Dublin, 1905).
[18] The Tramway Review, iii-ix, no. 22-48, p.107, (https://books.google.ie/books?id=0WBUAAAAM AAJ&q=fairview+slobland&dq=fairview+slobland&hl=ga&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjkobf_4NDhAhXWXRUIHSV4BC0 4HhDoAQg4MAQ) (accessed 13 Apr. 2019).
[19] *Minutes of Municipal Council,* no. 558 (Dublin, 1910).
[20] *Minutes of Municipal Council,* no. 239 (Dublin, 1910).
[21] This paragraph is based on three reports of the Cleansing Committee, ii, no. 92 (Dublin, 1904); ii, 134 (Dublin, 1905); and ii, no. 135 (Dublin, 1905), with other sources referenced as they arise.
[22] *National Inventory of National Heritage*, Reg. no. 50070207, http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/niah/search.jsp? type=record&county=DU&regno=50070207 (last accessed 30/04/2019].
[23] Cleansing committee for six months to 30 June 1920, *Reports of Municipal Council,* no. 215 (Dublin, 1920)..
[24] 'Impressions of an old Dubliner as told to the editor', Editorial, *Dublin Historical Record*, xiii, no. 3-4 (1953), p. 65.
[25] *Irish Times*, 1 Feb. 1905, p. 4.
[26] *Irish Times*, 11 Nov 1911, p. 4.
[27] *Irish Times*, 27 Nov. 1906, p. 3.
[28] *Irish Times*, 18 Dec. 1906, p. 3.
[29] *Irish Times*, 14 Dec. 1906, p. 2.
[30] *Irish Times*, 21 Oct. 1908, p.7.
[31] Joseph Brady, 'Dublin at the turn of the century' in Joseph Brady, and Anngret Simms, (eds), *Dublin through space and time* (Dublin, 2001), p. 272.
[32] *Irish Times*, 17 Oct. 1908, p. 21.
[33] *Irish Times*, 26 Dec. 1908, p.23.
[34] *Irish Times*, 3 Oct. 1908, p. 9.
[35] *Irish Times,* 8 Oct. 1908, p. 6.
[36] *Thirty-seventh annual report of the Local Government Board for Ireland, for the year ending 31st March 1908,* i, [Cmd 4810], H.C. 1909, xxx, 107.

[37] 'Historical Trees , Fairview Park & the Irish Forestry Society' places the trees of Fairview P in the wider setting of the lobbying activities of the society, and it also recounts the corporation's efforts to appease the concerns of local residents, http://eastwallforall.ie/?p=3720, accessed 24 May 2020).
[38] *Irish Independent*, 30 Oct. 1908, p. 4
[39] *Irish Times*, 1 Feb. 1913, p. 12.
[40] *Irish Times*, 8 Nov. 1909, p. 6.
[41] *Minutes of Municipal Council,* no. 175 (Dublin, 1910).
[42] Cleansing committee breviate report, for six months to 30 Jun. 1918, *Reports of Municipal Council,* no. 159 (Dublin, 1918).
[43] *Irish Times*, 9 Apr. 1909, p.9.
[44] *Minutes of Municipal Council,* no. 596 (Dublin, 1909).
[45] *Irish Independent,* 7 Jul. 1910, p. 4.
[46] *Freemans Journal*, 9 Jul. 1910, p. 4.
[47] *Minutes of Municipal Council,* no. 539 (Dublin, 1910).
[48] Attributed to Séan T. O'Ceallaigh, McGee, 'Fred Allan', p. 211.
[49] *Minutes of Municipal Council,* no. 799 (Dublin, 1913).
[50] There were, on a lighter note, significant quality control issues with war-time bands paid to play in Dublin's parks, see Pádraig Yeates, *A city in wartime: Dublin 1914-18* (Dublin, 2011), p. 268.
[51] Carolan, 'Clontarf and Marino Allotments', pp 224-5.
[52] *Irish Times*, 26 Mar. 1915, p. 6.
[53] *Irish Times*, 26 May 1914, p. 9.
[54] Pádraig Yeates, *A city in wartime: Dublin 1914-18* (Dublin, 2011), pp 120-1.
[55] *Irish Times*, 26 Mar. 1915, p. 16.
[56] Ibid.
[57] *Irish Times*, 29 Apr. 1915, p. 8.
[58] *Report on the administration of the national relief fund up to the 31st March, 1918 (in continuation of Cd. 8920)*, I, [Cd. 9111], H.C. 1918, 5.
[59] Report of crops grown at Fairview Farm Colony, Minutes *of Municipal Council,* no. 677 (Dublin, 1919).
[60] *Dublin Daily Express*, 5 Mar. 1917.
[61] Ibid.
[62] *Freeman's Journal*, 30 Oct. 1919, p.9
[63] Carolan, 'Clontarf and Marino Allotments', p. 224.
[64] Land cultivation committee breviate report, for quarter ending 31 Mar. 1918, *Reports of Municipal Council,* ii, no. 122 (Dublin, 1918).
[65] Land cultivation committee report, for year ending 30 Sept. 1920, *Reports of Municipal Council,* ii, no. 256 (Dublin, 1920).
[66] *Reports of Municipal Council,* no. 1 (Dublin, 1920).
[67] *Report of the officers of the railway department to the lords of the committee of privy council for trade: with appendices i &ii*, xiv, [752], H.C. 1846, xxxix, 430-1.
[68] *Minutes of Municipal Council,* no. 558 (Dublin, 1924).
[69] *Irish Times*, 10 May 1926.