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SIR GEORGE GABRIEL STOKES: THE MALAHIDE CONNECTION

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While the Irish origin and family connections of Sir George Gabriel Stokes are well documented, [1], [2], the fact that he maintained continuous contact with his family in Ireland is probably not as well known. This connection is recorded on a brass tablet which is mounted on the wall of the east (right) transept of Saint Andrew's Church, Malahide. The inscription reads

*To the Glory of God and in memory of
 Sir George Gabriel Stokes Bart
 Master of Pembroke College
 and for 53 years Professor of Mathematics
 in the University of Cambridge
 which he represented in Parliament 1887-92.
 President of the British Association 1869,
 and of the Royal Society 1885-90.
 He was a Member of the French Academy of Science,
 was decorated with the Prussian Order of Merit,
 & received many other honours for his discoveries
 in previously unexplored regions of Science
 Endowed with rare intellectual gifts
 yet simple hearted as a child
 and seeking truth above all things
 He was a devout believer in Him
 Whom he often worshipped in this church
 and in the Knowledge of Whom is everlasting life
 Born in County Sligo, 1819. Died at Cambridge, 1903.
 "The Lord is my Light"*

The name of the tablet maker is inscribed on the lower margin, namely, T. R. Scott & Co., Dublin. This was a firm of wholesale cabinet makers, shop fitters and straw case makers which supplied school and church furnishings from their joinery works at Upper Abbey Street, [3].

In relation to the plaque itself a "form of Certificates of consent to Alterations proposed to be made in a Church vested in the representative Church Body" is held in the Archives of the Representative Body of the Church of Ireland. This dates the certification of the permission by the Bishop or Ordinary to "introduce" the brass tablet as 10th July 1903. There is no record of the date on which the tablet was dedicated but it is reasonable to surmise that this Church ceremony took place on or near the birth date of Stokes, 13th August.

A gravestone in the adjacent churchyard provides further evidence of the Malahide connection. The inscription on the stone is

*Sacred to the memory of Elizabeth Stokes
relict of the late Revd. Gabriel Stokes
rector of Skreen and Vicar General of the
Diocese of Killala who departed this life
November 30th AD 1866 in the 86th year of
her age.*

Revelation XIV Ch. 13V.

"Her children arise up and call her blessed"

Prov XXXI Ch. 28 V.

*Also of her daughter Elizabeth Mary Stokes
who died June 18 1904 aged 93*

Continuing instant in prayer

The firstnamed Elizabeth Stokes was the mother of Sir George Gabriel Stokes. She was the daughter of John Haughton, rector of Kilrea, County Derry, while the secondnamed Elizabeth Mary Stokes was her unmarried daughter and older sister of Sir George Gabriel. His mother lived at 4 Windsor Terrace, Malahide, during the last years of her life. An entry in the 1865 edition of Thom's Directory, [4], which lists the householders of Malahide, shows a

Mrs Stokes at that address for the first time. The house, a semi-detached two storey over basement type, still stands as a private residence to the north of (downhill from) Saint Andrew's Church on the opposite side of Church Road. Mrs Stokes continued to be recorded as the householder in Thom's Directory until the 1867 edition following which there was a break of two years, the listing being "Vacant" for that period. In the 1869 edition the entry was changed to Miss Stokes, which continued unchanged until the 1905 edition.

There is no documentation relating to the Malahide connection in the collection of his academic papers and writings which is held at Pembroke College Library, Cambridge, [5]. However, the following extract from *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, [6], provides evidence of the continued link with his family in Ireland.

In 1837, the year of Queen Victoria's accession, he commenced residence at Cambridge, where he was to find his home, almost without intermission, for sixty-five years. In those days sport was not the fashion of reading men, but he was a good walker, and astonished his contemporaries by the strength of his swimming. Even at a much later date he enjoyed encounters with wind and waves in his summer holidays on the north coast of Ireland.

With the development of the railway system and sea ferries between Ireland and Great Britain the Victorian traveller had frequent and rapid transport between London and Dublin. At the end of the 19th century three express trains departed from Euston Station, London for Westland Row Station, Dublin via Kingstown from Monday to Saturday with one express train on Sundays. The total rail and sea journey time was 9 hours, the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company providing the sea ferry service from Holyhead to Kingstown. A frequent rail service was provided by the Great Northern Railway (Ireland) from the Amiens Street terminus to Malahide.

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Book Review

Introduction to MAPLE

Andre Heck

Springer-Verlag 1993, 497 pp
 ISBN 0-387-97662-0 (New York)
 ISBN 3-540-97662-0 (Berlin)

Reviewed by Pat O'Leary

This book is the first real introduction to Maple and, as such, is very welcome. The author is managing director of the CAN (Computer Algebra in the Netherlands) which stimulates and coordinates the use of computer algebra in education and research. The book is an introduction and has to be viewed as such. It begins by discussing computer algebra and as well as discussing the advantages, some limitations of computer algebra are mentioned. The version of Maple used is release 2 of Maple V, which has been superseded by the launch of version 3 in April 1994 (a common problem with books on software) but given the introductory nature of the book, and the nature of changes in the new release, this does not cause major problems.

After the introduction, the basic syntax of Maple is introduced at a very reasonable pace and there are many good exercises at the end of each chapter. There is a very clear exposition of the structure of the language and of data types (a subject that often causes problems for students). The author also illustrates some difficulties that arise with examples, particularly with plotting. In the chapter on solving equations there is a nice demonstration of the use of Gröbner basis for solving non-linear differential equations. The last chapter looks at applications using the Linear Algebra package. The book has an extensive list of references on the material of the book. Given the large number of examples of code in the book, it would have been greatly enhanced if a diskette with code had been included with it, or was even available as a