

# GRANDFATHER'S HOUSE

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*Monte Alverno, Dalkey, Co Dublin*





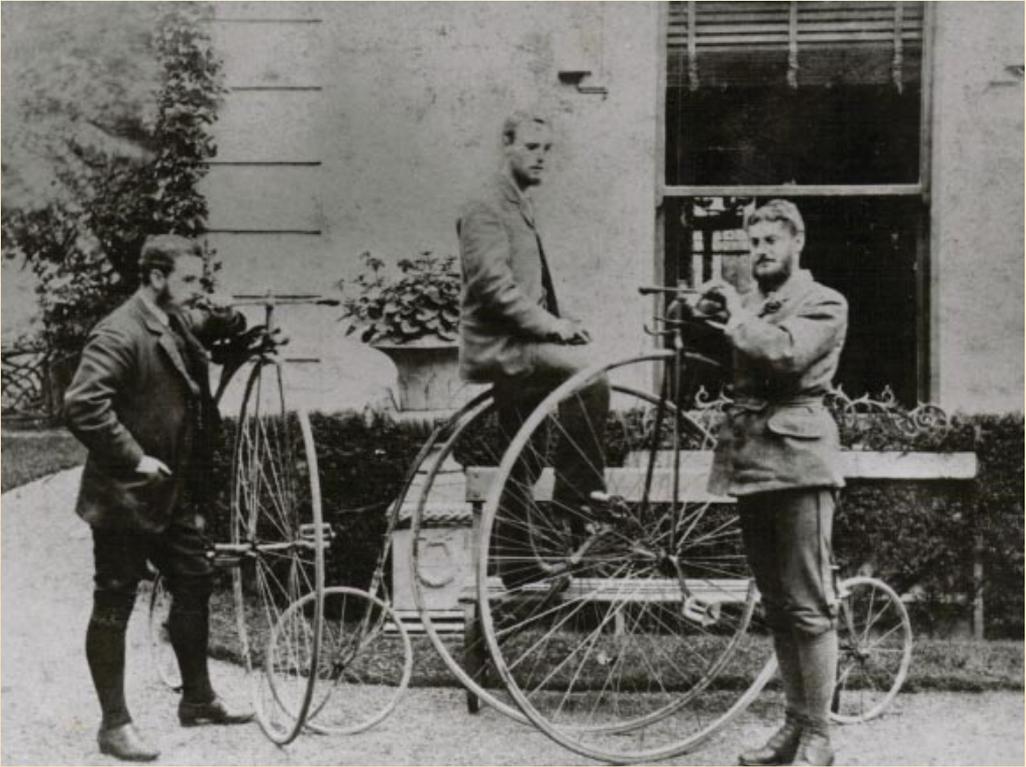
Elsewhere in Dalkey in the 1870's, things were equally stony and rugged and undeveloped. Perhaps the most characteristic element of the whole area then was this juxtaposition of fine large houses with rows of squalid looking cottages. Well, *cottages* to be polite. Hovels, to tell the truth. This view is looking down the hill towards Bulloch Harbour. That's the still new Kingstown Pier in the background. And in the foreground that row of cottages/hovels was known as Perrin's Cottages. Perrin, a quarry owner, built the nearby Castle Park, now a prestigious school. These cottages were for his quarry workers. They have been long replaced by an institution known as Dalkey Manor, an exceedingly ugly looking nursing home for the aged and unwanted of our times. A thoughtful observer looking up at the modern rows of windows might well recall the onetime rows of hovels. And walk on, brooding.

Grandfather's House



Fast forward twenty years or so. The small flag waving boy was to become a soldier in the 1st WW. Not only a soldier, but an officer. Not only an officer, but a winner of the Military Cross for gallantry during active operations against the enemy. Here he is, on a quieter day.





These three young buckos (as they'd be called in my part of the country) are Alexander Conan, Robert Conan and Jean Paul Guéret. That latter surname will be familiar to readers of the *Irish Medical Directory*, its editor being one Maurice Guéret. He also pops up as newspaper columnist and as a (usually unsuccessful) candidate in various political elections. Maurice is a descendant of Jean Paul, the family having originally come to Ireland from France in the 1870's. The young Conans had been students in Paris at that time and the Gueréts had accompanied them back to Ireland as refugees from the troubles of the period.



These drawings are those prepared for the fitting out of the library at Monte Alverno.

And this beautiful woman? Well I think she's beautiful. Anyway, she is Norah Curtis, who was to marry Robert Strahan of the furniture family. She is pictured here in the Monte Alverno conservatory. Alexander Conan was fond, very very fond of conservatories and glasshouses generally. (See page 63). He had a vinery. And Norah had a sister, Alice, perhaps not quite so beautiful. Alexander married her.

