



## Dictionary of Irish Architects 1720 - 1940

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### Selected:

**FULLER, JAMES FRANKLIN**

**Born: 1835 Died: 1924**

Architect, of Co. Kerry and Dublin city. James Franklin Fuller came of minor landed gentry in Co. Kerry. He was born in 1835, the only son of Thomas Harnett Fuller of Glashnacree, Co. Kerry, by his first wife, Frances Diana, third daughter of Francis Christopher Bland of Derryquin Castle, Co. Kerry. He was sent to a school in Blackrock, Co. Cork, where THOMAS NEWENHAM DEANE\_ , was a fellow pupil. After two years the establishment moved to Dublin, where he completed his schooling.(1) In 1850 he went to England, where he spent a year's apprenticeship with the mechanical engineers Summers, Day and Baldock of Southampton before entering the office of FREDERICK WILLIAM PORTER\_ of London. After serving his articles with Porter he worked briefly for several London architects - Horace Jones, Thomas Roger Smith, and WILLIAM BURGES - \_ then for ALFRED WATERHOUSE\_ in Manchester. From Manchester he moved to the office of MATTHEW ELLISON HADFIELD\_ in Sheffield, and afterwards to the office of Henry Dawson(2) in the City of London.

In 1861 Fuller returned to Co. Kerry with his wife. The following year he answered an advertisement for a district architect under the Irish ecclesiastical commissioners, and was chosen for the post from among ninety-seven candidates.(3) His charge was the North Western Division with residence at Killeshandra, Co. Cavan. On the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869, he received a lump payment, and set up his own office at 179 Great Brunswick Street, Dublin, where he remained for the rest of his long life. His connection with the Church of Ireland continued: in 1871 he became architect to the Representative Church Body for the dioceses of Dublin, Glendalough,(4) Kildare, Ossory, Ferns and Leighlin, and in 1882 for Meath, holding these positions until his resignation at the end of March 1913 'on account of advancing years and failing health', when he was granted a retiring allowance of £200 per annum.(4) In 1873 he was appointed architect to St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.(5) He was considered an authority on the Hiberno-Romanesque style.(6) Diligent in supplying the *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette* with news of all his latest works, 'Mr Fuller', as a contributor to that periodical observed somewhat wearily in 1877, 'must, from the frequency with which we meet with his name in connexion with church work, have built over half of Ireland'.(7) He was evidently regarded by the Church of Ireland authorities as a safe pair of hands. 'It is not too much to say that the Church of Ireland may be congratulated on having in Mr Fuller, one whose taste and skill may be safely relied on,' ran a description of All Saints, Killesk, in the same journal in December 1878. 'The complete success of Mr Fuller's design for All Saints may be traced to the fact that the fact that no attempt was made to interfere with his plans in those matters in which he ought to be the best judge of fitness and propriety.'(8) In addition to ecclesiastical work, he was architect to the Benchers of King's Inns and to the National Board of Education,(9) and in 1912 he was appointed assessor to the Ballsbridge Carnegie Library competition.(10)