

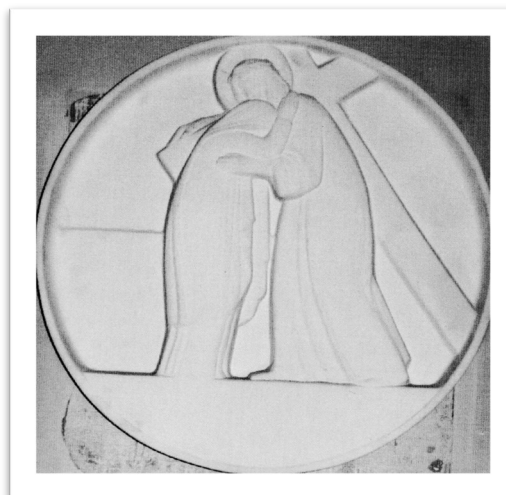




**Heritage Features  
of  
the Church  
of  
St John the Evangelist  
Sandymount**

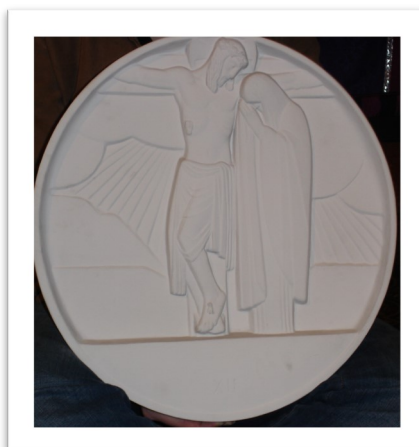
## THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS AT ST. JOHN'S

The present set of art-deco plaster roundels are the original set believed to have been donated in 1935 by Evie Hone, at the time a worshipper at St John's. The artist was a deeply religious and spiritual person and, although received into the Roman Catholic Church in 1937, supported St John's for many years.<sup>1</sup> She is known to have travelled repeatedly to France during the early 1930s. and the legend is that she would have known the work of Roger de Villiers and be in a position to recommend or perhaps donate this set of Stations. Roger de Villiers was an French art deco sculptor.<sup>2</sup> and



Jesus meets his Mother Mary

much of his work was sold through a religious art shop called *Art Catholique*. The catalogue offered three different designs for Stations of the Cross. They are believed to have been made using either a waste mould or a piece mould. At the back of the roundels there is evidence that a hand was used to press the plaster into the moulds where it would have been strengthened by the introduction of animal hair. There is no French



Mary at the Cross

text but the catalogue suggests that inscriptions and the medium used are the choice of the patrons therefore these were probably customized for St. John's.<sup>3</sup>

Since 1930 the incumbent of St. John's had been Revd Samuel Colquhoun. He was a very controversial figure and at the time the Stations were installed, had already had, in 1934, charges brought against him by the Ecclesiastical Court of the Church of Ireland. Petitions were made to the General Synod for his "non-canonical" practices. These included candlesticks on the Communion table, a crucifix, a crib, a confessional screen and "a set of representations of figures in plaster known as Stations of the Cross"<sup>4</sup> On

December 17th 1938 the Archbishop of Dublin delivered his judgment that all listed objects had to be removed in seven days. Fr Colquhoun said that the stations were "lent" to the church pending their permission for permanent erection and they were now to be returned to their donor.<sup>5</sup>

After their removal from St. John's in 1939 the stations were next traced to the Jesuit Chapel in St Stanislas College, Tullabeg in 1947. They appear to have been donated by Senator Brennan whose children studied there. In 1991 the college closed and the Stations of the Cross were moved to the Jesuit Chapel, University Hall, Hatch St Dublin. When this also closed they were put up for auction and members of St. John's, seeing the advertisement, were successful in bidding for them. However, when the Jesuits discovered that they were coming back to St John's, they kindly donated them.

St. John's is still the only Church of Ireland church with a set of the Stations of the Cross on permanent display.

The images are as follows:

- I. Jesus is condemned to death by Pilate
- II. Jesus receives his Cross
- III. Jesus falls for the first time
- IV. Jesus meets his Mother
- V. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus with the Cross
- VI. Veronica wipes Jesus' face with her veil
- VII. Jesus falls for the second time
- VIII. Jesus meets the holy women of Jerusalem
- IX. Jesus falls for the third time
- X. Jesus is stripped
- XI. Jesus is nailed to the Cross
- XII. Jesus with his Mother
- XIII. Jesus dies on the Cross
- XIV. Jesus is laid in his tomb



### Notes for Stations of The Cross

1. *Account Books of St John's* p.0306.07 RCB Archives.
2. *Irish Province News* July 1947
3. Alison O'Keeffe, *A Case Study on the History of the Stations of the Cross in St. John the Evangelist Church, Sandymount.* (UCD May 2005)
4. *The Church of Ireland Gazette* Vol LXXXIV January 1939
5. *The Irish Times*, 19th December 1938