



ROYAL ACADEMY OF MEDICINE IN IRELAND

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History of Medicine Section

Wednesday 22nd March 2017 at 6.15pm
Geoffrey Bourke Room, First Floor, Setanta House
Setanta Place, Dublin 2.

*The famine of 1741, Handel and the première of Messiah in Dublin:
what's the connection?*

Dr Jonathan Bardon

(President, Belfast Natural History & Philosophical Society)



The Bottle Tower, Rathfarnham



George Frideric Handel



Fishamble Street

Arctic conditions followed by storms and a drought led to a terrible famine sweeping across Ireland in 1741. As starving, fever-ridden families ranged through Dublin's streets, the Charitable Musical Society for the Release of Imprisoned Debtors invited George Frideric Handel to come over from London to conduct a benefit concert of compositions of his own choosing in the Society's new Musick Hall in Fishamble Street. Handel accepted because, after many years of success, his career was faltering. It was in this way that the sacred oratorio, *Messiah*, came to be given its first performance in Dublin on 13 April 1742.

All Welcome, particularly students