

Cumann Staire

Bhéal Átha'n Chaorthaidh
Historical Society Journal
1993



Luach £2

Uimhir 1

Chairperson's Address

le Seán Ó Súilleabháin

Thar ceann an Chumann Staire cuirim fáilte rómhaibh go léir go dtí an chéad eagrán den "Journal". Tá súil againn go mbainfidh sibh taitneamh as ár n-iarrachtaí agus go mbeidh tuiscint níos fearr agaibh de stair Uibh Laoghaire i ndiaidh san.

Nuair a bheartaíomar ar iris a fhoilsiú cupla mí ó shoin cheapamar nach mbeadh mórán altanna againn do eagrán amháin fiú. Anois tá súil againn eagrán eile a fhoilsiú le linn na bliana seo chugainn.

There are many sources which we can use in compiling a history of Uibh Laoghaire. These can be divided broadly into the official written records and work done by private individuals driven by a love of their locality and culture.

Census returns and surveys of land occupiers provide a picture of Uibh Laoghaire's population from c1500 to the present day. While the Schools Manuscript Collection from 1937-38 contains some fascinating stories from the parish's past taken down from local people by the teachers and pupils from the national schools for the Folklore Commission. Included in this edition are two short stories from the collection and we hope to publish many more in forthcoming publications.

Private individuals have also contributed to our understanding of our past. Uibh Laoghaire is fortunate in that we have a major collection made in 1917 by Fr. O'Donoghue who was curate in Ballingearry at the time. (This collection was kindly lent to the Cumann by Gobnait Creed of Inchigeela to whom we are

very grateful) There is however a need for more work to be done in the area of collecting our history. Everyone should show an interest in taking down information from people who can remember the interesting details of their youth. This is an area that can be fascinating, particularly when it concerns events during certain eras for example the 1916-23 era, the Economic War, and how people coped during the Emergency.

So go out there and collect and let 1994 be a fruitful year in that regard. The collection of field names and the names of rocks, streams and every other physical feature in the area is another project that the Cumann hopes to undertake in the near future. These names are being forgotten at an alarming rate and if you get a chance please make a list of the ones you know. These simple lists can be very important to future generations in tracing their history.

The Cumann would like to thank everyone who has helped to make the last two years very successful. Particular mention must be made of those members who attended the first series of meetings and demonstrated that the interest was widespread in historical matters. In the years to come we hope to continue as we have begun, collecting our history and making it available to more and more people. If you have an article you would like included in the next "Journal" please pass it along to me, it may be of interest to a lot of people. If you have any questions you would like answered come along to a meeting and we may be able to help you. Míle buíochas.

STOITE

le Mairtín Ó Diréain

Ar n-aithreacha bhíodh,
Is a n-aithreacha siúd,
In achrann leis an saol
Ag coraíocht leis and
gcarraig loim.

Aiteas orthu bhíodh
Tráth dob eol dóibh
Féile chaoín na hÚir,
Is díocas orthu bhíodh
Ag baint ceart
De neart na ndúl.

Thóg an fear seo teach
Is an fear úd
Claí nó fál
A mhair ina dhiaidh
Is a choinnigh a chuimhne
buan.

Sinne a gclann,
Is clann a gclainne
Dúinn is éigin
Cónaí a dheanamh
In árais ó dhaoine
A leagfadh cíos
Ar an mbraon anuas.

Beidh cuimhne orainn
go fóill:
Beidh carnán trodán
Faoi ualach deannaigh
Inár ndiaidh in Oifig Stáit.

Field Trip to Sceichin na Radharc

(August 1993)

This Field Trip followed the old road from Dromcarra Bridge to Carrignacurra Castle. This was the main throughfare into the Parish from the East, before the construction of Toons Bridge and the new metalled road from Macroom. All three of the O'Leary tower houses, and other important buildings such as Kilbarry Church, lay on this strategic route. It was known as Sceichin na Radharc, the little road with the view. The view in question was from the top of Kilbarry hill, from which nearly half the Parish can be seen.

Dromcarra Castle

The ruins of Dromcarra tower house lie to the North of the old road, in Dromcarra North townland. It was built by Donnchadh O'Leary, fourth son of Conchobhar Mac Diarmaid, also known as an Ghaorthaidh, who died in 1638. He became O'Leary in 1600 following the death of his elder brother, Amhlaoibh Ruadh, killed at the battle of Ahakeera. It was traditional on the election of a new Chieftain for the lands of the Sept to be redistributed and the new chieftain to have the principal tower house in Carrignaneelagh as his home. This did not happen in 1600 and Carrignaneelagh and Carrignacurra were firmly held onto by their current occupiers, Domhnall mac Airt and Tadhg Meirgeach, who claimed ownership under the new customs following Surrender and Regrant. Donnchadh initially lived in the other principal O'Leary home of Mannen, in Inchigeelagh, but eventually decided to build a new tower house for his family. This work was completed in 1625 and at that time he is described as "living as a country gentleman in the privacy of his walled garden and orchard" of Dromcarra Castle. This was one of the shortest lives for a tower house since it was slighted in 1650, following Lord Broghill's campaign in Muskerry. In 1641 it had been the home of Donnchadh's son and heir, Amhlaoibh.

The ruins of the tower house stood in good order until 1968 when they were deemed unsafe, and knocked down by the Army in an explosives

exercise. It was the smallest of the O'Leary tower houses, measuring 30 ft x 20 ft with a height of 40 ft. The walls were only 2 ft thick which is scarcely "castle" dimensions. It was valued at £110 in 1655.

Kilbarry Church.

The site of St. Finbar's church and cemetery lie one mile further to the West on the same road. There is little to see now apart from the outlines of the foundations. The church was built, probably, in the 15th Century by the O'Learys, on the site of an earlier building which had been a chapel of ease for the monks, lying on the route between Gougane Barra and the Monastery in Cork City. This was probably the third church to be built in the Parish, following the one in Augheris and St. Ronan's in Kilmore.

It was constructed of stone and clay and with a thatched roof. It probably fell into reduced use following the construction of the first church in the more central position of Inchigeelagh village. It was certainly not mentioned in the Civil Survey of 1655, and was described as ruinous in 1845. The cemetery continued to be used for some time after, and was later described as a Kileen (children's burial place). The church was 40 ft x 20 ft and the cemetery was 60 ft square. There is said to be a holy well close by called Tobar Ri an Domhnaigh, and a Mass rock is a few fields away.

In 1812 the first school was built in Kilbarry townland and lasted until 1884 when the present one was constructed in Kilbarry village. It accommodated 120 children and the Master was paid £12 p.a. plus a charge to each child. It is uncertain whether this school house was built on the chapel site or a little further West.

Carrignaneelagh Castle and Kilbarry House.

Carrignaneelagh was the principal home of O'Leary. It was in the townland of the same name, a few hundred yards to the North of the road, and a mile West of Kilbarry

Church. The tower house was probably built by Conchobhar mac Diarmuid O'Leary about 1560, and the first reference to it was on the pardon to his son and successor, Art O'Leary in 1573. It was valued at £150 and there was a Mill valued at £2. In the Civil Survey it is noted that the occupier in 1641 was Art's son Domhnall, who became O'Leary on the death of his uncle, Donnchadh, in 1638. In 1650 the tower house was occupied by the Cromwellian troops who garrisoned the district, and they stayed there until just before the Restoration in 1660. When they left, the tower was slighted and remained a ruin until 1822.

This townland came into the hands of the Barry family in the early 18th Century, and in 1766 we learn that William Barry was living in their now home of Kilbarry House, built alongside the Castle. His son, James (1761-1835) was the most notorious of the Landlords in Iveleary, and called himself "An Bearthach Mor". In 1822 his house was burned to the ground in the night by the Rockites, and he made his tenants rebuild it using the stone from Carrignaneelagh Castle. Today Kilbarry House still stands, but is divided into two farmhouses. There is no trace of the Castle. Kilbarry House was 60 ft x 30ft and of two storey construction.

Carrignacurra Castle.

Carrignacurra Castle lies further West still, at the point where the old road crosses the river Lee going South. From here, the old road continues to Inchigeelagh village, reaching it at the bridge between Capanclare and Carrigleigh townlands. Carrignacurra was the first tower house built by the O'Learys in about 1500, and is the only one still standing. It was probably built by Diarmuid mac Tadhg O'Leary, the father of Conchobhar. The first reference to it was when the future Donal na gCroiceann O Donovan was fostered there as a boy by O'Leary in c.1530. It was initially the only and principal home of O'Leary. When Carrignaneelagh was built,

Carrignacurra became the home of the Tanaiste. The Castle was besieged by O'Sullivan Beara in 1602 during his brief foray into Muskerry just before the siege of Dunboy. The Castle was being held in the Queen's name, but the garrison surrendered to O'Sullivan, and all joined his force. In 1641 it was owned by Conogher Meirgeach, son of Tadhg. It fell to Lord Broghill's army in 1650 and was slighted by them. It stands today, roofless and ivy covered, but apparently quite sound. It is 30 ft x 30 ft and 70 ft high. It has four floors, the top room, the "Bower" room being supported by a splendid stone vault in excellent condition.

In 1723 a new Landlord called Masters built a mansion alongside the Castle which he named Castlemasters. The house was enlarged in 1777 by Jaspar Masters. His only son, Stephen, was killed when he struck his head attempting to ride on his horse through the stable door. The property later fell into the hands of Jaspar Pyne who married Master's daughter Catherine. This house was in use at the beginning of the 20th. century but has since been demolished and replaced by a new farm house. It was 60 ft x 24 ft and two stories high. There are still the remains of two of the old stables from Castlemasters to be seen.

The Old Church. (Inchigeelagh)

This Church lies on the new road from Macroom, in Glebe townland, half a mile from the centre of Inchigeelagh village. Since the Reformation this was the Church of Ireland (Protestant) Parish Church, but the site had previously been used for the Catholic Church when it was transferred here from Kilbarry in the 15th Century. The earliest record of a Parish Church in Inchigeelagh is in 1479 in Vatican papers which refer to the Parish Priest Fr. Donatus O Monghayn. This indicates that he was a Vicar appointed by Mourne Abbey who had the Rectorial rights. After the Reformation, as throughout Ireland, all Parish Churches were taken over by the Church Of Ireland including Inchigeelagh. In 1540 we learn that Mourne Abbey and Gill Abbey in Cork held joint Rectorial rights and in 1591 there was a Church of Ireland Vicar, Edmund M'Bryan. In 1699 the Vicar, Cornelius Hignett, reports "No Protestants in this

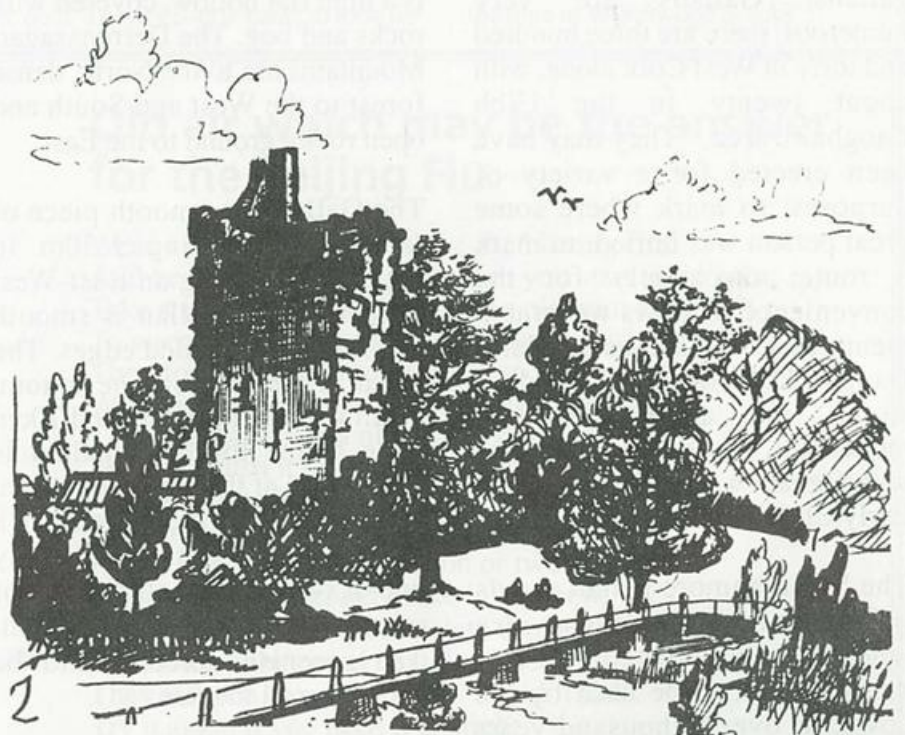
Parish", but the influx of resident landlords and their families in the early 18th Century improved their position. By 1766 there were 123 Protestants on the Parliamentary Return. The Earl of Cork had half the Tithes, the Vicar the other half. The Church had been unroofed in 1640 and 1700 but was repaired and put into use during the 18th Century.

In 1814 a new one was built at a cost of £230, which was basically the present Church. It was repaired again in 1867 by Rev. Edward Spring, who added a new Vestry Room and built the wall and gate. But by now the Protestant population had fallen again to 50 as Landlords became "Absentees". There was also a long period during the Vicarship of Rev. George Sealy when the Vicar also was absent in England leaving a Curate in charge. He did not however neglect to collect his handsome stipends amounting to about £400 pa., only paying his Curate £18 pa. The last Vicar, Rev. Patrick O'Rourke, resigned in 1885, and a series of Curates served until 1909 when the Parish was joined to Macroom due to lack of Parishioners. Altogether this site was used as a place of worship for nearly 500 years, and the ruins of the last Church are still well preserved.

The Churchyard was used for burials of Protestants and Catholics and although many of the tombstones are no longer legible, there are many interesting local people buried here. Amongst Protestants there are the Boyle, Barter, Grainger and Barry families, and of course, Private John Smith. Amongst Catholics there are many O'Learys and a number of Parish Priests.

The Glebe House.

This lies across the road from the old Church and in the same townland. The original Glebe house was built for the Church of Ireland Vicar and his family in the 18th Century and lay close to the river, beyond the Church. There is no trace of this building now. It was condemned in 1847 and in 1859 a new one was built at a cost of £647 on the present site. It was a handsome three story Georgian house, as can be seen from the ruins. It was occupied by the clergy up to 1909, when the Parish was abandoned. It then became a farm house for the farmer who was leasing the Glebe land. It was finally put to the torch during the War of Independance, when the local IRA learned that the Authorities were about to use it as a garrison. The occupier was warned in advance and helped with the removal of his furniture and other effects.



Carrignacurra Castle

AN GALLAN I SCRATHANMORE

by Maire Uí Leime

A standing stone, explains itself, it is a stone standing upright in the ground, it can be less than a meter in height or it can be as high as six meters.

a hollow, and marks a road junction. The Gallan could well have been erected to mark a route. Turn North to the Kerry border, turn West and head for Gougane



Standing stones can be in pairs, alignments and stand alone gallans. Gallans are very numerous, there are three hundred and forty in West Cork alone, with about twenty in the Uibh Laoghaire area. "They may have been erected for a variety of purposes; to mark where some great person was buried; to mark a route; or simply for the convenience of cows to scratch themselves." (Discovering Cork: Daphne D.C. Mould). Standing stones are a Bronze Age monument. Those standing stones with Ogham writing belong to the Early Christian Period.

The Scrathanmore gallan stands in Healy's farm, we have no idea when it was erected. A few decades ago, to be used by the cows, or over a thousand years ago to mark a heros burial place. The Gallan stands in the centre of

Barra, South to the Lee valley and East towards Macroom. The area is a high flat hollow, covered with rocks and bog. The Derrenasagart Mountains are to the North, dense forest to the West and South and open rocky ground to the East.

The Gallan is a smooth piece of sandstone, standing 1.30m in height, and facing an East-West direction. The gallan is smooth and flat with rounded edges. The gallan is 95cm wide at the bottom, 80cm wide at the centre and 70cm wide at the top. The gallan is 32cm deep at the top and bottom. The top half of the gallan has a greenish tinge to it, there is only one or two very small patches of moss and no lichen growing on it. The greenish colour could be caused by all the rain.



Scoil Scairte ar Goirtín Fliuch

Bhí scoil scairte ar Ghoirtín Fliuch ceithre míle taobh thiar thuaidh de Bhéal-Atha'n-Ghaorthaidh. Bhí ar scolairí ábhar tine do bhreith leo go dtí an scoil. Mac Gearailt ón Sciobairín a bhí ag múineadh ann. Bhíodh timpeall seisear déag ar fhicead (36) ag freastal ar an scoil agus ós rud é go raibh an scoil in aice na teorann idir Chorcaigh agus Chiarraí bhí micléinn ag teacht ó Chnocán a' Bhóna agus Cnoc a' Rudaig, i gCiarraí ag freastail uirthi uaireanta. Thagadh daoine ós na bailte seo i gContae Chorcaí, Gort Luachra, Doire na Buairce, Cúm Dorcha, Goirtín Eoin, Goirtín Fliuch, Leacha Bán, Carraig Bán, agus Ladhar na Gaoithe. Is i dtithe na mac-léinn a bhíodh an múinteoir ag cur faoi. Níl fhios cad é an pháighe a gheobhadh sé. Múineadh sé Bearla, Mathematic, Tír Eolais, Stair, Gaeilge agus Gramadach.

Bhíodh leabhair ag na paistí scoile. Do deineadh na leanaí roinnt scríobhneoireachta. Slinnte a bhíodh acu chun scríobh ortha. Bhíodh saghas éigin binne sa scoil sin. Bhí an Máistir Mac Gearailt ag múineadh ann ar feadh cúig mbliana. Fear an-léanta agus máistir an-mhaith, do b'ea é.

Taken from the "Schools Manuscript"

The Paint Lorry

One often hears the lamentation from many people that they neglected to question their parents and grandparents about events that occurred years previously. All too often details of an event are lost and all that is remembered is a vague outline. It is very important to make an effort to collect any information now, which may be useful in years to come in building a clearer picture of Ballingearry's history.

One period of time that is both interesting and important concerns the War of Independence and Civil War. Much of what happened during those years has never been recorded, and this is a pity as with each passing generation these stories are being lost.

An example of one incident, the details of which we know, relates to an event in Keimaneigh during 1919. Abbey Cronin, Inchibeg was an eye witness and told her story in the 1970's. "The I.R.A. had started long before 1919 but we only knew that they had meetings and so on. Often at night Maryanne Creed (Dromanalligh, who worked with them) and I would be asked to bake a cake for five or six of them as they would be going to meet at night and sleep out. If my mother-in-law saw us baking late in the evening it was very bad housekeeping."

"There were the Dinny Dins, John Con, Willie Twomey, Tureendubh all dead. Things were fairly dull around Keimaneigh until one day in 1919 a military lorry with British soldiers went into the dyke back at Donncha's Cottage" (Riordons, where Mr. & Mrs. Weekes are now living). "Next we heard there was a lorry in the dyke in Tureendubh. Dinny Dick Cronin, his father, Jerh Dockety (From Aharas) and Dick Cronin from Keimcoraboula were bringing in the hay from behind Dan Sullivans shop when they saw the soldiers going down the road. We saw Dan Sullivan going down the lane and we knew he was going to collect his men as evening came.

"We had butter to be taken down to Ronan's Mill at the time as they used to buy it. So Dinny Dick got his horse and car and took away the butter. Next we saw our men coming along from The Lodge where they had collected together. We knew there was something

on. Dick Cronin, Ceimcoraboula was a small boy at the time and living in Inchibeg. Eileen & Andy O Donoghue from Cogh who were going to school to Din Sullivan, they were staying at Dan's shop. We locked them into a room in the house with grandma and Stardy (who was only six months at the time). Maryanne Creed, Moll Sullivan and I stole away up to the rocks to have a look down at the men and the lorry. They tied up the soldiers and took away what they had in the lorry, paint and things, and set fire to the lorry. They then took the soldiers away up the mountain to an old house along with the soldiers from the second lorry in Tureendubh. They had some good things in their lorry, ware, cutlery and things. They were going on to Castletownbere to the army barracks."

"I heard sometime that they had drinks in Shortens and they heard that the Pass of Keimaneigh was dangerous at night. So they may think they were safe by laying up on the side of the road. Anyway Dan Sullivan and his men made tea for the soldiers and kept them in the house until some time in the night. Then they were left off to walk to Macroom or Ballincollig or where ever they were going".

"Sure, that night at one o'clock we had the soldiers from Castletown rapping at the door. They of course came to look for

their men who never arrived to them. We had Dan Sullivans sister Moll from the shop, in bed in our house. Jerh Dockety (Aharas) had gone to bed and left his boots near the fire with the marks of red paint on them from being drawing the paint and hiding it. They asked Dinny Dick, when he got up to let them in and asked who he had in the house. He told them his father, mother, wife and a school boy named Dick. They took up the boots. "They are schoolboys boots alright" they said. Jerh was small with a very small foot".

That was that and some time later a military lorry with Black and Tans came along to Tureendubh. They saw Tadhg Callaghan (Father, as he was known in later years) in Twomey's field at manure and Twomey's mouse coloured horse. "There is the man that was drawing the stuff from the lorry". They took Tadhg off that evening. Two weeks later Dan Sullivan was at the saw-mill with a load of timber. The saw-mill used to be where Colaiste na Mumhan is now. He was told the soldiers were on their way from Macroom. He got on his bike and came on up to Tureendubh to warn them. He hopped on his bike again and met the soldiers back against him. "He's the man who gave us tea in the old house" one of them shouted and he was arrested. Tadhg and Dan spent two years in jail, part of the time in Wormwood Scrubs.

Old air which may be the answer for the Beijing Flu.

Wear a heavy freeze coat by a big blazing fire.
 And be carefull of draughts when you start to perspire
 Take a strong glass of punch for a pleasant kick off
 To warm your insides and soften your cough.
 Then four pints of stout brought to lukewarm heat
 With ginger and sugar well flavoured and sweet
 Then sip it away at a nice sober rate
 Till you finish it all and begin to feel great
 Then pop into bed while your drowsy and hot
 And the rest of the cure may you never forget
 A pint of hot milk and a onion or two will do
 With butter and pepper make into a stew.
 Then sip it as hot as your palate can bear.
 Your flu will be cured next day I declare.
 They tell you they tried it and found it O.K.
 Try it again if you need it to-night
 If you take this advice you'll get rid of the flu

CUMANN STAIRE BHEAL ATHA 'N GHAORTHAIÐH

BALLINGEARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Cumann Staire Beal Atha'n Ghaorthaidh was first established in November 1991 and has recently completed its first two years of activities. It is open to members of all ages where ever they live, but particularly to the parishioners of Iveleary. Members do not have to be particularly knowledgeable, but only to have an interest in matters historical, archaeological, genealogical etc. We now have an active membership of about 30, and many others who attend from time to time.

During the winter months, meetings are held about once a month, usually in the Library of Scoil Mhuire. They take the form of lectures, talks and discussions given by members or invited expert visitors.

In the summer, there are no indoor meetings, instead there are Field Visits to local places of archaeological or historical interest, again usually once a month. We are very fortunate that our parish is very rich in such sites.

You are all invited to attend our meetings, if one is of particular interest to you. Better still, pay the modest fee to join the Cumann Staire for a year, and support our work for the protection of our local culture.

You will learn about current activities by watching for notices in the local shops in Beal Atha'n Ghaorthaidh and Inchigeelagh, and by notices from the pulpit.

The current officers of the Cumann Staire:

Sean Ó Suilleabhain	Curraithe	Cathaoirleach
Maire Bn Ui Leime	Cill Mhor	Leas Cathaoirleach
Conchur a Coitir	Curraithe	Cisteoir
Peter O'Leary	Tirnaspideoga	Archivist/Secretary
Maire Ni Luasa	Gougane Barra	Runaf
Dave Walden	Tooreenlehard	Archivist
Conchur Ó Murchu	Drom an Ailtigh	Ball don Choiste
Tadhg Ó Duinnin	Tuirin Dubh	Ball don Choiste

Cumann Staire Béal Atha'n Ghaorthaidh

Constitution of the Socitey

1. Name.

The Society will be called Cumann Staire Beal Atha'n Ghaorthaidh.

2. Objects.

The objects of the Cumann will be:

- to provide a forum and meeting place for residents to further their interest in the history of the locality.
- to keep records relating to local history which will be of benefit to present and future generations of residents.
- to provide a suitable permanent home, eventually, for such records and any other data which may be collected.

3. Scope of the work of the Cumann.

The work of the Cumann will include any historical period, from earliest time to the present day. The geographical area covered will essentially be the Civil Parish of Iveleary.

4. Membership.

Membership will be open to all, and members will be required to pay an annual subscription. Apart from administration and policy discussions, the meetings will be open to all, members and non-members alike.

5. Officers.

These will be, initially, a Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Other officers may be appointed by the Committee as they see fit.

6. The Committee.

This will consist of the Officers plus any number of additional members as may be elected at the AGM, or appointed by the Committee. Officers and the Committee will consist of paid-up members only.

7. The Annual General Meeting.

This will be held annually, in December.

Reports will be given (verbally) of the activities of the past year. The Treasurer will report on the financial position of the Cumann.

Elections will be held for each position of Officer and an agreed number of Committee members. Any Officer or Committee member may stand for re-election for as long as he/she wishes and remains eligible.

Each member present will have one vote, and in case of a balance, the Chairperson will have a casting vote.

Time will be set aside to allow members to air their views on future activities and the general running of the Cumann.

8. Regular Members Meetings.

Regular Meetings will be held throughout the year according to demand. These will include:

- Fieldwork, visits and outdoor meetings on particular projects.
- Indoor meetings, to hear talks and reports, and discuss the progress of projects.
- Committee meetings as required by the Committee.

9. Funds.

The Cumann will be operated within prudent financial policy. The Committee will budget for future requirements, and endeavour to raise funds accordingly. Funds will be raised by annual subscription; by seeking patrons and sponsors locally; by seeking grants from State or other similar bodies; and by special activities of a fund raising nature.

10. Winding up of the Cumann.

The Cumann may be wound up at any time at an AGM or EGM and by majority vote. In such an eventuality, any funds of the Cumann, remaining, will be donated to a Charity or to another similar Cumann as agreed by vote.

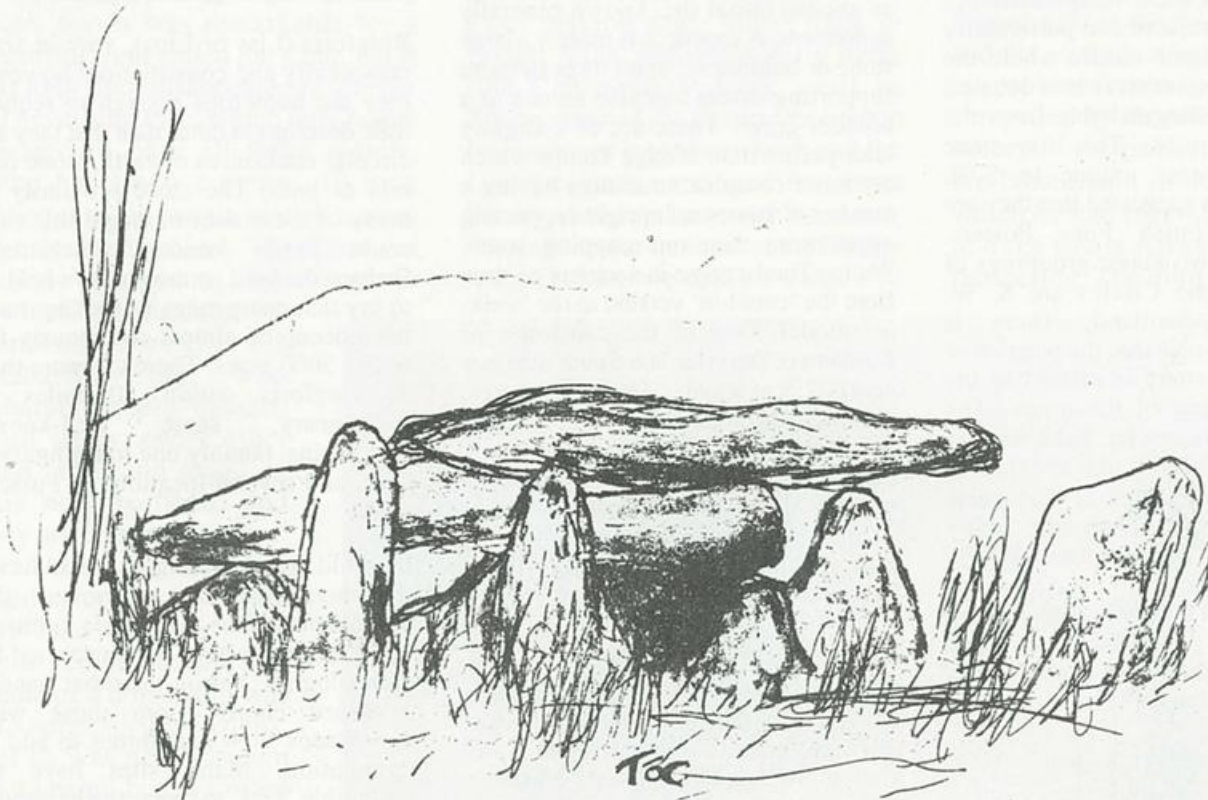
A Brief Introduction to Megalithic Stone Culture

by Dave Walden

Dating early stone structures presents many problems for archeologists. It is possible to date organic remains fairly accurately and pottery or metal artifacts can be ascribed to certain periods but where such remains are found associated with stone structures care must be taken before assuming that they are contemporary with the building of the sites. However, it is now generally believed that construction of stone circles, standing stones and other related structures began c3,700 BC and continued for 2,500 years until c1,200 BC after which no significant building took place. The cultures that used large stones in these ways are described as Megalithic, but it must be understood the time period spans the middle and late

neolithic (stone age), through the early bronze age to the middle bronze age. There is probably no coincidence in the fact that Megalithic cultures began to thrive as the climate improved following the last ice age and then declined as the climate deteriorated again. The climate of the Old Stone Age had been harsh and unforgiving but by c3,700 BC had become pleasant with great forests and a wide variety of wild life. This climatic improvement accelerated advances in farming methods, cultural developments, communities and trade between isolated groups of population and eventually advances in metal technology from early copper to bronze. A sophisticated belief system developed that is not yet fully understood. What must be made clear is

that these people, our ancestors, were men and women physically like us, with the same limitations of mind and body. Intellectually they were our equals but...their beliefs were different because their lives were different. They had an acute and sensitive awareness of animals, plants, clouds and weather because these things were the framework of the world they lived in. The problems they faced and the methods employed to solve them have to be seen in the light of their current development and their understanding of the world around them. It is to be understood that the construction of stone circles and associated monuments along with elaborate rituals, formed an intimate part of their belief system.



It is interesting to note here that the Megalithic cultures developed and declined fairly uniformly throughout Northern Europe, the British Isles and Ireland despite tribal wars and there is compelling evidence that a large number of sites have been rebuilt more than once on the same spot. When we realise the Megalithic era covers a longer period than Christianity has yet to achieve one may ponder on the unifying ethos which encouraged succeeding generations to mark the ground with needles of stone.

What may be found in our area.

Without travelling more than seven or eight miles from Ballingearry examples can be found of stone circles, standing stones, stone alignments, Cromlechs, Wedge Tombs, Cairns, Radial Cairns, Souterrains, Ring Forts, Earthworks, Fullacht Fiadhs and a Crannog.

Stone Circles.

Generally, the stone circles of South West Ireland are of the type known as Recumbent Stone Circle. This refers to a stone that is found in the south or west portion of the circle that has been laid on its side ie. recumbent. Another "feature" or general characteristic is the existence of Portal or Pillar stones found on the Eastern or opposite side to the recumbent stone. However these features are not necessarily prominent and particularly so in the five-stone circles where the recumbent stone survives in a debased form hardly distinguishable from the other circle-stones. The five-stone circles are almost unique to S.W. Munster but it is suggested that they are related to Scottish Four Posters. Certainly, the two major groupings of Recumbent Stone Circles are S. W. Munster and Scotland. There is compelling evidence that the position of the recumbent stone is related to the rising and setting of the moon. The moon, and its phases, has been seen by cultures world-wide and throughout history as an influencing body on matters of life and death. There are many theories about the use, nature and alignments of stone circles. Many of these are fanciful but some deserve more thought and will be the basis for a future article. Some of the stone circles within a few miles of Ballingearry are:

Gortanimill	Multiple stone circle
Gortanacra	Multiple stone circle
Reananaree	Five stone circle
Cappaboy Beg	Five stone circle
Cappaboy Beg	Four poster
Coolmountain	Multiple stone circle

Standing stones/Stone alignments.

Known as Gallans, standing stones are one of the most numerous and easily recognised pre-historic artifacts in the Irish landscape. There used to be many more but over the years field clearance, amongst other reasons, have taken their toll. Little is known about these lonely sentinels: what is known tends to disprove theories about them being boundary or burial markers.

Stone alignments, comprising up to six stones in a line, are usually aligned Southwest/Northeast. This general rule shows similarities to the alignment of stone circles. Standing stones and stone alignments are often found in the proximity of stone circles but it is the solitary splendour of some, and the anonymity of others that accentuates the enigma.

Within a few miles of Ballingearry there are of least 33 standing stones, including the immense stone at Baunatemple. Stone alignments are to be found at Coolavoher, Reananaree, Gortafludig, Tirna-spideoga and Derrynagree. There is also an Ogham stone at Kealvaugh More.

Cromlechs and Wedge Tombs.

Two names for basically the same thing, an ancient burial site, known generally as dolmens. A cromlech is usually a large stone or boulder set upon three or more supporting stones and also known as a boulder grave. These are of a slightly later period than Wedge Tombs which are more complex structures having a number of stones set upright supporting often more than one capping stone. Wedge Tombs come in a variety of sizes from the 'crawl-in' version to the 'walk-in' model. One of the capstones of Bordanree, Deryriordain South measure nearly 2.5 m square. These structures, although often found alone, are also found in close association with stone circles and alignments. They have been reliably dated to the Bronze Age or earlier. Ballingearry has sixteen wedge tombs within a few miles of the village in various degrees of perfection.

Radial Cairns.

Cairns of various types, or the remains of, fall into the following categories: Passage graves, Marker cairns and Radial Stone cairns. Passage graves, which are rare in West Cork, demonstrate a link with the great passage graves of the Boyne Valley, Co. Meath. Marker cairns, usually on hill tops and now often badly damaged, consisting in the main of piles of stones, and are assumed to mark the burial of a leader. Radial cairns are,

apart from one example in Co. Galway, unique to S.W. Munster. They take the form of a low circle of a large number of stones, through which a circular row of small upright stones protude, the axis of which is radial. Once again, the proximity of radial cairns to other megalithic sites indicates contemporary cultures. Only two radial cairns exist in the Ballingearry vicinity, one marker cairn and no passage graves. However if one travelled a few miles extra beyond our district, examples of each are to be found.

Souterrains, Ringforts, Earthworks and Fulacht Fiadh.

Apart from Fulacht Fiadh, which are piles of discarded burnt stones used for heating water for cooking and known to be contemporary with the megalithic culture, there is uncertainty about the exact dates of the other above sites. Some sites are thought relatively recent, dating from the Late Bronze/Early Iron Age, which places them at the extreme end of the megalithic cultures. Certainly, occupation of many ringforts and earthworks continued into the medieval period. Souterrains are similarly age-uncertain, although there is evidence that some were constructed during the Bronze Age and would thus be contemporary megalithic culture.

Ringforts (Liss or Lios), vary in size, complexity and construction; however they are numerous enough to require little description other than that they are circular enclosures of earth, stone or a mix of both. The close proximity of many of these sites to megalithic sites could imply various conclusions. Perhaps the least controversial would be to say that many megalithic sites have been occupied almost continuously for nearly 5000 years. There are more than 30 ringforts within 10 miles of Ballingearry, some well-known souterrains, notably one in Rathgaskig Lios, and several locations of Fulacht Fiadh.

It would be interesting to speculate on the mysteries that surround the monuments of the megalithic cultures. Many questions have been answered by archeologists, but on the other hand a sustained chorus from those with unorthodox views continues to add to speculation. Many sites have an intangible 'feel' to them; the harmony, balance and peacefulness of the site betrays the clinical assessment of the scientists, and it is not difficult to imagine early man having an instinctive understanding of the perfection of nature. Maybe the stones are part of this.

John Windele was a well known historian who lived in Cork City during the early 19th century. These are his own verbatim notes exactly as he wrote them.

MY VISIT TO GOUGANE BARRA

By John Windele

1st. September 1833

Js. Reardon, Corns. Delaney, Chas. McCarthy Luft, Charles McCarthy L'Abbe with me. Slept at Jas. Caughlan's Macroom 31st. August, Sunday by Coolcower, on the road by Gaorha. Called at Barry's within two and a half miles of Inchigeelagh for key of lodge at Gaugan, and got a token to the keeper Bat. Leary, viz.-that his hay carried away by the wind the day before. Within a mile and in sight of Inchigeelagh stopped to sketch Carrignacurra Castle, which is roofed and in good preservation. It was built by the McCarthys (what branch?) subsequently held by O'Leary. At Inchigeelagh changed horses. The Lake of Allua, commenced about a mile outside Inchigeelagh to the West. Not many years ago it was remarkable for a beautiful trout called the Char, but it has long since disappeared before the all devouring Pike, which now reigns paramount over all those waters, altho but a new colonist. To such changes of its people are the waters like the land subject. The Char was called Worogawn. This Lough is exempt from that huge but harmless monster, the enchanted Eel, who inhabits or did inhabit, until lately, every other lake large and small in this neighborhood, and they are numerous.

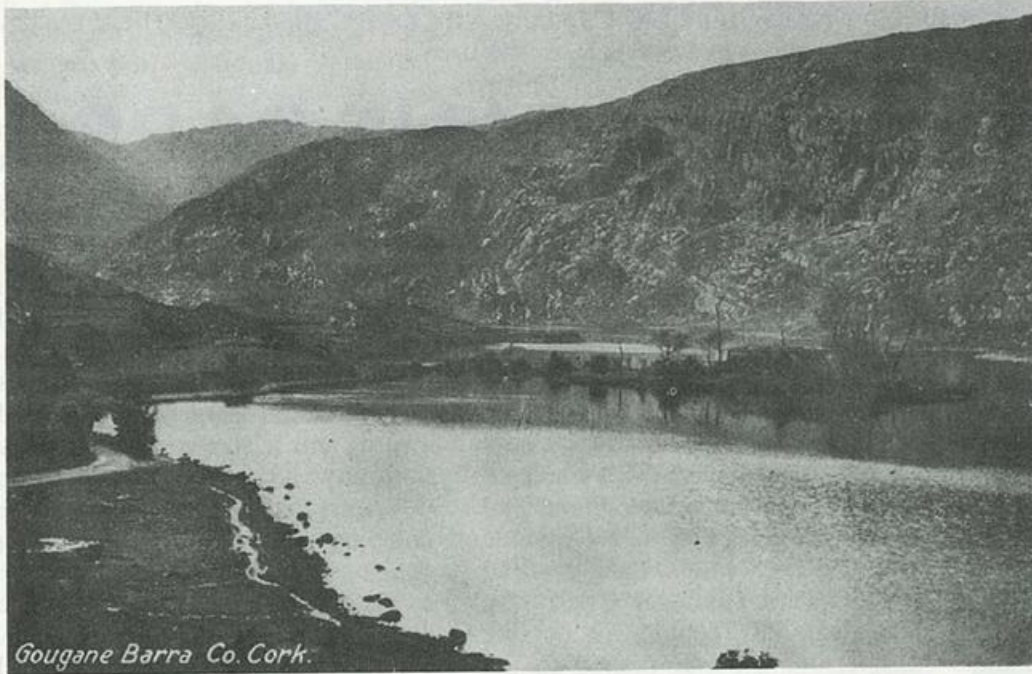
An Eel of this sort now used to come out on the dry land and feed, and altho he had the ears and mane of a horse, and was of enormous dimensions, yet he was never known to do harm, but he caused his own expulsion by an act of wanton daring not to be tolerated by Gods or by men.

A Priest was one day celebrating Mass on the

Island, and in the act of dismissing the congregation, by flinging the holy water over them, when up popped the marvellous Eel from the Lake, and caught the Loneen, (an instrument or vessel used for the holy water), in his mouth, with which he escaped into the water. Alarm and horror seized the whole congregation, who at once inspired by the accursed daring, and despising the fear of contact with the mysterious animal, rushed to the waters edge, and with stones and missiles pursued the plunderer around the lake, and finally down the rocky pass where the Lee breaks out in its course to Inchigeelagh, and nearly opposite the Pass of Kaom-an-eigh, at a Fall called Aosach-Loneen. So hotly was he pursued that he let go his prize, and with the utmost rapidity pursued his course to the East, making some slight halts in Lough Allua, and under Relig Barra (the Cathedral) at Cork, until he finally attained the Ocean since when he has never more been seen and the lake has since continued free from the appearance of any such monster. We took up our quarters at the fishing lodge, where we laid in a store of

provisions etc. and proceeded to the Island. Its mainland neighborhood bore evidence of recent revelry. Cavities in the ground with remains of fire, a well beaten and trampled sward, and it seems that on every Saturday during the Summer, the peasantry assembled on the shore enjoying a sort of Carnival, drinking dancing etc, and little religion. In the caves of the consecrated area were several penitents at prayer as usual. The wooden cross in the centre had been repaired, but most rudely. We found one of the Ash trees in the centre of the Island, had been flung down since our former visit by the violence of the storm. A farmer removed the trunk, and used it for his purposes, fortunately for the safety of Gougane. Superstition stepped in for the protection of this grove. Several mishaps occurred successively to the farmer and his family, all of which he and the vicinity at large attributed to his profane removal of the tree, and compelled by his conscience and the outcry of the public, he repaired to the Island, and in lieu of the trunk which he had taken, he planted two or three young Ashes which are now prospering. The ruins and the Arches





have the appearance of high antiquity. The Rev. M. Horgan thinks the circular style and the absence of cement evidence of these being some of the earliest stone works in Ireland, and anterior the Round Towers, deemed by him Christian.

We ascended the mountain in order to reach Coom, whose steep and inaccessible cliffs have been the abodes of eagles for ages. The ascent of Dereen from the lake is steep and difficult, the side of the mountain is thickly covered with long heath thro which the passage is exceedingly laborious. Whilst at frequent intervals veins of soft springy bog occur, over which it is necessary to proceed with great caution and generally jumps and bounds, and to these obstructions are added large masses of rock, which break up the continuity of the way and compel frequent clamberings in the interstices of several of these crags. The solitary herdsman finds a dry and secure retreat and shelter in those sudden and tempestuous gusts which sweep down the sides of the mountain with amazing force and fury. The toil of half an hour brought us to the summit of Dereen. Several of our companions were left far behind puffing and wiping there foreheads whilst their eyes were lifted up wistfully to the high peaks of the mountain whereon they beheld us triumphantly perched. A glorious prospect was here on views.

The Recks not a misty masses enveloped in vapour, but their sides bright in the sunshine, their deep ravines and water courses visible and their various projections casting their deep and beautiful shades around, these with the round solid ridge of Mangerton, the elevated Paps, and a variety of lesser mountains yet splendid in their outline formed the boundry to the N.W. whilst the S. was bounded by many leagues of Ocean, dotted with Islands, the Bay of Bantry and the mountains of Glengariffe to the S.W. and all the interval of land between a Terrene ocean of mountain waves. Leaving far Brigach to the left we struck along towards the head of Toon, and attaining the summit obtained a glorious prospect; but a lake at a small distance beyond caught our eye, and we hastened to the wild and boggy shore of Lough-na-mna-dearg (the lake of the red woman) so called from three women in red attire seen a long time on the bank as if taking a look at the solitude of the locality and then being seen by a herdsman, entering the bosom of the lake and disappearing for ever. Its shores are wild and boggy. From this lake from which is separated by a slight elevation is another lake of considerable length, but very narrow breadth, its banks are steep and the aspect of the whole wild and lonely. It is called Lough Caol, the narrow lake, and discharges its waters in a western direction towards the Bay of

Bantry, whilst the Red Womans Lough seeks the East, and its streamlet falling down the steep sides of Coomroe joins itself far beneath to the waters flowing into Gougau. This in all probability should therefore be regarded as the genuine fount and source of the Lee. The peasants of Gougau claim the honor for two very accessible streams near the foot of Coom, but there we have a loftier and more distant water still. From Lough Caol we now turned to regain our companions

in the Glen of Gougau.

We rapidly descended the W. side of Coom, to where it forms a hollow (greatly elevated above Gougau nevertheless) at the opposite side to this I should think in Kerry the mountain looks precipitous and at its base lay dark and gloomy two small lakes guarded by vast precipices furrowed by the descending torrents of the higher mountains. Unfortunately time would (not) allow us to visit them. We hope to be able to do so on another occasion. Our descent now was extremely dangerous. Leaving the hollow we stood above the Lake at a height of at least a thousand feet and our ignorance of the pass rendered our movements exceedingly perilous. We however succeeded in reaching Poul Cummienguira, a now dry passage formed for many hundred feet downwards by the headlong winter torrents seeking the lake beneath. With much labour and difficulty we effected our way down this extraordinary passage, which I believe in summer is frequented as the only route into Kerry, by the peasantry, as midway we met a man and woman climbing the dizzy steep. About five o'clock we reached the glen and after an evening of jollification at the fishing lodge we took our farewell of Gougau for the year 1833.

THE BATTLE OF KEIMANEIGH

by Peter O'Leary

Introduction

This was but a minor skirmish in the long wars against the Agrarian tyranny of the 18th. and 19th. Centuries in Ireland. But people in rural areas like West Cork have long memories of past events, and more so when these memories are kept alive by fine poetry such as the song witten by Maire Buidhe Ni Laoghaire at the time. Keimaneigh lies on the main road between Macroom and Bantry, in West Cork. It is a wild and rugged place in the extreme West end of the parish of Iveleary (Inchigeelagh). It is noted for its Pass, at which there are sheer cliffs rising each side to a height of 100feet above the road. An ideal place for an Ambush! The Battle took place in January 1822 - 22 years after the Act of Union, and 7 years before Catholic Emancipation. But it was Economics not Politics which underlay these historic but tragic events.

Economic Conditions in 1822

The economic plight of the small tenant farmer and the labourer was dire in 1822. For 100 years these people had been trying to counter the appalling conditions from which they suffered under the Landlord system. Tenancies at-will, rent increases for improvement, arbitrary evictions, tithes, all were deeply resented, and poverty and near or actual starvation was never far away. The many movements set up to fight these wrongs were secret societies such as the Whiteboys who operated at night carrying out raids against their persecutors. After the Napoleonic War finished in 1815 conditions became worse. There was a serious depression worldwide, and West Cork was severely hit by the virtual end of the lucrative trade of supplying ships with butter and other provisions in Cork harbour.

The New secret Societies

By 1822 the methods used by the secret societies were also changing. The Whiteboys had operated in bands of 20-30, coming out at night, and returning to their homes before dawn. The new secret societies were now forming large encampments up in the hills, and staying there for long periods. They were much better organised and often claimed to have a leader, the mysterious Captain Rock. It is more accurate to call the men who gathered in the

Keimaneigh area in January 1822, Rockites, rather than Whiteboys.

The Widespread Problems throughout West Cork

It is also important to note that this gathering in Keimaneigh was not unique, but that similar large bodies of men were operating all over West Cork and elsewhere. One report suggests that there were 2000 men at Keimaneigh and 5000 in the camps which lay between Macroom and Millstreet. These numbers are probably exaggerated, but the bands were obviously large.

The Battle

The so called Battle was in fact a series of separate but related incidents which will now be described. Commentators of the time noted that the Rockites were well organised. There was also much use of hunting horns to rally the men.



The First Rockite Raid on Bantry

The first incident took place during the night of Friday 11th. January when a party of about 500 Rockites raided a number of the homes of gentry in the Bantry area, looking for weapons. They must have achieved some limited success because they were now in possession of a number of muskets, but no ammunition. We do not know all the gentry visited, but mention is made of a Mr. Mellifont.

Hot Pursuit by the Bantry Yeomanry

Not surprisingly, there was an immediate and aggressive reaction by the gentry. The following day, Saturday, Lord

Bantry and his brother, Captain White of Glengarriff, assembled a party of about 50 Yeomanry and rode after the Rockites. These Yeomanry were gentry, wearing handsome uniforms, mounted on horse, but armed only with sabres and pistols. Riding through the Pass they came upon the Rockites near Ballingearry but the latter rushed up into the hills and made back on foot for the Pass. Realising the danger of their position, the Yeomanry retreated back through the Pass, just in time to avoid the hail of stones hurled down from the heights, and then back to Bantry without achieving anything from this first sortie.

The Major Attack on the Rockite positions

Of course, the Authorities in Bantry were not going to let matters rest there. Their next more measured reaction was to mount a further war party which set out at 5 a.m. on Monday 21st January. This was again led by Lord Bantry and Captain White, but included a party of 14 armed soldiers from the 39th Regiment led by Major Carthew. There were also 2 Magistrates, Morty O'Sullivan and John Sandys Bird, several constables, the Yeomanry, and a number of Lord Bantry's tenants. The Rockites numbered about 400 mostly armed with spades or pitchforks, but with about 14 muskets, some very ancient, and little or no ammunition. The soldiers had been issued with 25 rounds apiece.

The battle lasted all day. The object of the war party was to kill and capture as many Rockites as possible. The soldiers advanced down the valley on foot shooting as they went, the mounted Yeomanry rode hard down towards Inchigeelagh and took a few captives, before turning back to rejoin the soldiers. The Rockites took shelter where they could, until the soldiers had fired off all their ammunition and some sporadic hand to hand fighting took place.

Eventually the Rockites returned to their superior position above the Pass and prepared to dislodge a few large rocks on the war party. The latter having found that there was little chance of driving them out, decided on a strategic retreat. Most of the Yeomanry managed to scramble through the Pass before it was blocked by the falling stones, but a large foot party had to return rather ignominiously by the old Bantry road, adding about 30 kilometres to their days marching. In the evening the war party returned to Bantry leaving the Rockites still in possession of the Pass, and controlling all movement through.

Tentative Attack by the Macroom Authorities

The following day, Tuesday 22nd January, the news of the battle reached James Barry, of Kilbarry House in Inchigeelagh. He was a landlord and a tithe collector, and was much feared and hated in the Parish. On receiving the news, he rode off to Macroom and assembled a party of the Muskerry Yeomanry and soldiers from the 23rd Battalion, Rifle Brigade, under the command of Mr. Hedges. This party also reached Keimaneigh, but of course from the East, and also came to the conclusion that the Rockites were too strongly positioned for a direct frontal assault. They also retreated back to Macroom and did not mount any sort of attack.

The Casualties

The official reports of the battle give 2 Rockites killed by the soldiers, their names being Barry Leary and Auliffe Lynch. A more recent report tells of the death of Michael Casey of Derryfineen. Four prisoners were taken, these being Jeremiah Leary, Denis Kelly, Denis Cronin and Edward Ring. On the military side there was one fatality, a 32 year old private soldier in the 39th Regiment called John Smith.

The Death of John Smith

John Smith's death had a profound effect on events, and has been the cause of much debate since. He had apparently moved forward ahead of his comrades, when he came across Seamas Walsh who was taking cover. Smith aimed a shot at Walsh but missed. Whilst he was attempting to reload, Walsh rushed at him and felled him with the musket he was carrying. Walsh had no ammunition for this gun. Other Rockites then gathered round the grounded soldier and one of them, supposed to have been Conogher O'Leary, brother to Maire Buidhe, finished him off with his own bayonet. It was of course a very serious offence to be involved in any way in the killing of a soldier. They carried Smith's body to a bog-hole in Gortafludig, weighed it down with stones, and threw it in. There it remained for over a month, but after that the soldiers came searching for the body, found it, and took it back to Inchigeelagh where Smith was finally buried in the Church of Ireland graveyard with a headstone provided by Barry and inscribed by the Rifle Brigade.

The Burning of Kilbarry House

The final incident occurred towards the end of January. A party of Rockites came in the night and burned down James Barry's home, Kilbarry House. The Barry family had built their mansion next to the old O'Leary tower house, Carrignaneelagh Castle. After the burning, Barry summonsed all his tenants and made them pull down the old castle and use the stone to rebuild his house. Kilbarry House still stands today, but is now divided into two farm houses. Barry must have persuaded the authorities in Dublin that his part in the battle was very important, because he was amply rewarded for his contribution and the losses he suffered.

The Encampments are Abandoned

By early February the Rockites abandoned their encampment in Keimaneigh and quietly returned to their homes and farms. Probably they realised that they had made their protest, and there was not much more they could do. Possibly they were influenced by the thoughts of the reprisals which were certain to follow. In any case it was most likely cold and wet in the Winter of 1822 and there would have been a shortage of food.

The Special Commissions

And reprisals there were. A Special Commission was set up by Lord Wellesley, the Lord Lieutenant, in Cork City, to try the large number of prisoners taken at several affrays in Carriganimma, Deshure, Newmarket, and of course the four taken at Keimaneigh. Altogether 36 were

sentenced to be hanged, including Cronin and Ring. Leary and Kelly were acquitted. It was said that James Barry gave good character references for Cronin and for Kelly.

The Hangings

It was announced that the hangings would take place in batches, with an interval of a month between each batch. The hangings would stop if the country became quiet again. Ring was hanged at Deshure on 1st. March 1822 with four others. Cronin appears to have been reprieved along with 18 others, and they were probably transported instead. By the end of May the country was quiet once more.

Conclusions

Who were the victors of the Battle of Keimaneigh? One can only surmise that the result was inconclusive. The Military did not come out of the affair with much distinction, and the Rockites commanded the Pass of Keimeneigh, and the traffic on the road from Macroom to Bantry for two weeks, without being dislodged. On the other hand, the actual reprisals carried out, and the fear of further reprisals, eventually brought an end to proceedings. And there were no improvements in the lot of the unfortunate protesters.

Note 1. Source Material.

These notes have been compiled largely from the following four documents:

- a) "The Story of Iveleary" by Seán Ó Coindealbhain. No date but believed to be about 1913.
- b) "Cath Cheim an Fhia, it's place in the Rockite Campaign." by Diarmuid Ó Grada (JCHAS Vol.9 1992.)
- c) "Cath Ceim and Fhia" a note in the papers of Fr. O'Donoghue. Being held by Cumann Staire, Beal Atha'n Ghaorthaidh. (Ref O'D 412 dated 1911.)
- d) "A Description of the area around Inchigeelagh in 1839" from "The Sportsman in Ireland" by a Cosmopolite published London 1840.

Note 2. Some Further Comments.

Most of the hard facts are culled from official Reports. This inevitably introduces a bias towards the official view. Thus local lore suggests that the actual number of Rockites killed was anything up to 12 people. It is quite possible that men were wounded, taken home, and died from their wounds shortly afterwards. They would have been buried without fuss, to avoid possible recrimination. Most of these have living relatives who can vouch that their ancestor died in the battle. It would be a valuable future project to obtain this information from the relatives and to draw up a final and definitive Roll of Honour for posterity.

There is some doubt about the actual line of the road in 1822. We know that at that time the road was narrow, twisting and with a very bad surface. It is often suggested that it lay on a totally different line to the present one. It would be a valuable future project to study the possible alternative routes of the old road.

CILLÍN

le Máire Uí Léime

The Cillin, "Cillin Leasa Ronain" is in the townland of Kilmore. It is at the southern end of the townland, the field slopes gently to the South. It is bordered to the West and North by rocks, to the East a disused sandpit, and to the South a lake, Loch Lua. The road which was built in 1816 runs between the field and the lake. Locals believe that St. Ronan had a church here in olden times, thus the name Cill in the townlands name Cill Mhor - Kilmore.

The field is certainly steeped in history. Folklore has it that gold is hidden in the field. "Cillin Leasa Ronain" can be found at the Southern end of the field. During recent drainage a souterrain was found, and when the trench was examined, traces of a bank (earthen fort) were found, at the Northern end of the field, traces of posts were found along with several patches of dark sooty clay. At the North West side of the field there is what is called locally 'a mass rock', or could it be the bullan stone from St Ronan's Church.

The Cillín is oval in shape 790 cm East-West by 700 cm North-South. It is slightly raised in the field, 56mm at its highest and level with the field in some places. To the Northern end of the Cillin there are too large flat stones diameter 149cm by 107cm, and the other 264cm by 223cm. These sandstone, stones could have come from the Northern end of the field, where there are several rocks standing. The rocks have a lot of slits in them, from top to bottom, the flags on the Cillin could have easily broken off the rock, and be moved to the Southern end of the field.

The Cillín is very uneven with stones scattered about. In the centre of the Cillin there is a small heap of stones 56cm, at the Southern end of the Cillin, there is a stone 65mm high, no other grave markers now remain.

We know the Cillín was used during the Famine, and later to bury still born babies, it was used into the 1950s and maybe as late as the 1960s.

Rev. Fr. Arthur O'Leary OFM Cap. "The Apostle of Toleration"

By Peter O'Leary

Fr. Arthur O'Leary was a Franciscan Friar who lived in the 18th. Century. He was a very well known but contentious figure in his lifetime although few people remember his place in history now, even in his adopted home of Cork City. Modern historians tend to question his patriotism, but this shows a poor understanding of his philosophy and the times in which he lived.

Arthur was born in Acres, a townland in the parish of Fanlobbus, near Dun-manway in 1729. He was the second son of three born to Tadhg na-Post O'Leary and his wife Mary. Tadhg was a native of Uibh Laoghaire where his father, Fingin mac Tadhg had a small farm in Monavadra. They lost the lease of this farm in 1703 but Tadhg had married well and was able to get the lease of a farm in Acres. His wife Mary MacCarthy was a descendant of the first Earl Clancarty, and an elder sister to the Florence McCarthy who was a leader of the County Cork rebels in 1798, and died in Cork Gaol in 1818 at the age of ninety eight.

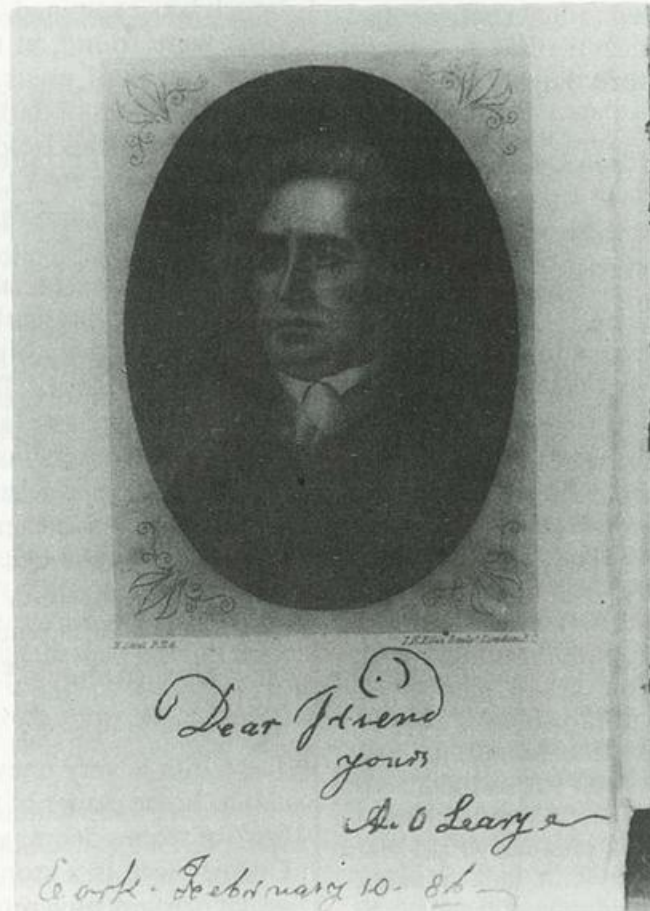
Arthur spent much of his childhood in Uibh Laoghaire being looked after by his grandmother, and retained his Irish tongue throughout his life. He was a studious boy and like many others at the time, his potential was recognised by the Franciscan Friars who arranged for him to be sent secretly to France to finish his education and try his vocation for the priesthood.

So in 1746 and aged 17 he was smuggled on a fishing boat to North France and thence to the Friary in St. Malo where he duly trained for the priesthood and was ordained in 1758 by Bishop John Foyasse de la Postre. For the next 13 years he led an uneventful life as a preaching friar in France and obtained a fluency in French in addition to his Irish and English. He also had a great love for that country which never deserted him.

During the War period of 1756-1763 his command of the Irish language made him useful to the French authorities, who required a Chaplain and Confessor to the many Catholic Irish prisoners taken by the French during the war against England, and who had been serving in Irish Regiments in the British Army.

The Franciscans however were not training West Cork boys to the priesthood in order to supply French parishes, and eventually, in 1771 and aged forty two, Fr. Arthur was sent to the "Irish Mission", in Cork City. Here for the next eighteen years he spent the main period of his Irish pastoral life until he reached the age of sixty. In 1771 the Penal Laws were still in existence, and in rural areas of Cork County were being zealously pursued, as can be witnessed by the

savage legalised murder of Fr. Sheehy in 1767, or that of Fr. Arthur's kinsman, Captain Art O'Leary in 1773. But in Cork City there was a more relaxed attitude and Catholics were being allowed to enter trade, although religion had to be practised secretly. The Franciscans were operating a friary in Blackamoor Lane which was a small dwelling house in reality. Here Fr. Arthur became a member of the community and worked amongst the impoverished Catholic population in the South of the City. He was a man of very abstemious habits, and very generous with help and money to the many calls from his parishioners, who regarded him a Saint.



About 1772 he established the first public place of Catholic worship in Cork City since the Reformation. It was a small chapel in Blackamoor Lane (sometimes called Friary Lane), and most remarkable that such effrontery was accepted by the Authorities. The actual building, known as Father Arthur's Chapel, is still in existence, although nowadays has become a shoe warehouse. After this

modest breakthrough, other chapels began to be built all over the City, many by the religious orders since there was only a fragmentary parish or diocesan structure, and few secular clergy. Fr. Arthur was a powerful preacher and his fame spread far and wide. His language was always moderate, his arguments cogent, and many of the Protestant merchants and other worthies used to come to hear him preach on a Sunday. He had a profound liberalising influence on the thinking in Cork City at that time, which was of enormous benefit in establishing a rapport between the wealthy Protestant ascendancy class, and the Catholics in the suburbs who were gradually becoming more of a force in the City.

Fr. Arthur wrote no books, but broadcast his message by Tracts, many of which can still be read. His better known works included "Loyalty Asserted", an answer to John Locke's attack on the Catholic position in Ireland; "A Defence of the Divinity of Christ" in which he attacks the blasphemous writings of Dr. Blair; his "Plea for Liberty of Conscience" in which he sets out his views on Tolerance which earned him his title, the Apostle of Tolerance. We also still have accounts of his meetings with John Wesley in which he countered the unchristian and bigoted remarks made by that zealous but anti-Catholic churchman. He also engaged in a long exchange with Dr. Woodward, the Protestant Bishop of Cloyne, in which he rejected the claims that there was a Popish Plot and defends the people who were resorting to Whiteboyism by clearly stating their grievances and sufferings. These and other local matters of importance at the time have now long been forgotten.

There were other issues which were of National importance and which are still subject to debate

today. O'Leary was strongly opposed to Whiteboyism although he fully understood the grievances which caused it. But he could not accept that a secret society coming out at night, maiming cattle and burning houses, was the correct way of righting the wrongs. His "Addresses to the Common People" deploras these excesses, and urges the end of the movement. More practically, he took to going out into the country districts every Sunday and preaching against Whiteboyism in those areas where it was most rife. But even in this he was misunderstood, and some Protestant leaders suggested he was actually fomenting the trouble by his words.

He was largely responsible for defeating the attempts to suppress the regular clergy in the Catholic Bill of 1779 and 1782 by going to Dublin and using his undoubted influence on his friends in high places.

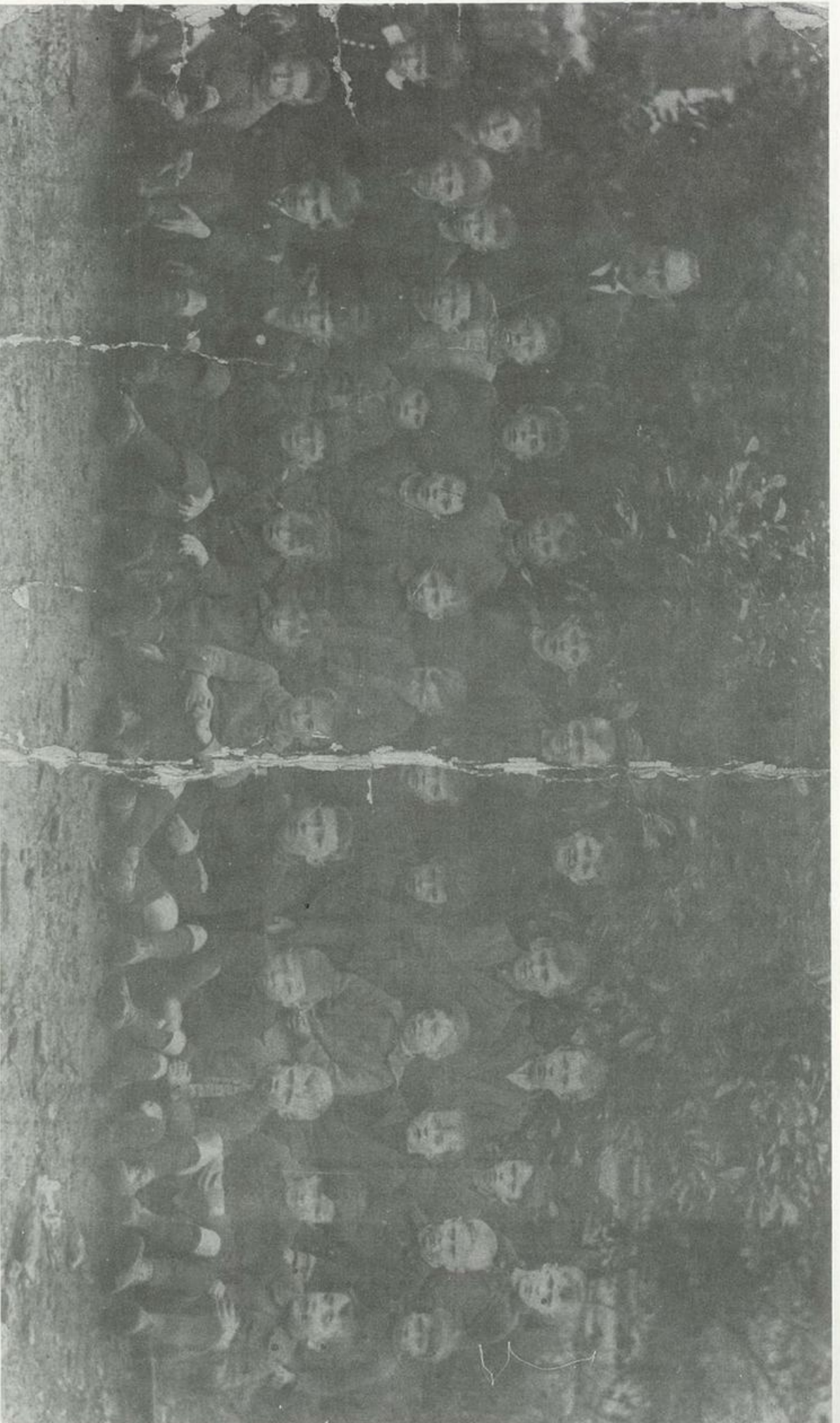
He was opposed to the United Irishman movement, in keeping with his general views, but like most people at the time did not know what was taking place in secret. When the 1798 uprising took place he was appalled at the carnage, the reprisals and the setback to the development of the Nation which resulted. He supported the Union before it took place, but was misled by promises given to him personally by Pitt, which were soon reneged on.

By 1780 Fr. Arthur had become well known in Dublin as well as Cork, and included amongst his acquaintances and admirers a number of distinguished Protestant figures in the Dublin Parliament and the Castle Administration, such as Edmund Burke, Henry Grattan, John Curran, Barry Yelverton, Sir Jonah Barrington and Lord Moira. In effect his constant preaching for tolerance, and a non-violent move to a fairer and juster society was becoming accepted by many

as a basis for political advance, even though he himself never sought to enter the world of politics. He was even elected an honorary member of the Knights of St. Patrick. This enabled him to mix socially with all the influential figures in Dublin Society, although he never took part in their revels. In 1782 at the time of Grattan's Parliament, Ireland reached a point where there was control of legislation, independent of London, albeit control by the Protestant majority in the Irish House of Commons. This was a critical point in the development of Irish Independence, which was not unnoticed in London, and was countered by the move to introduce Union. The nation was deeply split on the topic of Union, and many intelligent and knowledgeable Catholic leaders believed the promises of Pitt that Union would mean emancipation and economic equality for the Catholics. Based on these promises, Fr. Arthur saw himself as a Unionist as did many other Catholic leaders. The fact that events proved them wrong, does not mean a lack of patriotism, sincerity or integrity.

One of the many manifestations of the new feeling of manhood by the nation was the creation of the Volunteer Movement. Ostensibly raised to defend the country against invasion, these part-time military units became a display of Patriot fervour, and therefore seen in London as a threat to the survival of the colony. In 1782 Fr. Arthur was invited to be the Honorary Chaplain to the Volunteer Association, and addressed their National Convention at the Rotunda in Dublin in 1783 where he received a wonderful ovation.

It was said that Fr. O'Leary was in receipt of a Government pension of £200 pa. for his good services to peace and harmony in Ireland. There is no evidence either way, as to whether he was offered this



Back Row: Master T. Scannell, RIP. Robert O'Sullivan, Gurteenakilla. Padraig (Jim) Lehane, RIP. Ballingearry. Ds Callaghan, Cahir. Mll M.D. Cronin, RIP. Carrigadoura. Jerh Healy, Gurteenakilla. Stephen Sullivan, Rathgassig. John D. Creed, RIP. Aharas. Michael (Barry) Creed, RIP. Ballingearry. Jerh Horgan, R.I.P., Lyreenaghecha. Michael Cremm, Lackabawn. Free Lynch, Currahy. Michael Moyinhan, RIP. Illaninaugh.
Middle Row: John (Jack) Lucey, Gurteenown. Denis (Jack) Lucey, Gurteenown. Liam Twomey, RIP. Ballingearry. Sean Lucey, Kilmore. John Lynch, Upper Currahy. Denis Murphy, Gortnamona. Timmie Ronan, Kilmore. Richey (Dick) Cotter, Kilmore. Denny Murray, Droumanallig. Timothy T. Creed, Inchonossig. Con Horgan, RIP. Lyreenaghecha. Michael (Eugene) Riordan, Currahy. Denis P. Lynch, Upper Currahy.
Front Row: Joseph (Jim) Lehane, RIP. Ballingearry. Willie Creed, RIP. Illaninaugh. Eugene E.O'Riordan, RIP. Currahy. John Moyinhan, Carrig. Denis Dineen NT, RIP. And Patrick Dineen RIP. Aharas. Johnnie J. O'Leary RIP. Ballingearry. Sean Twomey RIP. Ballingearry. Seamus Twomey, Ballingearry. Patrick Ronan RIP. Kilmore. Denis Den Lucey, Cahir. Seán P.D. Cronin, Keimcoroboula.

Photo taken May 1927, Ballingearry Boys' School. Many thanks to Mick Cremm, for giving us this photo.