

The Corran Herald

COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY BALLYMOTE HERITAGE GROUP
CELEBRATING 30 YEARS 1984-2014

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The Corran Herald

Annual Publication of Ballymote Heritage Group

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Editor: Stephen Flanagan

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Issue No 47 2014/2015

The Corran Herald wishes to sincerely thank all those who have written articles or contributed photographs or other material for this issue

Ballymote 25th Annual Heritage Weekend

Thursday 31st July
to
Monday 4th August 2014

The Teagasc Centre,
(Right over railway bridge on Tubbercurry Road)
Ballymote, Co. Sligo

Organised by Ballymote Heritage Group - Celebrating 30 Years (1984 - 2014)

Thursday 31st

Classic Film at
The Art Deco Theatre & Cinema
The Sound Of Music
7:30pm
Admission, Adults €6, Children €3,
Tickets from Tighe's Shop, Ballymote

Friday 1st

8.30pm. **Official Opening**
Mary Kenny, Author & Journalist

**Lecture: Poets and Priests of Ireland
in World War 1**
Mary Kenny, Author & Journalist

Saturday 2nd

9 am. **Outing: Derek Hill
House and Glebe Gallery,
Churchill, Co. Donegal,
and Raphoe Heritage Town**

Guide: Martin Timoney, BA FRSAI
MIAI Research
Archaeologist & Author

8.30 pm. **Lecture: The Faddan More
Psalter**
John Gillis, Senior Book and
Manuscript Conservator,
Trinity College Dublin

Sunday 3rd

3 pm. **Afternoon Tea at Temple
House with Classical &
Baroque Music**
Tickets €12.50
(Accompanied children free)
must be purchased in
advance from Tighe's Shop,
Ballymote. Remaining tickets
available on opening night

8.30 pm. **Lecture: Sligo's Hidden
Bridges**
Gary Salter, Conservation
Engineer Senior
Executive Engineer,
Sligo County Council

Monday 4th

9 am. **Outing: Westport House &
guided walking tour of
historic town**

8.30 pm. **Lecture: Family Names in
the Place-names of Sligo**
Dr. Conchubhar Ó'Cruaiaich

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Ballymote Heritage Group: How it all began

by Eileen Tighe, President, Ballymote Heritage Group

The seed was sown for what was to become Ballymote Heritage Group in the winter of 1983 as a result of a growing interest in archaeology in the locality. Joyce Enright, archaeologist, under the auspices of Sligo VEC, delivered a course in archaeology in Ballymote Vocational school and it was attended by many, including the late Una Preston, the late James Flanagan, Betty Conlon and myself. After the course ended Una proposed to me that a history and archaeology group be formed in Ballymote saying, 'If you get the speakers I'll arrange the venue.'

A further course was given by Joyce Enright and enthusiasm was now beginning to spread. On Wednesday 30 May 1984 a group of interested people came together for what was to be our inaugural meeting in the Castle Hotel, Ballymote. Officers elected at that meeting were President, Thomas Tighe; Vice-President, Yvonne Perceval; Chairman, Tom McGettrick; Secretary, Eileen Tighe; Treasurer, Michael McDonnell; PRO, Una Preston. Members at that first meeting also included May O'Donnell, Gerard O'Donnell, Nuala Dockry, Gary Conlon, Nellie Tansey, Elizabeth Murray, Carmel Rogers, May Donnellan, Gladys Hannon, John Perry, Mary Rose Cryan, Anne Mulhern and Anne Henry. Apologies were received from Matilda and Stan Casey and Keenan Johnson. Joyce and her husband Martin continued to help and advise us and we also got great help and encouragement from Martin and Mary Timoney, archaeologists who have remained with us all the way.

At that first meeting many matters of a historical and archaeological nature were discussed, led by our local historian, Tom McGettrick. We decided to meet on the last Wednesday of every month to continue our intended aim of raising an awareness of and respect for all that is of historical, archaeological and cultural interest in our area.

Una Preston was still thinking ahead and after about a year in existence she suggested that we publish what she called a monthly newsletter covering local events such as sport, music, etc. The idea was taken on board and the late James Flanagan accepted the role as editor. At our monthly meeting Keenan Johnson (later Chairman of Ballymote Heritage Group) suggested 'The Corran Herald' as a title and this was accepted. Requests for material for publication were generously met; writers who contributed to the first issue were: James Flanagan, Una Preston, Stan Casey, Tom McGettrick, Elizabeth Brennan, Keenan Johnson, Neal Farry, Alfie Banks, John Cunningham and Eamon Sweeney.

The job of printing was given to John Joe KIELTY who at that time had a small printing press in Ballymote. John Joe was very helpful and our first issue, which was a mere 12 A4 pages and sold for twenty five pence, was launched in the Castle Hotel on the 25th October, 1985, by the late Ted Nealon, TD, who was then Minister for Arts and Culture. *The Corran Herald* did not turn out to be the local newsletter that Una had envisaged; rather it emerged as a periodical with a strong emphasis on the historical. Initially published a number of times a year it is now an annual 90-page publication in its 29th year with a cover designed by artist Brenda Friel. Over the course of 47 issues a wide variety of articles and photographs documenting local life, history, archaeology and culture have appeared. Print runs have increased over the years catering for a growing demand and interest; it is widely read with issues going overseas every year even as far afield as Australia.

It is a matter of great sadness that our esteemed and faithful editor, James Flanagan, is no longer with us to celebrate the fruits of his great contribution to our heritage on this our 30th anniversary. James passed to his eternal reward on 21 May, 2012. May his great soul rest in peace.

Our editor is now Stephen Flanagan, James's son, who is continuing the high standard set by his father.

As our group became well established with strong attendance at meetings and lively discussions, the idea of setting up a heritage weekend of lectures and field trips was explored. Our first Heritage Weekend took place from Friday 3 August to Monday 6 August, 1990, in the Teagasc Centre, Ballymote. Speakers were Eamon Barnes, then DPP, who performed the official opening ceremony, Frank Tivnan, Mary Timoney, Brigid Dolan, Bishop Flynn, Michael Gibbons and Ted Nealon. Guides for the field trips were Martin Timoney and Tom McGettrick. Our MC for the Heritage Weekends was James Flanagan. In conjunction with the first Heritage Weekend an Art Exhibition by local artists, which was coordinated by artists Brenda Friel and Nuala Dockry, took place in the Loftus Hall.

The Heritage Weekend has been very successful over the years and the high standard of its lectures and outings has continued to attract audiences from far and near. This year as we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the inaugural weekend we remember our recently deceased patron Matilda Casey. The success of the Ballymote Heritage Weekend is testament to the hard work, dedication and commitment of its many members past and present, alongside the unfailing support of our many lecturers, guides, patrons, sponsors and friends. On behalf of the Ballymote Heritage Group I extend sincere thanks to all who have contributed in so many ways over the years to bring us to where we are this year 2014, celebrating thirty years of The Ballymote Heritage Group. 'Ní neart go teacht le chéile'

(A list of Patrons, Members and Officers since the beginning is on page 7)

Eileen Tighe,
President,
Ballymote Heritage Group

30 years of the Ballymote Heritage Group

Speech by Pat McGrath, Chairman of Sligo County Council

President Eileen Tighe, Chairperson John Coleman, Members of Ballymote Heritage Group, their volunteers, sponsors, supporters and guest lecturers, Fellow Councillors: It is a privilege to welcome each and every one of you to County Hall this evening to formally honour the outstanding work carried out by your group since it was founded 30 years ago.

This evening we celebrate that milestone, and also acknowledge the outstanding and hugely popular Ballymote Heritage Weekend which has been a feature of your group for the last 25 years.

I take particular pride in the fact that there has always been a strong association between Sligo County Council and Ballymote Heritage Group, and previous Cathaoirligh of the Council have ensured they attended the official opening of the Heritage Weekend to show their support, and this Council's support, for one of the most important annual events hosted in County Sligo.

During my years as a public

representative, and particularly over the course of my term as Cathaoirligh, I have been amazed and overwhelmed by the work carried out by community volunteers all over County Sligo.

I am talking about the people who give so generously of their time and energy for a local cause or the common good, and they invariably do so with a willing heart without expectation of acknowledgement or reward.

And if you were asked to identify a model of community spirit and endeavour, for others to study and imitate, I would advise people to look no further than the Ballymote Heritage Group. The annual Heritage Weekend has become such a popular, flagship event which enjoys the goodwill and committed support of the local community and has attracted visitors from near and far, many of whom return year after year.

And the reason people support it in such huge numbers is the quality and the diversity of the weekend's programme, which ensures it is of equal interest to the academic and casual visitor.

A quick review of the 2013 programme illustrates the rich and

wonderful variety of activities and events on offer – an exhibition of historical photos of Ballymote, a screening of an old Dracula film, a lecture on the 19th century Middle East, an outing to County Tyrone, a lecture on County Sligo's railways, a visit to Templehouse... and much more.

The Heritage Weekend is just one facet of the Group. They also produce *The Corran Herald*, the hugely informative and much respected historical journal which opens up new and fascinating insights into our past. I know from my own experience that *The Corran Herald* is a very essential purchase every year in households all over the area.

It is difficult to encapsulate in a brief address the exceptional nature of the Ballymote Heritage Group, the regard in which it is held by the local community and the general public – you are a shining example of what a hard-working, creative and dynamic community can achieve. I wish you every success with the 2014 Heritage Weekend, well done again to everyone concerned.

Thank you.



Members of Ballymote Heritage Group with Patron Eamon Barnes at a reception to mark the 25th Heritage Weekend hosted by Pat McGrath, Chairman of Sligo County Council

Speech by John Coleman, Chairman, Ballymote Heritage Group

A meeting took place on 30 May 1984 in the then Castle Hotel in Ballymote to establish a society devoted to promoting a knowledge of and interest in all aspects of heritage in the Ballymote area. The group immediately set about organising outings and lectures and in 1985 the first *Corran Herald* was produced. It was followed in 1990 by the first annual Heritage Weekend which has become a fixture of August bank holiday weekends with a loyal following of people from far and near who return each year.

I would like to thank council chairman Councillor Pat McGrath, himself a Ballymote man, for inviting us here today to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the group and the forthcoming 25th Annual Ballymote Heritage Weekend organized by the group.

I understand that credit for the idea of establishing the group and its journal *The Corran Herald* must go to the late Una Preston. We must also recall the commitment over the years of founding members. Sadly some are no longer with us – Stan and Tilly Casey, James Flanagan, Vincent Jordan, Tom McGetterick, Mai and Gerry O'Donnell, Yvonne Percival and Nelly Tansey. The founding members also included Betty Conlon, Nuala Dockry, Anne Henry, Lilly Murray, Carmel Rogers, Tommy Tighe, Michael McDonnell and John Perry. Eileen Tighe, our current president, was of course a driving force from the beginning and continues to devote enormous energy to both planning the weekend and drawing articles for *The Corran Herald* from old and new contributors. The contribution must also be acknowledged of Martin and Mary Timoney who have provided invaluable advice over the years and have both contributed regularly to *The Corran Herald*. Frank Tivnan has been our guide on many occasions.

Personally I am particularly conscious of the valuable contribution over many years of my predecessor Des Black who was chairman for nine years, and of Betty Conlon as secretary and of Pam Benson who continues in the role of treasurer. We always

benefit from the wisdom of long-term members and have recently benefitted from the enthusiastic contribution of new members, particularly Ursula Gilhawley as Secretary and Anne Henry. Paddy Conboy has for years been official photographer to record the weekend events. The Group is always grateful for the support of our sponsors each year and we must particularly recall the generosity of the late Tilly Casey.

Of anyone I have not included I beg forgiveness.

The 46th issue of *The Corran Herald* was published last year – beautifully designed and printed by Orbicon in Collooney. Having begun as a slim volume produced three times a year, it was developed under James Flanagan's meticulous editorship into a substantial annual publication of almost 100 pages in some years. We are very fortunate that, following James's death, his son Stephen has ably taken on the mantle.

My own aunt Maisie McGovern was a long term member and president at the time of her death in 2008. She enrolled me as a member and it was as a result that before returning to live in Ballymote the Heritage Weekend had become a fixture in my diary each year.

Before I became actively involved in the organisation I was always impressed by a number of things about the weekend. These included the impressive line ups of distinguished speakers and the wide variety of the subjects of lectures, which invariably includes interesting surprises. Everything was of course perfectly organised, whether the venue was the Teagasc Centre, the Parochial Centre or the hotel. The tea and homemade cakes in the early years were a real treat.

I was always most impressed by the audience from home and away, ever keen to learn of something new or for new light to be shed on an old familiar theme. The weekend has become a focus for people with Ballymote connections living elsewhere to return and renew acquaintance with familiar places and faces. The post-lecture question and answer sessions have always been very engaging. The outings have also been most

interesting and have allowed the group to make links with likeminded people across the country. Jack Johnston is one such and we were treated to impressive hospitality when we again visited Clogher last year.

Last year we were able to work with Ballymote Business Association in putting together a superb exhibition of historic photographs as a special project for the Gathering. Mary Cawley did a superb job of persuading owners of old photographs to give access to them, including the notable photographs taken by the late Batty Cawley, for many years Ballymote correspondent of the *The Sligo Champion*. We now have an electronic collection of these valuable records. A selection was reproduced in last year's *The Corran Herald* and a further selection will be reproduced this year and in future editions.

We now have a web site www.ballymoteheritage.com set up last year thanks to the efficiency of our secretary Ursula Gilhawley and professional support of Barry Walsh at OSD in Sligo. It is intended to make past issues of *The Corran Herald* available on the site as well as a selection of the historic photographs.

Last year we also added a novel event with the showing of a classic film in the newly-restored Art Deco cinema to coincide with a lecture on Brahm Stoker and his Sligo connections. We are grateful to council chairman Pat McGrath for facilitating this event. Last year we also had a remarkably successful lunch and tour of Temple House courtesy of Roderick and Helena Perceval and this is very gratifying, particularly in view of Roderick's late grandmother Yvonne's enthusiastic contribution to the group over many years.

We have appreciated the support over the years of Siobhan Ryan, County Heritage Officer, and we have been grateful in the past to receive a modest level of financial support from the Heritage Office in the Council. Understandably this has not been available recently due to the recession and we have had to manage without this support. I would like to take this opportunity of inviting Ciaran Hayes our new county manager to join us during the weekend this

year. I noted in *The Sligo Champion* of May 6 a remark he made about the historic responsibility of those charged with governing Sligo: 'We are but custodians, tasked with a responsibility to pass it on to the next generation in a better condition than we received it.'

Outings this year will include a visit to Westport which is a town which has benefitted from the policies of the local council in relation to the preservation and enhancement of the character of the town. This has enhanced local pride of place but has also benefitted the local economy as the attractive atmosphere of this small historic town has proved a magnet for tourists. Ballymote too is a remarkable historic town as demonstrated by its wide handsome streets and dramatic 800-year-old Norman castle. Sadly some of our public buildings in prominent locations could do with 'a lick of paint' – in particular the post office and the redundant old garda station.

Some remarkable initiatives have been undertaken under the auspices of Ballymote Community Enterprise Company. A beautiful park has been created around the castle. Nearby is the 19th century flour mill and as we know the Minister for Arts and Heritage visited the site some time ago to mark its designation as the location of a Bianconi Coach and Transport Museum based around the O'Hara carriage collection from Annaghmore now in the National Museum. It would be wonderful if the museum could double up as an interpretative centre for the castle and open up this entire rich heritage as a resource for teaching history for local schools and as a visitor attraction. The fine Art Deco Theatre and Cinema has been beautifully restored.

We are well advanced in planning for this year's Heritage Weekend. We are delighted that distinguished journalist and author Mary Kenny has agreed to perform the official opening and lecture on Irish poets and priests

and World War I, a subject very much in our minds in this centenary of the commencement of that tragic conflict in which so many Irish men lost their lives and others were marked for the remainder of their lives. We are also delighted that Sligo County Council engineer Gary Salter has agreed to give a talk on the historic bridges of the county with which he has become uniquely familiar due to his work on their repair and conservation, which has earned him an international reputation as a conservation engineer; by my understanding the only one employed by any council in the country.

We all look forward to the 25th Heritage Weekend on the forthcoming August bank holiday and yet another interesting issue of *The Corran Herald*.

And finally I wish to renew my thanks to Council Chairman Pat McGrath for inviting us to the council offices to celebrate our 30th Anniversary.

Patrons, Members and Officers of Ballymote Heritage Group 1984 – 2014

Submitted by Eileen Tighe

Patrons: Eamon Barnes; Most Reverend Dr. T. Flynn, Retired Bishop of Achonry; Dr. John Dayton, RIP; Matilda Casey, RIP; Mattie Casey.

Presidents: Thomas Tighe; Tom Mc Gettrick, RIP; Dr. Stan Casey, RIP; Vincent Jordan, RIP; Gerry Cassidy Maisie Mc Govern, RIP; Eileen Tighe.

Vice-Presidents: Vincent Jordan, RIP; Matilda Casey, RIP; Anne Harrison, RIP.

Chairpersons: Tom Mc Gettrick, RIP; Keenan Johnson; Paddy Brady, RIP; Eileen Tighe; Des Black; John Coleman.

Vice-Chairpersons: Yvonne Perceval, RIP; Carmel Rogers.

Secretaries: Eileen Tighe; Carmel Rogers; Betty Conlon; Mary Timoney; Pam Benson; Ursula Gilhawley

Treasurers: Michael Mc Donnell R.I.P.; Keenan Johnson; Nellie Tansey, RIP; Betty Conlon; Mary Martin; Gerry Cassidy; Des Black; Maisie Mc Govern, RIP; Olive Byrne; Pam Benson; Anne Henry

PROs: Cassie Finn; James Flanagan, RIP; John Coleman.

Corran Herald Editors: James Flanagan, RIP; Stephen Flanagan.

Members: May O Donnell, RIP; Gerard O Donnell, RIP; Nuala Dockry; Gary Conlon; Elizabeth Murray; Elizabeth Brennan; May Donnellan; Gladys Hannon; John Perry; Mary Rose Cryan; Anne Mulhern; Bernadette O Grady; Esther Cassidy; Mary Cawley; Maureen Egan, RIP; Jack Martin; Bridget Mc Gettrick; Helen Finan; Michael Tormey; Myra Gilmartin, RIP; Nance Tighe; Padraic Dockry, RIP; Anne Flanagan; John Joe Kielty; Mary Perry; Paddy Horan; Sean Molloy, RIP; Nuala Rogers; Eileen White; Noreen Friel; Brenda Friel; Nellie Jordan; John Conlon; Mollie Howard; Roslyn Duffy, RIP; Marie Perry; Mary Black; Kathleen Coleman; Gordon Beaumont; David Casey; John Cawley; Clare Cawley; Michael Rogers; Gerry Keaney; Pat Mc Grath; Paddy Conboy; Derek Davey ; Owen Duffy; Neil Henry; Tom Lavin; Rita Lohan; Carmel Mc Gettrick.

A Walk on the Beach

By *Bernie Gilbride*

The wind changed as we turned for home. At first it was only a breeze with a slight nip to it but in minutes it became a full-blown gale with a hint of the icy region from whence it came in the north. Buttoning our coats, turning up our collars and burrowing our chins in our scarves we hastened our steps as much as soft sand would allow.

It was mid March and when the sun came out mid afternoon earlier that day, we made for the beach at Strandhill, eager to show our friends from Hong Kong the wild Atlantic at its best. Knowing that John and Yei Lei loved the sea and were into sailing at home, we felt sure the mighty waves with their surfers would impress them. The waves and surfers were spectacular as they coasted their way to the beach and our guests were duly impressed. However we had not bargained for a sudden change in temperature!

On reaching the slipway I was conscious that Yei Lei was trembling, and so we hurried as fast as possible along the promenade towards the Strand Bar and Restaurant, hoping a turf fire would be burning there. I was not disappointed. On entering a fire greeted us that would warm the heart of the coldest traveller. The flames danced and shimmered, casting a golden glow around the bar. Pulling our chairs up we stretched our hands towards its warmth and began to shed some of our outdoor gear. John went to order hot drinks and I fell to wondering just what it is about a turf fire that is so welcoming. Yei Lei stopped shivering and with a happy sigh stretched her hands towards the flames.

In a few minutes John was back with our drinks and Yei Lei was being introduced to her first hot Irish whiskey and being warned to sip it slowly. Her first sip brought a wry face but gradually the colour came back into her cheeks and she told us she actually felt she was beginning to thaw. 'What a comforting drink!' she exclaimed, settling into her chair

She had never seen a turf fire before – where she came from the sun supplied all the heat they needed. She was very interested in the turf and where it came from. Looking to one side of the fireplace I saw a basket filled with blocks of turf, ready to replenish the fire. Taking a sod of turf in my hands I began to tell her of our bogs – how millennia ago they had been laid down with fallen trees their base, under oceans whose waters compacted them into the bogs of today.

Not wanting to over-burden her with the history of how our bogs were formed I briefly told her the excessively wet climate had rotted the fallen forests, thus forming turf banks millennia ago. Eventually those oceans receded and farmers found that by cutting, allowing the wet sods dry, and harvesting the resulting turf it made excellent fuel. Down the centuries it has been used to heat our homes, cook our food and boil water. Promising to take her to see where John's forefathers had cut their turf next day, we sat back and enjoyed the fire and our drinks as we listened to the wind whistling down the open chimney.

Next morning broke bright and clear and we headed for Grange and the bog where we cut turf years ago and our forefathers for centuries before us. About a mile the Sligo side of Grange, we turned towards Benbulbin at Munninane Church and I pointed out the horseshoe, about halfway up the mountain. That is where our bog lies at a place called Lyle. Long ago people walked up to the bog and on reaching it the first thing they did was light a fire, boil the kettle and make a very welcome cup of tea. It was badly needed in those days, as it is a tough climb when they were carrying tools to cut the turf and whatever provisions they needed for the day.

That tradition continues today, though they drive to the bogs now and are only after their breakfast! By this time we were well on the road towards the bog and I had pointed out the part

of the old farm that bordered the road, known to us as the 'big meadow', and though we could see the chimneys of the old house there was no smoke nor had there been for many a year. The present owners never lived in the house but keep the land well stocked and in good condition.

The road had many potholes after the hard frost of winter, which made driving hazardous. The river flowed rapidly and full to our right, gurgling and foaming over rocks and stones on its way to Grange and the sea at Streedagh. At last we reached the bog. Making our way across the nearest bank we showed Yei Lei where it must first be pared and then cut with a shleuan, explaining how it is spread along the bank, and left for a few days at least to firm before 'footing'. Footings are triangular shapes of turf standing up against each other, about seven wet turf in each footing. After about a week, if the weather is good, the footings are ready to be clamped, i.e. gathered into a small stack of turf, and these are left on the bog to dry over the summer, being brought home late August or early September. They are then built into a big 'clamp' along a dry wall, convenient to the house for use over the winter, or stacked in a shed in the back garden.

'A lot of hard work!' exclaimed Yei Lei. 'I am glad the sun keeps us warm. Nice as the turf fires look and smell, I don't think I would like having to do all that work every year, to keep myself and my home warm.'

I could see Yei Lei had lost all interest in the turf. She was staring in wonder at the semicircle of mountains surrounding her, not listening to a word I was saying. The silence all around, save for the call of sheep and the gurgle of many streams hurling down the mountains on either side, held her spellbound

Turning to look back towards the sea, she stood entranced. The coastline was rugged with the wild Atlantic pushing its huge waves ashore, Innishmurray Island almost in under us at our feet. She had never

seen anything like it before. On our right was Classiebawn Castle, with the Donegal mountains behind. Out came her camera. 'I must try to take all this, otherwise at home they will never believe me,' she said. 'It is all so beautiful. So wild and rugged.' She used the camera constantly almost until we reached Munninane Church. There she asked us stop as she filmed the elegant old building before we reached the main road again.

Turning right at Munninane we headed for Grange. 'This is where Johns, family went to school,' I said, pointing out the old school. 'There is a beautiful new school a few hundred

yards further on now and the old school is used as a meeting place for the local people now, for art classes, crafts, and so on. But enough history for one day – a bit of lunch won't go astray after all that mountain air.'

'I hope we can have some of your lovely roast beef or ham and fresh vegetables,' she said. 'I think your beef has a wonderful flavour and the vegetables are so different to ours.'

Over lunch she said how much she had enjoyed the morning and the mountains. 'Many times I had heard of Benbulbin but never thought to go half way up it to look at a bog!' she said. 'I am going to bring a few sods of

turf home to show them to my family and to let them feel them. We will light a fire in the garden so they can smell the smoke. Then while it is burning I will explain about the bogs and all the hard work John's people had to do to keep warm in wintertime. It may make them appreciate how lucky we are, not to need a fire. I found the fire so pleasant and comforting, and I will be looking forward to warming myself at one next time and to having a 'hot whiskey' to warm me inside as well. Now that is something I know my Dad would really enjoy.'

Rathmullen School 1958

Submitted by Brendan Lavin



First row (front row), left to right: Kevin Feely, Tom Feely, Tommy O'Connor, Ann Quigley, Catherine O'Connor, Margaret Egan, Marion Murray, Catherine Feely, Una Quigley, Louis McDonagh, Joe Gilhooley, Jack O'Connor, Tommy Wynne

Second row, left to right: Kieran Rodgers, Brendan Killoran, Vincent Feely, Tady Scully, Mary Quigley, Bernie Coleman, Owen Gilhooley, Padraic Murray, Desmond Killoran, Phil Feely, Michael O'Brien

Third row, left to right: Mrs O'Dowd (teacher), Pauline McGrettrick, Marion O'Brien, Josie Killoran, Martha Molloy, Sheila Molloy, Kathleen Egan, Patsy Feely, Laura Feely, Maureen McGettrick, Joan Healy Mrs. Barnes [Teacher]

Fourth row (back row), left to right: Michael Flynn, John Finn, Eddie Scanlon, Tommy Quigley, Kevin Killoran, Tony Murray, Steven Lavin, Brendan Feely, Brendan Lavin, Tommy Murray, John O'Brien, Gerry Scanlon

Prehistory in the Bricklieve Mountains

By Sam Moore

Kesh Corran, the highest summit of the Bricklieve Mountains at 359m, is located on the western side of the range and creates a dominant feature in south Co Sligo. Its height, shape and contour lines give it a distinctive landscape form that makes it stand out within its location on the east side of the south Sligo plains. The white cliffs visible one-third the way up its western flank that contain the Caves of Keshcorran add to its distinctiveness. Throughout time the mountain and its caves appear to have attracted the attention of humans in various ways, which has provided an interesting and multi-faceted story in how it might have been perceived over thousands of years.

Although Kesh Corran is part of the wider landscape of the Bricklieve Mountains and is an intrinsic part of the Neolithic passage tombs that are located on the summits of nearly every hill within the range – the Carrowkeel-Kesh Corran passage tomb complex – the following outline focuses only on Kesh Corran’s prehistory. (For more detailed information on the Caves of Keshcorran see Dowd 2013, and on the archaeology around the Kesh region see Timoney and Timoney 2001.)

The Geology of Kesh Corran

Kesh Corran was formed during the Carboniferous period (c. 355-310 million years ago). This period saw huge rises in sea levels and on land rivers deposited sand and silt (now represented by sandstones and siltstones), while in the shallow sea muddy limestones and shales were formed. The limestone was composed of fragments of marine animal life, the mud being brought to the sea by rivers. During this long period the Bricklieve limestone formation shows evidence of being part of a sea, and this evidence stems from the abundant occurrence of fossilised lithostrotionid corals in the Bricklieves with crinoid stems

and brachiopod shells (MacDermot et al 1996, 17). By about 250 million years ago, atmospheric denudation and erosion became extreme. As soon as the Carboniferous limestone became exposed it was bombarded with a range of various processes of denudation, which resulted in a karstic landscape. Because of dissolution of carbon dioxide in water droplets in cloud, the rain that falls on the limestone is acid and reacts with the calcite content of the limestone. This chemical weathering affected the limestone block of Kesh Corran; a process lasting around 40 million years and creating rifts, solution depressions, sinkholes and caves, typical of the karst landscape of the area.

During the last 1.7 million years, physical weathering, in the form of ice, influenced the creation of the final form of the mountain we see today. Weathering processes continue to this day but at a much slower rate due to the diffuse nature of the rainfall, which sinks through the rock to subterranean flow. The rate of weathering on Kesh Corran was estimated at a rate of 30mm per thousand years (Corbel quoted in Cotton 2002, 18-19). The geology of Kesh Corran and its caves “has many features not seen in other isolated hills in Ireland and is the best example of its type” (McAteer and Parkes 2004).

The Caves of Keshcorran

The seventeen fissures and caves, some of which interconnect, known as the Caves of Keshcorran, are considerably well documented in comparison to other areas around the Bricklieves, and are found on

the western flank of Keshcorran Mountain. Research into the caves and medieval references to them have been well documented by Dr Marion Dowd of the Institute of Technology (2001; 2004; 2009; 2013). They are highly visible from a substantial distance to the west and are located at c. 180m OD in cliffs between 15m and 30m high. Their entrances are facing west and the caves are at right angles to the cliff-face. These entrances were widened, predominantly by the action of ice and external weathering processes during the glacial periods. In geological terms the caves are a series of entrances to a glacially truncated remnant phreatic maze cave system (McAteer and Parkes 2004).

Interest in the caves is expressed through George Petrie’s sketch the Caves of Kesh Corran (Fig 1), which



Fig 1: Caves of Kesh Corran (after Petrie 1840)

appeared on the cover of *The Irish Penny Journal* in 1840. Interest further grew following the discovery of bear bones in the caves in 1887, which led to an exploratory expedition; the final report of which was published in 1903 (Scharff et al; Dowd 2013). Further excavations were carried out in 1929 (Gwynn et al, 1940). Many animal bones of bear, deer, wolf, hare and wild pig along with bird bones of little auk, common scoter, scaup and smew, were located in a lower stratigraphic layer in the caves. The

upper layers contained high quantities of charcoal along with faunal remains including ox, goat/sheep, pig, horse, dog and marine shells as well as wolf, badger, fox, rabbit, hare, snails, trout, frog and many species of bird (Scharff et al,1903). As part of the Irish Quaternary Fauna Project some of the bone samples were dated and these indicate that much of the fauna of the lower layers did indeed belong to the Late Glacial period (Woodman et al, 1997, 139-40).

Archaeology at Kesh Corran

Species	Calibrated Dates	Period
Brown Bear	12,040-11,650 BC	Late Glacial
Red Deer	11,950 – 11,430	Late Glacial
Wolf	11,260 – 10,960 BC	Late Glacial
Hare	12,710 – 11,820 BC	Late Glacial
Arctic Lemming	10,040 – 9310 BC	Late Glacial
Stoat	6830 – 6230 BC	Mesolithic
Human tooth	200 BC – 30 AD	Iron Age
Human tooth	460 – 670 AD	Early Medieval
Horse tooth	350 – 600 AD	Early Medieval
Frog	1300 – 1440 AD	Medieval
Human tibia (L)	1020 – 1160 AD	Medieval

Radiocarbon dates from Caves of Keshcorran (after Dowd 2009)

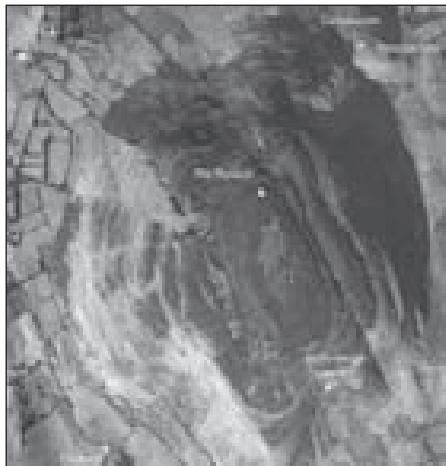


Fig 2: Kesh Corran with principle sites mentioned in this article

This region around south Co Sligo has a dense concentration of upstanding archaeological remains from the Neolithic period onwards; however it is during the Neolithic (c. 3,800-2400BC) and Bronze Age (c. 2400-400BC) that the area seems to have attracted significant ritual attention, mainly in the form of funerary monuments. There have been no Mesolithic (c. 8000BC to 3800BC) finds yet discovered in the immediate area, although evidence from this period is abundant at Lough Gara 10km to the southwest. As mentioned

previously, Kesh Corran is part of the passage tomb complex located on each of the summits and ridges within the Bricklieve Mountains. On its highest point is a possible un-opened passage tomb, locally known as the ‘Pinnacle’, and given its location (it is the highest in the complex) and size (it is second largest in the complex) this cairn is most likely a focal monument within the Carrowkeel-Kesh Corran group (the other focal monument appears to be Cairn F at Carrowkeel).

There is a magnificent view in all

directions from the cairn, which is at the north end of the mountain and measures 26m in diameter and is 5m high. It is built on a stone platform (35m in diameter and is 0.8m high to a maximum of 2m at the north side) and the cairn has a number of kerbstones still visible. Dates and objects from the Carrowkeel monuments suggest a period of use around 3200-2900BC (Hensey et al 2014), which could also relate to the date of the cairn on Kesh Corran. It lies within the northern end of a large oval enclosure (206m north-south by 168m east-west) with a D-shaped enclosure (18.5m north-south by 34m east-west) at its southern end, which in turn contains an 18m diameter enclosure, possibly a large hut structure. This hilltop enclosure does not really exploit the natural defences of the hill and although it has been called a hillfort (Condit et al 1991), which generally date to the Late Bronze Age, it could date to an earlier period (Fig. 3).

Another passage tomb lies on the north-eastern spur of Kesh Corran at Carnaweelan. Here there is an interesting collection of sites including a passage tomb, a hut



Fig 3: Enclosures and cairn Kesh Corran (Microsoft Bing maps)

site, two caves and an enclosure, along with an unclassified barrow just below the spur (see below). The passage tomb is northeast facing with an undifferentiated chamber and a passage that is 5m long. It is located in a ruined circular cairn with an approximate original diameter of 15m. In 1993 a small quantity of cremated human bone belonging to one adult was located inside the kerbstones, which seems to be a later, secondary interment; possibly Bronze Age in date (Buckley and Mount 1994, 71). A c. 28m diameter enclosure lies just to the south of the passage tomb and c. 40m to the southwest is a 5m diameter hutsite which is located just 2m west of Poulagaddy Cave. To the east of Kesh Corran are a number of other cairns on each hill top spreading eastwards towards Carrowkeel. Nearest to Kesh Corran, and apart from Carnaweelan, there are three other cairns in Treanmore; a c. 14m diameter cairn and another further south (on Kelly’s Hill) measuring c. 10m in diameter, with a small hutsite just 17m north of this and another on Sheecor hill (12m diameter) just to the west of Lough Labe. Although none of these have been excavated they appear to be part of the overall passage tomb complex. Another cairn measuring 8m in diameter is located on a south-westerly spur of Kesh Corran in Murhy townland.

No megalithic tombs have been

found in the immediate environs of the mountain apart from a wedge tomb with a 7m long gallery, which is located on a slight terrace on the south slope of the mountain in Murhy townland. It is one of the few in this region and suggests activity on that side of the hill during the late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age as wedge tomb dates seem to focus around 2540-2300 BC (Schulting et al 2008, 15). Other possible Bronze Age monuments are located around the mountain base, such as at Cloonagh, on the southwest side of Kesh Corran, where there is an embanked barrow and a mound barrow.

An unclassified 20m diameter quarried out barrow exists on the northeast corner of Kesh Corran below and northeast of the spur described above at Carnaweelan and in the same townland. Rev Constantine Cosgrave, parish priest of Kesh Church in the 1850s, in correspondence to the Kilkenny and South East Ireland Archaeological Society, describes an excavation at 'Myle's Cairn' in the vicinity of Kesh where a large flagstone rested on stone supports set deeply in the ground and only protruding slightly above ground. Through gaps in the supports a flagged floor was reached where small circular stone compartments formed by flat upright stones and covered by a thin slab contained cremated remains and polished beads (Cosgrave 1856-7, 52; Wood-Martin, 1888, 268-9). The location of this cairn is unclear, but the name 'Myles' could be derived from *maol* meaning bare or bald, and could relate to Carn an Mhaolín, the Irish name for Carnaweelan where the passage tomb is located. Timoney and Timoney (2001, 12) identify Cosgrave's excavation as being the passage tomb, but the heavily quarried out barrow could also be a candidate for the excavation.

Although there is Neolithic and Bronze Age activity in the form of monuments in the area there is no direct evidence for the use of the Cave of Keshcorran during these periods. A polished stone axe was found in the

caves but it seems to come from a layer that contained Early Medieval material. Marion Dowd's work on the caves has indicated dates from Iron Age and Early Medieval periods that appear to be linked to ritual deposits of human teeth. There was also an early date of a horse tooth and a number of undated dog teeth found in the caves (see Dowd op sit.) A number of artefacts were also found including a whetstone, a bone comb fragment (Viking type), two bone needles, an iron saw and a bronze ringed pin, all of which seem to date to the latter part of the Early Christian period (8th to 11th centuries) (Dowd 2009, 54). It is clear that the Caves of Keshcorran were used by man as temporary camps and that food was cooked and consumed within them during the Early Medieval period.

Mythology and Folklore of Kesh Corran

The hill, the cairn and the series of caves on the western flank of the mountain all feature in a wide range of myths and legends, and all feature as part of Garland Sunday festive assemblies (see MacNeill 1982, 185-7; Kielty 2001, 1-9). According to the Dinsheanchas the name Corran stems from the name of the harpist of the Tuatha Dé Danann, who was given the mountain and the plain that extends to the west, Magh Chorainn, for his excellent harp playing; and *Ceis* stems from Caelchéis, an enchanted sow, which was killed there with the help of Corann's harp playing (Gwynn 1913, 438; 1924, 292). However, Ó hÓgáin believes that *ceis* is a 5th -8th century Gaelic word meaning circuit (2001, 219) and Wood-Martin claim's *ceis* means 'small harp' (1882, 101). The Ordnance Survey Letters of 1837 relate the story of the three daughters of Mannanán MacLir who dwelt in an enchanted lake within Kesh Corran Mountain, Cé, Arabach and Léibe, who gave their names to the three principle lakes in the vicinity – Lough Key, Lough Arrow and Lough na Leibe (Herity 2010, 45).

Kesh Corran features strongly in

the Fenian Cycle of tales. It was sometimes called Céis Chorainn na bhFiann (Keshcorran of the Fianna) (Hogan 1910, 172) and is the location for various stories associated with the adventures of the Fianna. The district around Kesh Corran belonged to the family of Gráinne, and her father, king Cormac Mac Airt. Gráinne settled there with Diarmait after making peace with Fionn MacCumhall, and it was from here that Diarmait set off to from to the fatal hunt of the enchanted boar of Benbulbin (O'Grady 1857, 170; Breathnach 1968, 141). Interestingly, the earliest surviving account of the Pursuit of Diarmait and Gráinne was penned by a local scribe, Dáithí Ó Duibhgeannáin, of Shancough and Ballindoon in 1651, and is contained in RIA MS 24 P 9 (Breathnach 1968, 140). In the tale Duanaire Finn, Fionn and the Fianna are lured into one of the caves of Keshcorran by a one eyed, one legged, three armed blue coloured, master-smith called Lon mac Líomhtha where he made enchanted weapons for them (MacNeill 1982, 185-86, Ó Cathasaigh 1977, 35). The best known of the stories is Bruighion Chéisi Coruinn and this relates to the cairn on Keshcorran and the caves; the Brú of Conaran mac Imidel and his four hag daughters. Fionn is watching the Fianna hunt on the plains below from the Brú, also referred to as the 'Hunting Mound', when a doorway opens in the side of the mound and Fionn and the Fianna are taken into the mound to be killed but are finally rescued by Goll mac Morna (Stephens 1946, 203-18; MacNeill 1982, 186; Ó Cathasaigh 1977, 35).

Ireland's famous legendary hero and high king Cormac Mac Airt was born at Keshcorran and a variety of versions of the story appear in a number of early texts. However, many of these versions contain the motif used in his birth story where the hero is suckled by a she-wolf in Úaim Cormaic (Cormac's Cave). The theme of wolves/hounds being connected with the area of Keshcorran is interesting as the association appears a number of times. The root word in Conaran's

mac Imidel's name (mentioned above) is *cú*, meaning wolf (but also hound), Cormac is rescued from úaim Céise Coraínd (the Cave of Keshcorran) where Cormac was being reared by a wolf by Conamail Conriucht (literally Wolf-like Wolf-shape), the leader of the wolves of Connaught (see Ó Cathasaigh, 1977 for discussion). It is worth noting that wolf bones were found in the Caves of Kesh (Woodman 1997, 140).

One of the best-known stories about the caves concerns an old woman who lived at Rathcroghan in County Roscommon many, many years ago. At Rathcroghan, another place steeped in myth, is the cave/southern known as Oweynagat (the Cave of the Cats), but was formerly called 'The Hellmouth Door' as it was considered to be an entrance to the other-world. The story tells of the old woman holding the tail of an unruly calf, the only method she had to bring it home. However, the calf bolted and ran into the cave but the woman refused to let go. The calf kept running through twisting passages and caverns until the following morning, when the calf and woman, to her amazement and that of the locals, finally exited the darkness to arrive, twenty four miles from her home, at the caves of Kesh (Beranger 1779, 10).

Discussion

The symbolic qualities of caves are wide-ranging; principally deriving from the sense of being underground. Elements such as acoustics, temperature, smell, dampness, darkness, shadows, claustrophobia etc potentially lead to feelings of fear and awe, giving a sense of an otherworldly place, something evidenced in the folklore and the possible associations of Garland Sunday events being held at the Caves of Keshcorran (Dowd 2001, 27). Likewise the passage tomb on the summit, and indeed the entire mountain, appears to represent a perception of an otherworldly domain as evidenced in the range and type of medieval literature and folklore that are related to Kesh Corran. This

perception may have been similar to one during prehistory considering the number of prehistoric funerary monuments on and encircling the mountain. Perhaps the summit cairn and the caves may have been viewed as abodes of ancestral spirits or supernatural beings.

The wider landscape around Kesh Corran contains the other 18 passage tombs of the Carrowkeel/Keshcorran complex located to the east (apart from the Pinnacle, Carnaweelan, and the three in Treanmore). There is a barrow group at Greenan, and a number of other barrows to the south and west, with a considerable number further north on the higher ground above Ballymote. One barrow of interest might be the 22m-diameter bowl barrow at Bearvaish, which overlooks the Owenmore River to its west. Adjacent to this barrow is a bridge built in the 1920s over the Ford of Corraun. A total of 12 polished stone axes (mainly made of porcellenite from Co Antrim) have been found during the construction of the bridge and in subsequent years in its vicinity (Rathmullen, Bearvaish and Kingsfort townlands). This could suggest an entry point into this landscape from the west and the axes could be votive offerings at this natural threshold.

The mountains and the ancient monuments on and around Kesh Corran help make the distant past visible in the landscape. As long as they have existed they have been given new meanings and gained a new cultural significance through time. Monuments acted as memorials to the past, and their significance could be potentially altered or added to over time. The idea of memory and how this relates to monuments through time suggests that new meanings could be established at monuments long after the original understanding of the monuments had been lost. Similarly, monuments in their later histories became reference points for new agendas and new meanings often represented by mythical stories (Bradley 2002). Today people who

live in the area and those who visit it all reference the landscape in different manners. However, they cannot help being struck by the shape and texture of Kesh Corran and the Bricklieve Mountains and by the extraordinary caves on its western flank. Kesh Corran creates a sense of place, a sense of identity and a memory of both.

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Clontarf

By Joan Gleeson

The teacher called me 'Miss'
 I knew storm clouds were gathering
 For first names were for the clever and the wise
 These history lessons will lead to my demise.

"The date of the Battle of Clontarf?" she said
 My mind races, to me that's eaten bread.
 Clontarf? I have a cousin there
 She never mentioned battles when or where
 Teacher bellows "Stop twiddling with your hair,
 We're waiting Miss Gardinaire."

I see my cousin now, the fiddle in her hand
 Playing reels and jigs in the famous Kincora Céile Band.

Ah! Name springs to mind!
 High King Brian Ború
 Address: Kincora, Killaloe.
 He had enough of Viking plunder
 Pillaging and ransacking his monasteries asunder.
 Brian won that battle but got killed, poor man!
 He should have upped his tent and ran.

"Wake up!" I hear her dulcet voice
 It's now or never to make my choice
 I'll choose a date, for I must answer.
 Was it ten-fourteen or ten-sixty-six?
 Please lady luck come smile on me,
 Now's not the time for one of your old tricks.
 I chanced it, "ten-fourteen Miss" - give or take a year,
 And by the mere skin of my teeth, I'm here.

That battle fought fadó fadó
 Good Friday, one thousand years ago.

Happiness is . . .

By Bernie Doyle

Happiness is waking up in the morning, the sun peeping in through the chinks in the curtains, with a feeling of well-being and limbs without aches or pains.

Happiness is walking through the woods in spring through a carpet of bluebells and arriving in a field with a sunny bank a-glow with primroses and cowslips.

Happiness is getting out of your car in your driveway and hearing a chorus of birdsong from the back garden.

Happiness is having all your grandchildren and their parents to a get-together in your garden, listening to the chatter, shouts and children's laughter all afternoon, and waving them a cheery good-bye in the evening.

Happiness is in knowing that all those you love have come through their various difficulties and illnesses safely and well.

Happiness is seeing something you would like to buy or a trip you would like to take and knowing that, with a little management twitch here and there, you can afford to do it.

Happiness is being able to get up in the morning, eat what you want, do the things you would like to do and know that, even if you are slow and awkward doing some things, it doesn't matter a damn!

A trip to Aran

By *Bernie Gilbride*

The day dawned bright and sunny with a gentle breeze. We were on holiday in Galway, staying at the Galway Bay Hotel, and were scheduled to visit the Aran Islands, weather permitting. This was a trip I had always wanted to take and now I was getting the chance.

Boarding the bus with light hearts we headed for Rossaville, just out the road a few miles. Rossaville is a busy port, catering for the islands, fishing trawlers, cruisers and sports craft of all sorts. It was a very cosmopolitan place that morning with German, Italian, French and other European tourists and many American visitors. We were a group of about 35 people and were quickly through admittance and directed to the ferry.

The ferry was quite large with a restaurant, bar, a couple of lounges, all modern conveniences. We decided to stay on deck, and in a few minutes were on our way. The sea was like a pond with the sun glistening on it and we watched the Galway coast fade away, and admired the Clare mountains before they too began to disappear. With a blue sky overhead and brilliant sunshine we felt we could have been on a Mediterranean cruise.

About an hour and a half later Inishmore came into sight and in minutes we were pulling in along the pier at Kilronan. On landing we were met by a fleet of multi-coloured minibuses which we had been advised to take to tour the Island. The bus was driven by an Aran Islander who spoke Irish as well as English to us when



he realised we understood him. He was a mine of information, naming the houses, bays, and ruins along the route, even stopping at vantage points for photos.

Our first stop was at Kilmurvey village, with its many craft shops, general purpose shops and café, surrounding a flag-stoned courtyard with tables just waiting to be occupied. As we left the minibus there was a signpost indicating the road to Dun Aengus among many other places. My friend Maureen and I decided to try the road to Dun Aengus, knowing it to be a steep climb, but having heard so much about the fort we thought we might just attempt it and see how far we would get. Many of our group preferred to visit the craft shops and

information room before having tea or coffee at the outside tables.

At first the road was easy with a very gentle incline and we decided to continue a little further. As we climbed the view got better and better with heather, rocks and ocean on all sides. Gradually it got more difficult and at one time we considered turning back, but then having come so far we encouraged each other to keep going. We were not alone as many other tourists had also decided to visit Dun Aengus and were on the road with us. The laughter and chatter lightened the way and before long we realised we were making good headway. All around us cameras were in constant use – cine, ordinary, large and small, old and new, cheap and costly. The

climbers, especially the foreign visitors, were recording the whole thing, the actual climb, the scenery, the people, knowing it would take the photos to be believed, nothing less would suffice. It really was an exceptional experience.

We met many people on their way down who encouraged us to keep going, assuring us the fort was well worth the climb. We thought of the men that built the fort all those centuries ago, on orders of Aengus their leader no doubt. What hardship they must have endured in wintertime. What clothing had they worn as protection against the cold and the Atlantic storms? Were they slaves, as in Roman times, with no choice but to obey or face death? Who was this Aengus in whose footsteps we now followed on this lovely summer day? Questions, questions. Perhaps we will find some answers in the fort itself.

By this time the climb was beginning to get really tough. We had to concentrate on the road, picking our way around rocks and over shale. As we drew nearer we rested for a few minutes on a big rock, admiring the view, before making the final assault. We could see for miles around, it was a spectacular sight, heather, rock and ocean. Immediately behind us the walls of the fort loomed, sturdy stone walls, built to endure. They had stood the test of time.

With the last few yards behind us we made our way to the arched stone entrance more fitting to a church than a fort, we thought, and then we were there. We had made it and I for one felt like kissing the ground in my delight and joy.

We were met by a young tour guide who welcomed us all and began to give us a little of the history of the place. It is one of the most famous prehistoric forts in Europe, an important archaeological site. It is thought to date from the Iron Age, probably 1,100BC, though some historians believe it to date from

2,500BC. Its triple-wall defences built on the western side are said to date from 500BC. It is thought to be one of the most magnificent barbaric monuments to be seen, known as 'The Fort of Aengus', a pre-Christian god of Irish mythology, a mystical King.

The fort consists of a series of four walls of dry stones built on a high cliff some 100 metres above sea level. The surviving stonework is four metres wide, originally oval or 'D' shaped, parts of which have since fallen into the sea. Outside the walls there are stone slabs planted in upright positions, largely well preserved, known as 'chevaux de frise', and they are the most impressive of their kind known to exist. Dun Aengus encloses approximately 14 acres of land, and although clearly defensive it is suggested that its primary purpose was religious and ceremonial rather than military. It may have been used for seasonal rites – bonfires perhaps, clearly visible for miles. The location provides a view of approximately 120 km of coastline and was possibly of significant importance in its control of this coastal trading highway. The Aran Islands were then possibly the last known part of Europe.

The guide showed us the fire pits used for the preparation of food, then warned us of the dangers of the site and left us to wander around by ourselves. We walked around, marvelling at the views and delighted to have made the climb. The younger members stretched flat on their tummies and leaned out over the edge to view the sea below, their feet firmly held by their friends. Then it was time to go. We made our way back to the entrance with its beautifully arched opening, and after casting one glance back we viewed the descent, realising it would probably prove much more difficult than the climb.

Over the first 100 yards we stumbled and slid, holding onto each other and to the larger rocks until we reached the gentler slopes. From then on down

it was easy and in no time we were back in Kilmurvey ordering icecream and enjoying a well-earned rest before the mini-bus came to take us on the remainder of our tour.

Not having much time left we visited in rapid order:

The Seven Churches, ruins of an ecclesiastical study centre from the 7/8th century

Maggie Danin Cottage, a thatch cottage in the smallest village on the Island

Man of Aran cottage, the original setting for Robert Flaherty 1930s film Man of Aran

We ended our tour back in Kilmurvey, the largest village on the island, with its lovely shops and cafes. There we bought Aran sweaters and jumpers with their intricate design. The designs and stitches are special to the individual families on the island, where they are hand-knitted. These designs and stitches have been handed down for generations, where they sometimes were the only way to identify bodies washed ashore after tragedies at sea.

Sitting drinking coffee we spotted our ferry coming in. Once the incoming passengers had disembarked we queued to embark, a little sad to be leaving this extraordinary place, with its stone fields and gardens, its lovely houses, wonderful scenery, many historical ruins and friendly people. We promise ourselves to return again, to stay a few days and walk the island at our leisure. One day is clearly not sufficient.

This time we choose to sit inside in the lounge, listening to the babble of voices in many languages, and compare our impressions of the island with our friends. Well satisfied with our trip to Aran we recount the highlights of our day and enjoy hearing theirs.

It was a very happy group that thanked our bus driver as he left us at the Galway Bay Hotel.

The First Domestic Incident

By John McDonagh

Recall naïve Adam and Eve
In Eden's garden splendour
Without any hint or precedent
Exploring other's gender

In this verdant land straight from
God's hand
The Sun was always shining,
No noisy crowds, no darkening clouds
To need a silver lining

No tears or fears, no aging years
No worries about money
Just birds and bees among the trees
In this land of milk and honey.

From head to toes they wore no
clothes
No cap no coat nor wellies
No bra or vest on boobs or chest,
No buttons in their bellies

No knickers, thong or no long-john
Would cover their credentials
But a very brief and brown fig-leaf
Would hide the bare essentials

In pond and glade they swam and
played
With joy and exultation
As Eden nursed the world's first
At the dawning of creation

But Eve was odd and said, "Dear God
I know I sound ungrateful

But I'm really feeling unfulfilled
And the feeling's oh-so-hateful

"There's too much sun and not much
fun

My life is oh-so-boring
Adam's unappreciative
And I can't abide his snoring.

"It well may be the PMT
That's making me so snappy."
Said God, "I'll make a great big snake
And that should make you happy"

Then God did say, "Enjoy your day,
I hope your snake stays quiet,
But as of now, I will allow
No apples in your diet

"You see my lass they're full of gas
And methane clouds are forming
Just as it seems, I've joined the greens
To combat global warming."

Well, Eve did take this handsome
snake
And loved him 'til he withered
But one fine day, he got away
And up a tree he slithered

In one great bound she left the ground
And after him went climbing,
Despite her pace beside her face
She saw an apple shining

Before she knew what she should do
The apple she was nipping
And Adam waiting on the ground
Observed her fig-leaf slipping

Imagine Eve, the lovely Eve
No blemish or no wrinkle
Well Adam opened up his eyes
And his eyes began to twinkle

And as he gazed his hormones faded
He begged the Lord for pardon
But he soon forgot, and lost the plot
And chased her 'round the garden

And round about and in and out,
Through the cabbage, spuds and
flowers
There were squeaks and shrieks
among the leeks
The crack went on for hours

Then God looked out and gave a shout
"Those apples are restricted,
You're both engaged in ASB
I'll have you both evicted!"

And as they shivered in the cold
In rain and desperation
Poor Eve (in normal female mode)
Began the lamentation

Says she "I'd like to take that snake
And ram him down your trapple!"
Said Adam, "All I wanted was
TO EAT THE BLOODY APPLE!"

Radio

By Bernie Gilbride

My source of information,
My stimulant to conversation

Introducer of pleasure
Music at leisure

Once large and awkward,
Now fit in a pocket

Companion while walking,
Background to talking

Sauce for celebration,
Solace in consternation

Variety the basic theme,
Effortless t'would seem

Drama any choice,
Politics every voice

Music to sing along,
Opera to brood upon

Defender of the exploited,
Injustices pinpointed

Upholder of free speech,
Across continents you reach

Important for freedom,
To each generation

This freedom guaranteed,
Worldwide would succeed

All lives to enhance
With hope to advance

You are
My companion down the years,
Used to sooth my tears

The Role of Women and Religion in the 1916 Rising

By Sandra Murphy

The roles of women and religion are subjects that have not received adequate attention in the popular history of one of the most important events of modern Ireland. In fact the participation of women in the 1916 Rising was extensive. In addition to the traditional female roles such as cooking and nursing, women were also involved in other more warlike activities. They directly assisted the combatants by delivering messages, by moving ammunition around and by motivating and raising the morale of the men. Closely connected to this theme of motivation is the role played by religion. Time and time again, participants and bystanders alike turned to religion for guidance and comfort.

At the turn of the twentieth century, women's roles in society were changing. The increasing availability of education to women meant that they were gradually branching into professions which had previously been the reserve of men. In 1884, the Royal University of Ireland awarded degrees to women for the first time. Although many women at this time were still restricted to primary education due to economic circumstances, the widening of the availability of degrees to women opened up a way for them to increase their political standing in society.

In many societies, the women's suffrage movement is perceived as the beginning of women's role in politics. However, in Ireland at this time there was a generation of women who had been involving themselves in political movements. The Land League of the 1880s provided the opportunity for women to become involved in a political movement when the leaders were imprisoned, and the Ladies Land League took over their activities. They

were curtailed quite quickly after the men were released from prison but nonetheless they had now been involved in a political movement and their influence in the revolutionary tradition was only to increase from then on.

In terms of militant political movements, the Fenian movement of the late nineteenth century also provided an opportunity for female involvement. Although there was no actual organisation for their involvement, the women as sisters, mothers, wives and daughters assisted their men by offering first aid, food, safe-houses and other services. It is likely that their influence at this stage was also ideological. The risings of 1798 and the 1860s had imprinted themselves onto Irish folklore. It is likely that romanticised stories of these failed rebellions and the heroism associated with them were told by mothers to their impressionable young boys and girls in the decades afterwards. The fact that these were militant nationalist movements defined the method of active nationalism from then on.

The main rebel participants in the Easter Rising were The Irish Volunteers, The Irish Citizen Army, Cumann na mBan and Fianna Éireann. The foundation and administration of these organisations involved women on a number of levels. Inghinidhe na hÉireann originated in opposition to Queen Victoria's visit in 1900. The organisation continued after the opposition to the royal visit, encouraging the study of Irish literature, language and drama. The first president of the organisation was Maud Gonne, the daughter of a British captain. She came to Ireland when her father was stationed in the Curragh and became an ardent nationalist.

However, marriage problems and a split from her husband led to her being the target of much criticism, and membership of Inghinidhe na hÉireann dwindled from 1908.



Countess Markievicz

It was later taken over by Helena Molony. Molony was an actor from Dublin who was also involved with the Irish Women's Franchise League. She launched the women's paper *Bean na hÉireann* in November 1908. It was Molony who introduced Countess Markievicz to Inghinidhe na hÉireann. Countess Markievicz was born Constance Gore-Booth. She was the daughter of Sir Henry Gore-Booth, an Anglo-Irish landlord. In 1903, having married the Polish Count Markievicz, she moved to Dublin. She became involved in Inghinidhe na hÉireann and *Bean na hÉireann* in 1909, and in the same year assisted in the foundation of the nationalist boy scout organisation, *Na Fianna*. An objection was made to her



Helena Molony

involvement at the foundation of the Fianna on the grounds of her being female. She was defended by Bulmer Hobson and allowed to continue in her role.¹ She was also an ardent socialist and was involved in the ITGWU. She was to become one of the more famous participants of the Rising and was heavily involved in politics in the years after it. Molony also introduced Dr Kathleen Lynn to the nationalist cause. Lynn was a doctor originally from Co Mayo. She, like many others, became involved in the Irish Citizen Army in the aftermath of the 1913 Lockout and continued to play an active role after that. She was the chief medical officer of the ICA for the Rising and played a prominent role in moving around the city and treating those who needed medical attention.

From 1910 onwards, Home Rule became the most prominent issue in Irish politics. Women who had previously campaigned for suffrage for women now turned their attentions to the acquisition of Home Rule. The Home Rule Bill of 1912 led to the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force to resist Home Rule, by force if necessary. The spectre of a militant unionist force in the North inspired the formation of the Irish National Volunteers in November 1913, led by John Redmond. Consequently, in April 1914, a women's auxiliary,

Cumann na mBan, was formed. It was subordinate to the Volunteers and its members were trained in first aid. One of the most notable roles of Cumann na mBan during the Rising was that of messenger. Along with some of the men, women were sent out to deliver dispatches across the city as communication lines had been severed. They were given white armbands with red crosses on them in the hopes that this would prevent the British Forces from firing at them or placing them under arrest.

In 1914, the Volunteers secured funds to buy arms and in July of that year they landed 15,000 rifles with ammunition at Howth and Kilcoole. The arms which were landed in Howth arrived on board the *Asgard*, the yacht of Erskine Childers and his wife, who was on board with her friend Mary Spring Rice. They had accompanied the arms from Germany and were greeted in Howth by a crowd of Volunteers. Mrs Childers was involved in the organisation of the Volunteers. The arms brought in through Kilcoole had left Germany on board another ship, the *Kelpie*, which had a Kitty O'Brien amongst its crew.²

Josephine Clarke, widow of Liam Clarke, recounted that before the Rising she was advised not to appear to be involved with Cumann na mBan in public so that she could be used to transport dispatches during the Rising. She recounts that her pre-Rising activities included bandage-making and filling in mobilisation orders.³ Eamonn Ceannt's widow, Áine, detailed how Cumann na mBan had obtained old tweed costumes to be made into sleeping bags and how her sister Lilly procured the material with which the Tricolour flag was made by a Mrs Mellows.⁴ Volunteer women also provided accommodation for the Volunteers. They provided what could be described as 'safe houses' for the males. For example, Annie O'Brien's family had Con Colbert staying with them in the run-up to the Rising. She provided him with his breakfast on the morning he was mobilised into action.⁵

During the course of the Rising, Cumann na mBan carried out a wide range of tasks, such as preparing meals, delivering messages and administering first aid. Although the sources provide little evidence that there was much need for their First Aid services, there is sufficient evidence to say that they provided a reasonable amount of support to the men. Their primary roles seemed to have been in providing meals, where food was available, delivering messages, running errands and raising morale. Their role in delivering messages was a particularly precarious one. Winnie Carney was stationed in the GPO during Easter Week. She had arrived there with the original occupation force on Monday and remained there until the building was evacuated due to fire. She had a typewriter with her and spent her time typing messages and orders for the other rebel leaders stationed around the city. These messages were taken by women who wore white armbands with a red cross in the hopes of being mistaken for Red Cross workers. They had to move through increasingly dangerous streets, in constant danger from the British Forces and indeed from stray bullets from their own comrades' guns. They were acknowledged by a William Christian, stationed at Northumberland Road during the week: 'We were full of admiration for them as the action required courage and resource in order to get past the British Patrols.'⁶ One of these messengers worthy of note was Elizabeth O'Farrell. Elizabeth was a nurse who was stationed in the GPO during Easter Week. She attended to wounded in the GPO along with her friend Julia Grenan. Elizabeth was selected by Pearse to approach the British Forces regarding the surrender. She was then sent back to Pearse to get an unconditional surrender. She accompanied Pearse to surrender to Brigadier-General Lowe and subsequently brought surrender orders to the other rebel garrisons around the city. Seán Byrne, a first aid worker stationed with the Boland's



Severe damage to Dublin's Sackville Street (now O'Connell Street)

Mills garrison, recounts the arrival on Sunday morning of a woman at the railings claiming to have a message for Commandant Pearse, and that she then left and came back later for a second time. This was surely Elizabeth delivering her surrender orders. Her second visit was due to Eamonn deValera's refusal to accept surrender orders from anyone other than McDonagh.

The most prominent medical care provider from within the ranks of the rebels was the afore-mentioned Dr Lynn. She was present with Seán Connolly when he died on the roof of City Hall. Seán's brother Matthew was also present in City Hall. He had heard that his brother had been seriously wounded but was unable to go to him. He later heard that Dr Lynn was in the building and treating the wounded. She later recounted Sean's last moments to his brother.⁷ It is clear from his account that Matthew was comforted by the fact his brother had not been alone at the time of his death. Dr Lynn also told him of his sister's work in treating wounded in the same building. The numbers of Volunteers wounded seemed to depend very much on location. There

were enough people wounded in City Hall to warrant Dr Lynn going there to treat them, but in other locations 'the members of Cumann na mBan had very little First Aid work to do.'⁸ The main role of Cumann na mBan in the Rising, as perceived by the members themselves, was to 'prepare food and generally to look after the welfare of the men.'⁹ Their adherence to these instructions was absolute. In one instance at Marrowbone Lane Distillery, 'the garrison had been short of food and the girls had left it all for the use of the men.'¹⁰

The rebel cause was also assisted by many women who were not involved as members of any organisation. One despatch carrier named Ignatius Callender noted how when he returned to his house with ammunition which he was to deliver to Church Street the next morning, his mother took it from him believing that she was less likely to be stopped by the authorities. She brought it as far as Blackhall Place from where a Mrs Murnane's daughter brought it over the barricade in King Street.¹¹ On another occasion, the wife of one of the rebels, a Mrs Redmond took messages home for a number of the men stationed at the

Imperial Hotel on Sackville Street.

After the surrender, women continued to offer their assistance to the men. When a British military officer attempted to get the Cumann na mBan girls to say they had only participated by administering first aid, they refused. They stated that they had gone out as belligerents with the men and that they would have done anything that was asked of them.¹² When the GPO garrison were being detained on the green of the Rotunda hospital, one volunteers noted seeing Winnie Carney put her coat over Seán McDermott as he slept.¹³ The sources also show that the women provided moral support to the men. When those arrested after the surrender of the Marrowbone Lane distillery were being marched to Richmond Barracks by the British forces, the women were reportedly asked to sing marching songs by the men.¹⁴

There is a distinct connection between women and the clergy at the time. Irish society in Dublin was only beginning to emerge from the chivalric ideas of the Victorian Age. Especially among the upper classes, it was expected that women would be segregated from men to some

extent. The clergy provided no risk to the sexual integrity of women and with the high rates of adherence to Catholic ideals, priests were far more connected to the lives of the women of their parishes than they are today. Attendance at mass and confession was strictly adhered to. The immunity afforded to priests allowed them a freedom of movement that other adult males did not have during Easter week. Many of the newspapers had had to cease printing and martial law severely curtailed movement. As a result, correct information was difficult to come by. When Áine Ceannt was seeking information on the fate of her husband, her sister-in-law suggested that she should go and speak to the priests in Church Street as that was 'where the only reliable information could be found.'¹⁵ There are numerous incidences in the sources of the women and men attending mass and confession before hostilities began. In one case, a member of the second battalion recalled how four to six weeks before Easter week, they were instructed to 'go to confession and to keep [themselves] in the state of grace for any eventuality.'¹⁶ On Easter Saturday, one volunteer noted that there were thousands of men and boys present at confession.¹⁷ Attendance at confession was to prepare them in case they met their deaths during the hostilities. However, they also turned to religion to protect them. Their families also turned to prayer as a way of coping with the fact of their loved ones going out to fight. Ignatius Callender's mother ran after him as he left to join his battalion to pin a badge of the Little Flower to his clothes saying 'you're alright now, the Little Flower will protect you.'¹⁸

In another instance, Ignatius carried a message to the wife of an unnamed volunteer to say that her husband had received confession. Her reply was 'Oh, thank God.'¹⁹ Men also stopped to pray before going on individual tasks during the Rising. Before an attack on Broadstone station, Fr Albert and another unnamed friar gave a blessing to the twelve men

participating.²⁰ Another Volunteer stopped into the University Church on Earlsfort Terrace to say a prayer on his way to his battalion.²¹ In another pre-emptive blessing, the tricolour flag which was in Eamonn and Áine Ceannt's house was 'brought in and sprinkled with Easter water.'²²

Another important role of religion in the Rising was that of providing comfort following the surrender. In the aftermath of the Rising there was great uncertainty regarding the possible fates of those who had been arrested. They were held in a number of places before they were either released, deported to English prisons, or executed. A great camaraderie had developed between the men and women of the various units and there is evidence of great anguish on the part of those waiting for word of the fates of friends and family members. In Richmond barracks, a group of Volunteers who had been arrested recited the rosary after lights out before they settled down for the night.²³ Áine Ceannt recalled saying the Rosary between three and five-thirty am the morning that Eamonn was to be executed.²⁴ In another example of religious devotion, a group of Cumann na mBan women on the eve of being transported to Kilmainham gaol to be searched for the first time since their arrest, worried about what to do with the guns they still had in their possession. They decided to say the rosary for guidance on what to do and then hid them on ledges up the chimney.²⁵ It is clear that prayer and religion pervaded every aspect of the Rising.

In addition to providing accurate information in the days following the surrender, the clergy of Dublin assisted in a number of ways. During the hostilities, several priests put themselves at risk by administering the sacraments to those involved in the Rising. On Sackville Street, a Fr Headley of Dominick Street church crossed from the GPO to the Imperial Hotel under heavy fire to hear the men and women's confessions. The firing was so intense that he then had to

stay the night in the Imperial Hotel.²⁶ There are also the priests who tended to those who had been arrested. One Volunteer reported that a Fr McCarthy fetched him a change of clothes while he was in Kilmainham gaol. He was later visited by Fr McCarthy when he was in Portland Prison.²⁷ There were also those who attended the men who were executed in their last moments. A Fr Albert attended Con Colbert at his execution and later passed on a message from him to a friend.²⁸ Fr Albert also visited the ladies of Cumann na mBan in Kilmainham as the executions were taking place. According to Lily Curran, he consoled them, blessed them and heard confessions. He also took messages from them to their families and as a result, Lily received sweets and biscuits from her brother Tom.²⁹ Members of religious orders also played a part in the Rising. One witness statement records the wish of a Sean Cody to express appreciation to nuns from St John's convent for preparing food for the men in the Church Street and North Brunswick Street area.³⁰

Assessing the impact of the Rising on Dublin civilian women is difficult. There are few written accounts of their experiences. Newspapers and witness statements provide some information. Dublin city centre was badly damaged during the Rising. It is estimated that the damage caused was two and a half million pounds sterling. The damage to businesses in the area of the fighting must have been severe. In places, entire streets were reduced to rubble. In the midst of this rubble lay the remains of the shops and offices of Dublin. Shops which had not been destroyed were likely to have been looted. Deliveries into the city had been severely disturbed and the fighting and martial law had made it difficult for people to move around, reducing their customer levels. This must have caused significant hardship for the business owners, employees and their dependents. One business owner lost her business as a result of the rising through different means.

Mrs Callender was the proprietress of Lucan restaurant in the city. Eighty per cent of her business was from British army soldiers who placed orders with her. In the aftermath of the Rising, when she was heard expressing remorse for those who had been executed, the British soldier eating there challenged her for her remark saying that it was 'more than [she] said for [their] poor fellows who were killed.'³¹ Gradually, the British soldiers stopped placing their orders with her and by June, she had closed the restaurant. There was also a significant effect on the home lives of the citizens of Dublin. In one instance, a group of volunteers provided food to the residents of a street which they had barricaded.³² This indicates that the residents were unable to leave to procure food for themselves. The Volunteers had taken possession of businesses, private houses and tenement buildings alike. The people living there must have suffered significant disruption. They would have had to leave their homes, find alternative accommodation and then deal with the destruction which was caused in their homes on their return. Their freedom of movement was also restricted. On Easter Monday, it was noted that families who had taken day trips to the sea had difficulty returning to their homes when public transport systems stopped running. Seamus Daly reported seeing families with small children still attempting to make their way home at two or three am.³³ Even those who could stay in their homes were under threat of being raided. In one case, a family in Gloucester Street were told by British soldiers that if they looked out the window, they would be shot.³⁴

There were also many civilians who lost their lives as a result of the Rising. Among them was a Nurse Kelly, another nurse in the South Dublin Union, a woman who was shot dead outside her home on Capel street,³⁵ and a woman who died of a seizure when her neighbour's house was raided in the course of Easter week.^{36 37} The poor of Dublin also

suffered when the Volunteers seized the Mendicity Institute, a charitable organisation which offered meals to the destitute. It is estimated that 2,500 civilians were killed or injured during the Rising.³⁸

In light of the far-reaching ill-effects of the Rising on the citizens of Dublin, it is not surprising that many of those who were involved found themselves the target of hostility. One group in particular notable for providing this hostility were the 'allowance women.' These were women whose husbands were serving in the British army. For them, British rule afforded their husbands a chance to earn a meagre living to support their families. There were also Irish soldiers among those who were deployed to suppress the Rising, such as the Dublin Fusiliers. Some of these men may very well have been family members of the women voicing their opposition. When the City Hall detachment was being marched to Kilmainham jail, Matthew Connolly reported having marched through 'several groups of hostile people.'³⁹ It was only when the leaders of the Rising were being executed that public opinion changed in favour of the Volunteers. By the time the men were being brought to jails in England, the crowds who gathered in Dublin were greeting them with cheers.⁴⁰

In the months after the rising, there was a need for relief systems to assist the dependents of those who had been killed or interred during or after the Rising. There were some relief efforts for the civilians on the part of the British authorities but they did not extend to those whose relatives had been involved in leading the Rising. Many people lost their jobs as a result and found it difficult to secure employment elsewhere. Kathleen Clarke launched the Irish Volunteers Dependents Fund using money she had been given by her husband before the Rising. Its executive committee was comprised of women including Áine Ceannt, Margaret Pearse and Lil Colbert. Shortly after this another organisation with similar intents

was formed. The Irish National Aid Association raised and distributed funds for those who suffered as a result of the Rising.⁴¹ There was some tension between the two organisations and they amalgamated in August 1916. In addition to the aid they distributed, the women dependents of the executed men provided a link to the men who had by now reached the status of martyr for the Irish cause.

History remembers the women of 1916 who went on to gain notoriety in Irish politics in subsequent years. Apart from Countess Markievicz, no evidence has been found of women actually participating in combat situations. Countess Markievicz participated as a member of the ICA and not of Cumann na mBan and she was to take an active role in combat situations. However, the other women of Cumann na mBan, although they may not have been quite as militant as history makes them out to be, were totally dedicated to both the republican cause and to the support of their men. It has been shown how, on numerous occasions, they displayed extreme courage and determination.

Women were heavily involved in the nationalist cause on an unofficial level during the Fenian era, and by 1916, they were officially involved. Women assisted with the setting up and running of nationalist organisations such as Cumann na mBan and Na Fianna, providing them with the political platform to advance further into the world of politics. The role of the woman in the family is also notable, mothers told stories of the Fenians to their children, who in turn took up the nationalist cause. During the course of Easter week, the women took on most of the tasks not related to fighting in order to free the men to do the fighting. It was not just the women directly involved in the hostilities who participated but also the citizens of Dublin. Some citizens supported the Rising by providing practical assistance to the participants and others who objected to the rising made their feelings known also. The background to all of this is the Irish Catholic

Church. The sources provide a wealth of information on the devotion of the people of Dublin to their religion and also a number of stories of the clergy who put themselves in danger to attend to their parishioners. It is clear that religion played a very important role in the Rising. Although men still held the political power at this point, women were growing ever more influential. In the years following the Rising, the increased participation of women in politics was shown when Countess Markievicz was elected to the Dáil. The fact that the Irish Volunteers Dependents Fund had only females on its Executive Committee indicates the political independence that women were now seeking. They had fought alongside their men for their nationalist cause and they now demanded recognition for it.

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Fighting the Famine in Ireland

By PJ Duffy

Ever since the dark period of the Irish Famine, much has been written about how and why this disaster took place in our land. Most researchers and historians readily place the blame on the blight and subsequent failure of the potato crop. But the question has been asked, why were we so dependent on the potato crop in the first place? At that time it would seem our country was very much overpopulated. Potatoes were always a plentiful crop so a crammed population became over-dependent on them.

During the period when the potato crop had failed here and the famine was at its peak, there were thousands of people in the London area of Great Britain who were surviving on the brink of starvation. Alexis Soyer (4 February 1810 – 5 August 1858), a chef at London's Reform Club, operated a huge soup kitchen for London's poor in Leicester Square. He had sometime previously been abroad with the British army where he was employed devising recipes for the forces. When he heard about what was taking place in Ireland he volunteered to go there and offer his services and advice as a chef.

When he arrived into Dublin he was met by hundreds of starving people all eager to sample his recipes for human survival. He erected a huge tent with wood and canvas on the esplanade outside the Royal Barracks in Dublin. He installed a 300-gallon coal-fired boiler and supplied soup and chopped vegetables to hundreds of hungry people. Huge sections of beef, mutton and pork were chopped up and cooked in this boiler. The appetising aroma that came from the tent was mouth-watering for a hungry people who surged forward in droves to avail of the food on offer.

Immediately following on his Dublin venture he recommended that soup kitchens on a smaller scale be set up at suitable locations around the countryside. On one of his trips



Alexis Soyer in 1849

out to the country he was amazed to discover how much stuff was going to waste while a whole population was starving. In abandoned gardens along his route cabbage plants like kale and broccoli were growing wild; also garlic, a plant that could be useful to give flavour to soup. He explained that during his life he had seen a huge amount of fresh material going to waste and being dumped into refuse bins that if turned into soup could prevent thousands of people from starving.

He contacted landlords and other prominent people and got their co-operation in setting up suitable soup kitchens at various locations around the country. He devised a suitable recipe for those people in charge. A government supervisor took charge and directed that at all times hygiene was paramount and utensils in use in kitchens must be scalded with boiling water after use in order to avoid the spread of disease.

Ladles and enamel mugs were

supplied to people being served with soup, which has been described as wholesome and nutritious. This action, while not bringing the death rate to zero, at least slowed it down so that there might be more possibility for relatives of the deceased to bury their dead.

Even in the 1940s people working in the fields were able to point to a spot where a man died in 1848 while returning from a soup kitchen. His next of kin were quickly notified. They took charge of his remains, brought his body home to be waked in his own little house, and on the following Sunday took it to the local graveyard to be interred in the family plot. Before that time hundreds of dead people were buried without coffins in unmarked graves situated in the corners of fields.

Reference: Readers Digest Stories of a Previous Generation.

Changing Times at the Market Yard

by *Bernie Gilbride*

As I parked my car in the Market Yard in Sligo the other morning I got to thinking of all the changes there over the past few years, and wondered what the old neighbours in Temple Street would make of it if they could come back and see it now. The entire centre has been cleared away. The three massive gates are gone and it is open to drive through at any hour.

My earliest recollection of the yard is of a huge fire on the left-hand side as one enters from Temple Street. I was being held up to an attic window so that I could see the flames. I have since discovered the building on fire had been a shirt factory and its burning down was catastrophic for our small town at that time. Being very young this aspect of the fire meant nothing to me, but the flames really took my fancy, much as fireworks do for children today.

At that time the yard was completely enclosed, having three massive gates: one at each entrance, to Temple Street, High Street and Dominic Street. These gates were approximately 15 to 20 feet high and very heavy. They were padlocked each evening at 6pm and re-opened each morning at 7am by a caretaker, who lived in a house in the yard. I can still see the huge keys that hung from his belt. Inside the gates were stores on either side of the yard. I would assume that these stores were once dwelling houses, but at that time they held all sorts of equipment for Sligo Corporation. Just inside the Temple Street gate was a big watering trough, continuously overflowing, for the horses to drink from.

The entire centre of the yard was covered and slated, with a large open-ended platform at either end. In between was an open space capable of taking at least ten to 12 horses and carts. The platforms were of stone covered in very heavy timber similar to railway sleepers, and were the height of a normal cart, so that the cart drawn alongside was easily unloaded. On each platform were huge scales capable of weighing anything and everything. On these same platforms

we youngsters sang and danced if we had a chance, practising for when we would all be famous film stars. To be in the 'pictures' was everyone's ambition then. Alas, I don't think any of us realised that dream.

Every Saturday morning would see the yard full of horses, carts and farmers with all their wares: hay, potatoes, cabbage plants (when in season), oats, turf and blocks. There were so many carts they overflowed on to Temple Street, lining both sides. One could see the bargaining going on: the farmers with their big cocks of hay overhanging the cart showing the good quality out, the buyer sticking his hand into the centre of the hay, pulling out a handful, smelling it, running it through his fingers. Then the bargaining would begin, with much walking away and arguing the price until eventually a deal was made. With a spit on the hand and a handshake the money was handed over, and the 'luck' money handed back. Often there were carts of bonhams and their squeals could be heard way down in O'Connell Street. Carts too of young calves with their velvety soft frightened eyes, occasionally allowing their noses to be rubbed.

In fact on Saturday morning, Market Day, the place was a seething mass of humanity, with animals, produce, horses and carts thrown in for good measure. The noise – much shouting, laughter, neighing of horses, braying of donkeys, squealing of bonhams and the odd fiddle or melodeon being played and of course dogs barking – made it a lively place indeed.

On Temple Street corner stood a pub. It too would be filled with farmers and buyers all during the market and many a deal was sealed with a drink, with much of the 'luck' money being spent on it. Another pub stood at the High Street entrance. All along High Street were shops that complimented the country trade, selling grain, groceries and huge blocks of salt. The hardware stores, which were numerous, sold spades, forks, rakes and all types of

farming implements.

This was not the only use for the yard. Sligo Corporation used it to store its equipment for making and repairing roads – sand, gravel, stones, a big stone crusher, a huge steamroller, barrels and barrels of tar, and a tar spreader which had a fire underneath to keep the tar bubbling and spreadable. The smell from it permeated the whole area. There was a water sprinkler to wash down the streets after the market.

The town fire tenders lived there too, while the firemen lived in the neighbouring area to be easily available in case of fire as there were very few cars and no mobile phones. In fact one of the first phones was installed in the fire tenders' sheds. Outside each gate was an emergency bell behind glass, to be broken if the yard was locked in order to raise the alarm. Then the gate nearest the fire was opened and off they went.

The town brass band had a place there too and could be heard and sometimes seen practising on Sunday mornings or on summer evenings, much to our delight. During the war the Local Defence Force used the yard for drilling and marching and this we loved to see.

Now as I sit here, all around me are modern elegant apartments with beautiful balconies. Where once the old stores stood, once again are dwelling places. The yard is completely open with through roads to Temple Street, High Street, and Dominick Street and lots and lots of car parking spaces. It's only five minutes' walk from the town centre and is a very popular spot for parking. Having parked I must be going, and must not forget to put up my ticket, otherwise it might cost me 20 euro instead of 65 cent for my ticket.

No doubt the old neighbours would have much to amaze them -- a woman parking a car, the number of cars around, having to pay to leave the car for even an hour, but most of all, the now completely open Market Yard.

Of Rabbits, Pheasants and Partridge

By John McDonagh

It's hard to believe now but in the post-war era of the hungry 1950s an amazing number of people supplemented their income and supplied protein to their family's diet by trapping, snaring, lamping, shooting or otherwise capturing the humble rabbit.

I can remember very clearly hundreds of rabbits being sold at the Ballymote markets, which were held each Thursday in the wintertime. The rabbits, paunched and hung in pairs, could vary in price from a low of one shilling and three pence to a high of four shillings and six pence. A fairly normal price would work out at about two to three shillings.

Taken in context, the price of a pint was then around two shillings and two pence, so the trapper with a couple of dozen rabbits for the market each week could look forward to a fairly bountiful Christmas.

Lamentably, the whole enterprise was brought to a sad and sudden end by the introduction of the hideous myxomatosis disease, which was introduced to this country around 1954.

Before the intensification of agriculture the countryside looked completely different. Fields were much smaller and usually bounded by dense hedgerows and big earthen banks which the local people called ditches. Oats and potatoes were grown on nearly every farm, creating a perfect habitat for all kinds of wildlife, especially rabbits.

Indeed rabbits could be seen as resource or a pest, depending on where your interests lay. If you were a farmer growing oats or barley, which most farmers did at that time, then your entire crop of germinating seedlings (locally known as 'braird') could be decimated by a heavy infestation. On the other hand, some seasonal workers became fully professional rabbit trappers during

the winter months, taking dozens of rabbits every week and transporting them directly to Dublin by rail, thus cutting out the middleman. Needless to say, this fraternity didn't see the onset of 'myxo' as beneficial in any way.

I understand that the vast majority of the rabbits that were traded ended up in butcher shops in Dublin but a sizeable number were exported to England, where post-war scarcities still existed. The dealers were usually small-time traders who also bought poultry, game, wool, horse-hair and any other commodities with potential to return a profit

I have very vivid memories of two competing dealers in Ballymote, each with a small pick-up truck, one parked outside the Hibernian Bank (now the Bank of Ireland) and the other, just across the road, outside Johnston's. They shouted insults lustily across the street at each other as they competed for the rabbits which were being brought to town for sale, in cars, vans and donkey-carts but mostly, on the

cross-bars and handlebars of bicycles.

Sadly, the 'myxo' put an end to all this activity, affecting a complete wipe-out of the rabbit population and thereby depriving many enterprising young fellows of their Christmas pocket money, and for some of the more seasoned hunters removing a useful supplement to their income.

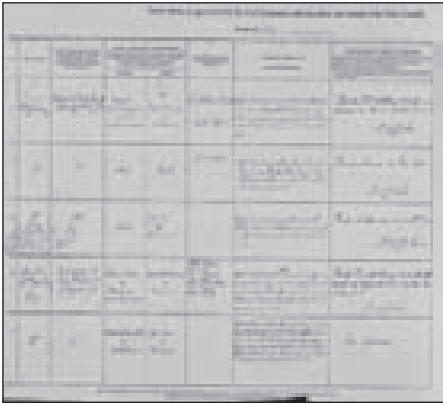
Rabbits were first introduced to the British Isles in the thirteenth century by the Normans, to provide meat and fur. Hunting them was the preserve of the aristocracy and any 'commoners' found hunting them were severely punished, sometimes by death. Rabbits being rabbits, they quickly multiplied until they became a pest that was eventually eliminated by the myxomatosis.

Pheasants and partridge were also introduced to Ireland from France by the Normans. They were regarded as game birds and once again hunting or taking them was the prerogative of the aristocracy – a privilege that was retained and jealously guarded by the landlords in much more recent times.

This Book, as approved of by the Justices (with the advice and consent of the Petty Constable)
County of Wick

No.	Name of the Defendant	Charge	Verdict	Penalty	Remarks
1	John J. [unclear]	Stealing of Rabbits	Guilty	£10	[unclear]
2	[unclear]	[unclear]	[unclear]	[unclear]	[unclear]
3	[unclear]	[unclear]	[unclear]	[unclear]	[unclear]
4	[unclear]	[unclear]	[unclear]	[unclear]	[unclear]

Ballymote court records of poachers being prosecuted



In compliance with the various land-acts of the nineteenth and early twentieth century most of the landlords sold out to their tenants, but the terms of sale nearly always contained a clause which gave them (the landlords) the exclusive right to 'hunt, pursue, shoot or otherwise take the game from the said lands' irrespective of the of the new owner's wishes. He or she was often denied the right to pursue or take pheasant, partridge, hares or mallard from their own holding.

These regulations and game laws were taken very seriously and rigorously enforced both by

the landlords, the Royal Irish Constabulary and later by the Gardaí. The 'Petty Sessions Records' from Ballymote court show hundreds of prosecutions in the mid to late 1800s brought by William Craig, and later by his son Robert, against poachers on the preserves of the Gore-Booth family. The Craigs were gamekeepers for the Gore-Booths and appear to have been remorseless and unrelenting in their pursuit of those who would dare to trap, shoot or otherwise take any of the baronet's game.

The courts too took a very dim view of poaching and there are several records from the 1880s showing fines of up to £5 or two months in prison with hard labour for poaching. (£5 would represent three or four months wages at that time.)

This rigorous enforcement of the game laws didn't seem to apply in our particular townland. The landlord here was Alexander Sim from Colooney . The preservation of game and shooting rights never appear to have been a priority with him and his tenants were not restricted from

taking game.

However, across a little stream from our townland were the townlands of Lissananny and Ballybrennan, the preserves of the Gore-Booths, with a bountiful supply of pheasants, woodcock and partridge. Well watched by the Craigs and their successive gamekeepers, as well as the police, it was an adventurous and rewarding activity to slip across the river in the early morning and return again undetected with a few pheasants, mallard or partridge in the bag. My late father and uncles specialised and revelled in this activity. They had many good tales to relate about close encounters with and subsequent escapes from the gamekeepers and police.

By the time I started to use a gun, the Craigs were long gone and the Gore-Booth estates were in terminal decline. The game rights were then leased by a consortium of wealthy Sligo businessmen and were minded by the Gardaí but the temptation to continue the family tradition was as strong as ever.

County of Sligo						
GORE-BOOTH, as approved of by the Lord Lieutenant (with the advice and consent of						
No.	Date of Complaint	NAME, RESIDENCE, and OCCUPATION of the Person or Persons charged with the offence		Name of Person who made the Complaint	NATURE OF COMPLAINT as set forth in Summary	PARTICULARS OF EVIDENCE ON OATHS
		Offence	Residence			
20	1887	William Craig Ballymote	James Craig Ballymote	Wm Craig Ballymote	That the said James Craig was charged with the offence of poaching on the preserve of the Gore-Booths, in the County of Sligo, on the 14th inst.	James Craig
Ballymote Petty Sessions - County of Sligo						
1	1887	William Craig Ballymote	James Craig Ballymote	Wm Craig Ballymote	That the said James Craig was charged with the offence of poaching on the preserve of the Gore-Booths, in the County of Sligo, on the 14th inst.	James Craig
2		James Craig Ballymote	James Craig Ballymote	Wm Craig Ballymote	Same offence as above.	James Craig
3		James Craig Ballymote	James Craig Ballymote	Wm Craig Ballymote	Same offence as above.	James Craig

Ballymote Court Records

The Hunter-Gatherer

By Joe Mc Gowan

Spring is the best time for anyone wishing to gather winkles, *báirneachs* (limpets) and other tasty morsels by the seashore. They can be eaten only in a month with an 'R' in it. This is the time of year to pick *sleabhac*, *crannach* and other delicacies too.

Sleabhac, an edible seaweed, grows in abundance on bare rocks in the tidal zone. It is available only at low tide. Reminiscent of the biblical manna that turned up out of nowhere to feed the Israelites, this hardy plant springs forth only during the winter months. Shortly now, with lengthening days and stronger sun, it will disappear, and all that will remain is bare inhospitable rock. In past times this seaweed was a valuable addition to the dinner table. During famine times it helped to keep many people alive, along with dilisc, *carrageen* and *crannac*.

Sleabhac grows only in special places and is best plucked after a spell of frost. The spot where I went recently to gather my share is aptly named Leac na Meala (the Honeyed Rock). While spoken Irish has died out in this area, people still refer to seaside places by their Irish names: Pollyarry, Ros Caoireach, Leac Cam, Cromadach and so on. Every section of shore had, and still has, its own designation and a reputation for good fishing or good seaweed, different places at different times of the year. It was as important to other generations to know these names as it is now for shoppers to know the streets and addresses of favourite stores in our towns and cities.

So much has changed in such a short time in Ireland that, now, very few bother to gather *sleabhac*. It may be nowhere near as healthy or wholesome, but for busy lifestyles, food on supermarket shelves is pre-packaged, convenient and much more



The author gathering *sleabhac* at Leac na Meala

accessible. Even though these seaside plants are wholly organic and packed with nutrients, a new generation is growing up that has never heard of them.

As I pluck the dark brown weed I think of my parents and the old people who knew when and where to look for this food and who crowded the seashore until not a pick was left; a people who lived by their wits and their intimate knowledge of nature. They knelt in the same places that I do and gathered this delicious food that re-generates miraculously year after year. I think too of the hungry, emaciated creatures who scoured the seashore in famine times. A small bag of *sleabhac*, mixed perhaps with *báirneachs* and winkles, would keep them alive for another day. As I work, somehow I feel their spirits are close by.

The roar of the ocean behind me is timeless and reassuring as, alone with my thoughts, I gather and reflect. 'Never turn your back to the sea,' the old people warned us time and time

again when we went to the shore. They feared and respected the waters that nurtured and fed them but, in an unguarded moment, would equally take their lives. 'Bíonn a cuid féin ag an bhfarraige' they believed: the sea must have its due. It was unlucky to save a drowning person. A place in the deep was destined for a corpse; someone must fill it. The rescuer would, in time, forfeit his own life in place of the life he saved.

I am grateful to be here in this beautiful place, at the edge of the Atlantic in Mullaghmore, Co Sligo, and grateful for the knowledge the old people have passed on to me. Sleek cars and power-walkers whiz by on the cliff road above, oblivious to the secrets of nature encrypted in the landscape. They stare, and perhaps wonder, at the unusual sight of a lone hunter-gatherer crouched by the waves.

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A book of short stories called *The Hidden People* will be published by the author this year.

The Gods of the Neale

By Bernie Doyle

In my childhood I often heard tales of the Gods of the Neale, and I remember climbing through a gap in the wall of the Kilmaine demesne, down the Ballywalter road in search of them. So when I was passing that way a few years ago I thought I would show them to my daughter and her friend. We found the broken wall and climbed into a hollow and there were the fearsome gods!

We faced a square stone structure holding an inscribed slab. Above this is a smaller plinth, into which are inset what look like three grotesques plundered from mediaeval churches. The first is a cow sitting on its tail, to the right of this is a skirted be-capped figure holding some sort of shield, and the third, underneath the other two, represents a horrible-looking cow with claws and ruffles and rejoicing in a tail with three fingers and a thumb. Above this again is a still smaller plinth with a pointed finial, and an inscription on three sides. The only inscription I could make out, written in Latin, translates as: 'Pray for the soul of Manchus who made me. Died 1526.' While I was examining this, the others went off to explore the ruins of Kilmaine House.

I have since found out that the main inscription tells us that we have here the Gods of Con, and we are to have confidence in Loo Lava Adda Vackene, the Shepherd of Ireland. Those images were found in a cave behind the place where they now stand, and were the Ancient Gods of the Neale, or the Gods of Felicity, from which the place is called in Irish *Ne Héille* and in English 'The Neale'.

Loo Lava Adda reigned in 2577 BC and was then 60. Cedna reigned in 2994 BC. Con Moil was the son of Heber who divided his kingdom with his brother. He had the western parts,

which were all called *Connovcht*, from Con's portion. His son, Loo Lava Adda, who founded the Druids, was thought to have drawn all his knowledge from the Sun. Loo's Gods were adopted by Con and Edna of the line of Heber. This Loo Lava Adda may be the character named in later stories as *Lugh Lámh Fhada*, whose arm, lost in battle, was reputed to be buried under an upright stone, known locally as the Long Stone, which is situated at the junction of the Headford and Cong roads just outside the village of the Neale. A few miles distant on this same road to Cong lies the site of the ancient first battle of Moytura. The current local explanation is that these Gods of the Neale are, in fact, nothing more than a collection of artefacts pillaged by an eighteenth century Lord Kilmaine from various ruins, and placed together as a type of folly.

I decided to join the others and to have a look at the site of the Lonsencan Stone built into the orchard wall. This was a slab, about fifteen inches square, with an inscription of undoubted antiquity. In the 1940s the slab was returned to the church at Breaffy, Castlebar from whence Lord Kilmaine had originally filched it. But the side stones are still in position and the inscription on these reads: 'The above stone was found at Breaffy, Co. Mayo AD 1732 in a coffin inscribed in Irish characters as the coffin of Genan which contained a skeleton twelve and a half feet long. Genan was King of Ireland AM 3352 and this monument is erected to show the antiquity of the Irish character and the size of mankind in those early ages. AD 1756.'

The others had shouted something about cattle when they were making their way to the house but I told them that cattle are always curious. There was no need to worry. But when I

came up from the hollow into the field I found an animal a short distance away – a magnificent specimen – and he was striding briskly, confidently and purposefully towards me. I called out to Gráinne and Fergal and they ran towards me. We had, by now, spotted the wicket-gate in the wall and by common consent we sprinted towards it, Gráinne's long legs taking her there first. That left Fergal and myself some yards behind, separated from one another and not very well placed. I stopped. Fergal stopped. The bull stopped. We had a triangular confrontation for about ten seconds. Then I shouted to Fergal: 'You go down the hollow and climb over the wall and I'll head for the gate. One, two, three . . . go!' We were so busy running that we never really saw which one of us the bull went for. But we cleared the field all right.

On the way home, passing the gates of Kilmaine House with the statue of a lion sitting atop each pillar, I was reminded of the story of the old lady years ago. One Sunday her starting time for setting out for Church was delayed by five minutes. She hurried along to make up the lost time. 'But,' she said eloquently, 'the bell struck me at the Lions' Gate.'

On then past that curious structure, known as the Weathercock, which consists of a series of receding steps. It was rumoured that Lord Kilmaine's brother had been to Egypt in the eighteenth century and was given a plan of a pyramid, which was then scaled down for the family estate. Perhaps there was a weather vane on top, visible from the house, which helped the family to plan their daily programme. Our day, at least, had had lots of excitement.

Woulfe Flanagan – The Sligo Connection

By John C McTernan

The Flanagans alias Woulfe Flanagans were an old Roscommon family closely associated with the royal O'Conors, and were described as 'a Catholic professional family from the wealthier strata of the upper middle classes which through the ownership of landed estates merged with the upper classes.' By the mid to late 19th century they had attained eminence in the legal profession and were also substantial landowners, holding 2,000 acres in Co Sligo in addition to an equivalent amount in Roscommon and Clare.

In the late 18th century John Flanagan of Clogher in the Barony of Boyle, the then-head of the family, held 525 acres, plantation measure, under a Fee Farm grant, close to Lough Gara in the half barony of Coolavin. In the 1790s he purchased Rathtermon and adjoining lands in Killaraght, formerly part of the Lorton estate, for £6,570, an investment that generated a handsome income from the rearing of horses and selling them to the army during the Napoleonic wars. He was returned as a registered elector in the Co Sligo Parliamentary election of 1796. He died in June 1819 possessed of the lands of Rathtermon, Cloontycarn, Lisgullaun, Inch Island and the deer park at Cloonlough. In his will, dated a year earlier, he bequeathed the property to his son, Francis Flanagan, for life, and made provision for his widow, Winifred (nee Coyne), and other offspring.

Francis Flanagan married Catherine Molloy and built Rathtermon House on a site overlooking Lough Gara. A number of their offspring died in childhood and following his wife's death he forsook his inheritance and emigrated to the USA. An extant document lists him as residing in Kentucky in 1849 but nothing further is known of his fate in his adopted country. During his tenure at Rathtermon he engaged himself in the politics of the day. In 1828 he attended the inaugural meeting of the Co Sligo Liberal Club and afterwards took an active part in the affairs of

the newly-formed Coolavin Baronial Committee.

John Stanilaus Flanagan (1821-1905), eldest and only surviving son of Francis and Catherine, succeeded to the Rathtermon property. He was educated privately and in his early twenties forsook his inheritance and went to Paris to study for the priesthood. Shortly after the outbreak of the Revolution in that city in 1848, he returned home for a short time before resuming his studies as a member of the Oratorian Congregation in Birmingham, founded by John Henry Newman, subsequently Cardinal Newman, where he was ordained in 1851. He quickly gained a reputation as a leading theologian, and as such finds regular mention in the published works of Cardinal Newman. On the foundation of the Catholic University in Dublin he accompanied Newman to the Irish capital and while in Dublin, with the assistance of fellow Oratorians, he restored and enlarged Killaraght church where he had worshipped in his youth.

In 1861 Fr Flanagan disposed of his landed property in Coolavin to his cousin, Stephen Woulfe Flanagan, before taking up an appointment as chaplain to the Earl of Dunraven at Adare Manor in Co Limerick. In 1866, most likely through the influence of the late Earl's family, he was appointed Administrator of the Adare parish and parish priest on the death of the incumbent, Revd T S O'Grady. He was subsequently elevated to the rank of archdeacon and finally a dean of the Diocese of Limerick. For over forty years he laboured in his adopted parish with singular devotion and was widely hailed as a man of remarkable ability and theological attainments, and the friend and advocate of the poor and needy. He died in October 1905 and is buried within the parish church at Adare where an inscribed tablet marks his final resting place. A plaque in Killaraght church, erected by his nephew, Stanilaus J Lynch, also recalls his memory:

Of your charity pray for the

repose of the soul of Very Rev. John Stanilaus Flanagan, Dean of Limerick. Died at Adare on the 11th October, 1905 aged 86 years. Some years of his childhood were spent in this parish and in or about 1854, in conjunction with the Birmingham Oratory, of which he was a member; he restored and enlarged this church.

Terence Flanagan of Drumdoe, Ballinafad, and Leixlip, Co Kildare, the eldest son of John and Catherine Coyne of Clogher and Rathtermon, in 1813 married Johanna Woulfe, daughter of Stephen Woulfe of Co Clare and Lord Chief Baron of the Irish Exchequer. They had three sons, John, Stephen and Terence, each of whom adopted the additional name of Woulfe.

John Woulfe Flanagan (1815-1869), JP, DL, the eldest son, studied law and was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn. He was also a member of the Irish Bar but never practised. Instead, he lived the life of a country gentleman, held the rank of Captain in the Roscommon Militia, was High Sheriff of Sligo in 1860 and for a number of years a Grand Juror for both Sligo and Roscommon. He also sat on the Boyle Board of Guardians, was Chairman at the time of his death and widely hailed as an authority on the workings of the Poor Law system.

Following the death of his father in 1846, he took up residence at Drumdoe, Ballinafad, which the family had leased a decade and a half earlier from Viscount Lorton of Rockingham. In 1848 he married Susan, only daughter of Sir Michael O'Loughlin, Master of the Rolls. He had a reputation of being a model landlord, befriending those in need, especially in the harsh years of 1861-62. Shortly after settling at Drumdoe he remodelled and enlarged Corrigeenroe church for the benefit of his tenants at Drumdoe and the local community.

In March 1867, already well versed in local administration, he announced his intention of offering himself as a Liberal candidate in the ensuing Co



Flanagan family plot, Corrigeenroe

Sligo Parliamentary election on the understanding that the outgoing MP, Richard Swift (Liberal), would not be contesting the seat. However, he later withdrew when the latter decided to re-enter the race.

With the approach of the 1868 general election a vacancy arose in the representation of the Borough of Sligo on the unexpected retirement of the outgoing MP, Sergeant Richard Armstrong (Liberal). In advance of the election the Liberal voters of the Borough, on the recommendation of Bishop Laurence Gillooly, unanimously selected John Woulfe Flanagan, described as 'an independent gentleman and an advocate of religious equality', as their standard-bearer in opposition to Major Laurence Knox, the proprietor of the *Irish Times*, who was standing in the Conservative interest. In what was described as 'the most tense and hard-fought election of that era' Flanagan is said to have 'presented himself in a manner which commanded respect and won him many friends.' Contrary to his popular appeal, a general approval of his political principles and the backing of the Catholic clergy, he lost by a handful of votes, 241 to 229. Despite the setback the *Sligo Champion* proudly proclaimed that Capt Flanagan had polled the largest number of votes ever recorded by a Liberal candidate in Sligo and was

defeated through 'a combination of bribery, intimidation and the kidnapping of voters.'

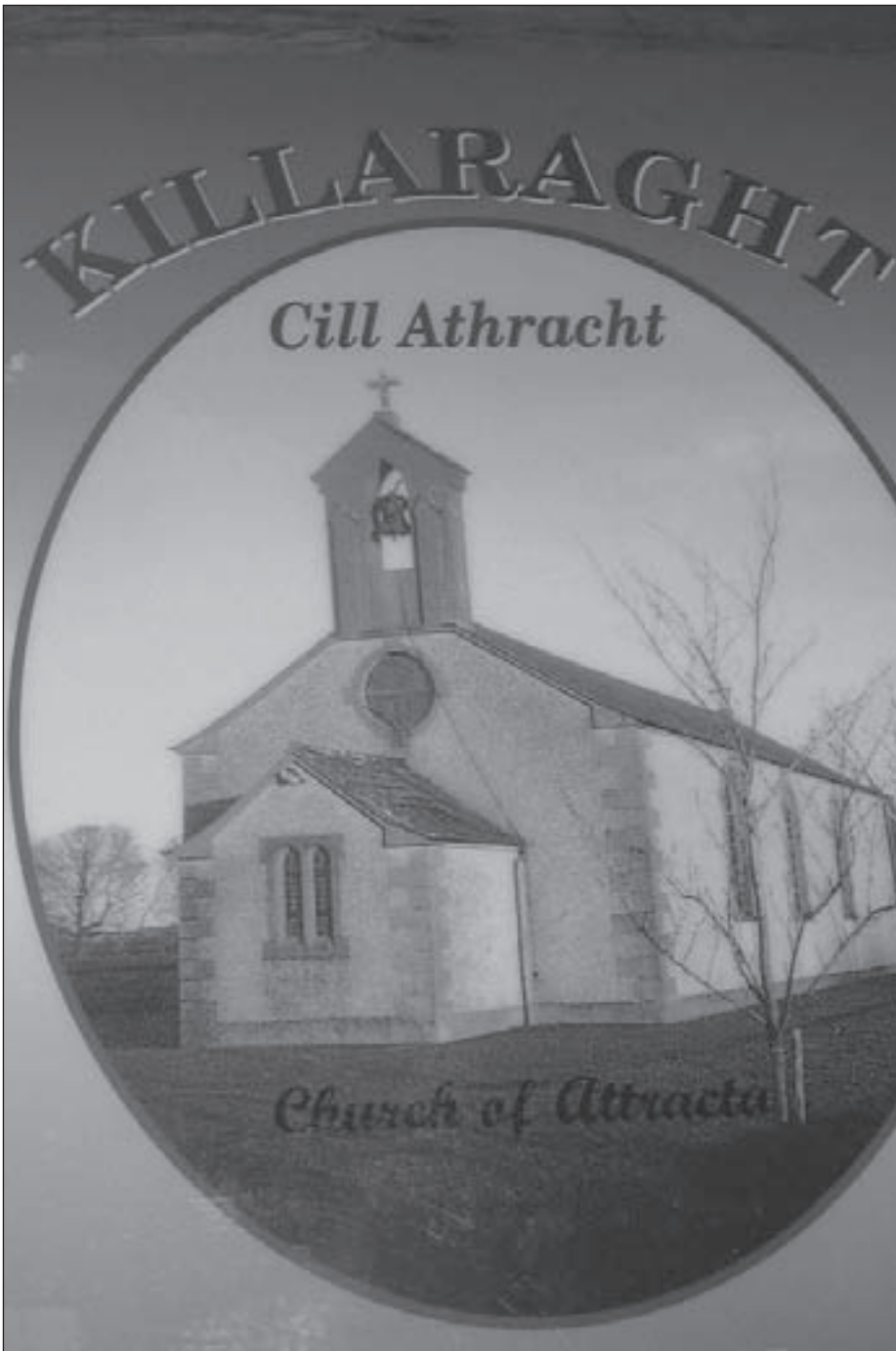
In a subsequent hearing before a Select Committee of the House of Commons the election was declared null and void, and Major Knox was unseated. In anticipation of a by-election John Woulfe Flanagan was again unanimously nominated as the Liberal candidate and was widely expected to be victorious on the second occasion. However, a Commission of Inquiry into corrupt practices at Borough elections led to the abandonment of the anticipated by-election and the subsequent disfranchisement of the Borough of Sligo in July 1870. In the meantime, John Woulfe Flanagan had fallen ill and died unexpectedly, and without heirs, in October 1869, aged 54 years.

His passing was widely mourned, not least by the Liberals of Sligo. His funeral from Drumdoe to Boyle railway station, the first leg of the journey to the family vault in the O'Connell Circle in Glasnevin Cemetery, was the largest ever witnessed in the area, a fitting tribute to the esteem he was held in not only by his tenants but the public at large. The cortege consisted of more than seventy vehicles representative of the resident gentry and the Catholic clergy, including Bishop Gillooly, from over a wide area.

Stephen Woulfe Flanagan (1816-1891), second son of Terence and Johanna Woulfe, was educated in France and studied law at Trinity College, Dublin. He was called to the Irish Bar in 1838 and joined the Munster Circuit. He was later appointed a QC and a Bencher of King's Inn. During the Famine years he was an inspector in the Boyle area for the Poor Law Commissioners. In 1849 he was appointed Secretary to the Incumbered Estates Court and a decade later a judge of the newly-established Landed Estates Court in which capacity he enjoyed a wide respect and the esteem of his colleagues. He was also a Privy Counsellor of Ireland and Great Britain.

Judge Flanagan was one of the most respected legal practitioners of his era, and in his later years resided in Dublin's fashionable Fitzwilliam Place. He married Mary, daughter of John Richard Corballis, QC, the first Catholic Baron of the Irish Exchequer Court, by whom he had six sons, all but one of whom had the advantage of an Oxford education; and five daughters, one of whom, Frances, a popular young girl, was accidentally drowned in Lough Arrow. It appears she was accustomed to boating on the lake close to the family lakeside residences at Lecarrow and Drumdoe. On the evening of 4 July 1898 she was observed boating some distance from the shore and bathing her feet, as was customary, over the side of the craft. Some time later the boat was seen drifting closer to the shore but unoccupied. Over the following four days police and neighbours were engaged in dragging the lake in search of her body, which was eventually recovered on Friday, July 7, and subsequently interred in the family plot in the grounds of Corrigeenroe church.

Stephen Woulfe Flanagan was an extensive landowner holding 3,500 acres in both Sligo and Roscommon, but mostly in the parish of Killaraght which he had inherited from his Flanagan forebears. In 1863 he purchased Rathtermon House and lands from his cousin, Revd John S Flanagan, together with Drumdoe, containing 169 acres and previously held under two separate leases from



Killaraght Church

the Lorton estate. A year earlier he had acquired nearby Lecarrow, a holding of 33 acres on the shores of Lough Arrow, in the Landed Estates Court. Judge Flanagan died in September 1891, aged 75 years, and was buried in the family vault in Glasnevin cemetery.

John Woulfe Flanagan, JP (1852-1929), lawyer and historian, the eldest son of Judge Flanagan and his wife, Mary Corballis, was educated at Oscott College, Birmingham, and at Oxford, where he studied law, qualified as a barrister and was

called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn. He practiced law only briefly, resided for a time at Rathernon before taking up journalism and moving to London where he found employment with *The Times* newspaper in 1886. A gifted writer and well versed in European languages and culture, he became a widely read leader writer on the topics of the day and the author of a series of articles on the Parnell affair that attracted a wide readership. He died in London in November 1925, and was survived by his wife, Maria, the daughter of Major-General Sir Justin Sheil, a son, John, and a daughter, Maria.



John Woulfe Flanagan 1815 - 1869

His younger brother, Stephen Woulfe Flanagan, Jnr, JP (1854-1940), graduated in law but never practiced. Instead, he specialised in conveying and for a time operated as a Land Agent, mostly in the Dublin area. In 1898 he married Emily Gertrude, youngest daughter of Capt Hugh McTernan of Heapstown House, a Resident Magistrate, and subsequently took up residence at Lecarrow Lodge which had been built by his father, Judge Flanagan. He died in January 1940 and is buried in the grounds of Corrigeenroe church in a grave shared with his wife, Emily, who outlived him by a mere four weeks. They were survived by a son, Hubert, a solicitor by profession, who practiced in Dublin, and a daughter, Mary of Lecarrow Lodge, the last of the family to reside in County Sligo. A highly respected member of the community, noted for her kindness and generosity, especially to those less fortunate, she died in May 1987, aged 83, from injuries received in a car accident on her own driveway, and is buried in the family plot at Corrigeenroe church.

Sources

Killaraght: a Parish History, 2002, John Woulfe Flanagan:
In Memoriam (O'Loghlin Papers, NL), *The Times*, 18 November 1929.

Extracts from the Past

Submitted by Padraig McDermott

From the *Sligo Journal*, 18 October 1850

Auction of a valuable grazing farm to be sold by auction at Doyle's Hotel, Ballymote, on Friday the 25th instant, at the hour of One O'Clock, p.m. The interest in that well-known and valuable Farm called Cloonahinshan.

Situated within Three Miles of Ballymote, on the road leading from the above town to Tubbercurry, containing 153 Acres, Irish Measure.

The character of the Farm is well known for its Fattening qualities. It is now upwards of 20 years since the Land was broken up.

All the particulars relative to the Title, &c., will be satisfactorily set forth on the Day of Sale, and the

Immediate Possession Given to the Purchaser who will have the advantage of Prime Winter Grass now on the Lands.

Terms – Cash, and the Purchaser to pay the usual Auction Feeds of 5 per cent.

Higgins and Grose, Auctioneers
October 14, 1850

From the *Sligo Journal*, Saturday 16 April 1847

To contractors

The Relief Committee of the Electoral Division are desirous of contracting for the supply of the following:

OATMEAL per Ton.

INDIAN MEAL per ditto.

RICE per cwt.

PEAS per do.

HOUSEHOLD BREAD per lb.

at their Depot.

Persons wishing to contract are requested to state the terms on which they would supply the several articles mentioned per ton &c.

And whether for two or three months, with the prices respectively – or contracts would be entered into, to rise and fall with the markets, weekly. Tenders would be received for the supply of the above, and for the distribution of same, on or before the 24th day of April next.

Address – The Rev James Franks, Manorhamilton

Contractors require to name securities.

Novices and Postulants Walking to Work

Submitted by John Coleman



Novices and Postulants walking with their spades to work in the farm at the Cistercian Abbey of Mount St Joseph, Roscrea, Co Tipperary in 1963.

Vocations were at a high point at this time in Ireland. The monastery of the Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance (OCSO) at Roscrea

had been established in 1878 as part of a revival of the order which had been suppressed in Ireland during the Reformation. Manual labour was seen as an important part of the monastic life and farming by the monks supported self-sufficiency.

After an initial period as postulants,

candidates become novices and some went on to take final vows (see Mount St Joseph web site - www.msjsroscrea.ie). Today there are 200 Cistercian monasteries of the order world wide. Photo from the collection of John Benson (1917-1986) who lived in nearby Nenagh, Co Tipperary at that time.

Catechist, Linguist and Parisian churchman – the life of Rev Dr Andrew Donlevy LLD

By Neal Farry

The precise birthplace of Dr Andrew Donlevy has given rise to a degree of speculation, but the Parish of Ballymote has for a long time put forward many a staunch claimant to requisition the honour.

Archdeacon Terence O'Rorke is unsure of Andrew's place of birth and he states that it was either Ballygawley or Templehouse, both localities being home to families of that name in the mid 19th century. John Mc Ternan notes that the Ballymote historian JC McDonagh is adamant that Ballymote can claim the honour. At the present time there are families by the name of Dunleavy in the Lecarrow, Oldrock and Ballinacarrow areas. Fr Liam Swords in *A Hidden Church – Achonry*, records no birthplace for Dr Donlevy. Elsewhere Fr Swords asserts that the bilingual catechist Andrew 'Dunleavy' came from Bellaghy but he provides no evidence to bolster this claim. Another Ballymote historian, the late Tom McGettrick, said that it was part of the oral tradition of Ballymote that Andrew was born in a house on the Rock where the JP Bookmaker's premises are now located on O'Connell St. Mr McGettrick is at pains to point out that in documents for the year 1825 in the National Archives, one finds the Donlevys as occupiers of a 'house and plot' in two locations in Ballymote.

The author of the foreword in the third edition of Rev Dr Donlevy's bilingual Irish Catechism, published by Maynooth College in 1848, addresses the issue as follows: 'The Rev. Andrew Donlevy was born, we believe, in the year 1694, and received his early education in or near the town of Ballymote, in the county of Sligo, in the Diocese of Achonry. Here his ancestors had lived in comfortable

circumstances, in this locality and in both the dioceses of Achonry and Elphin.' The year of birth given here is clearly incorrect because the inscription on Andrew's tombstone in the vaults of a chapel in Paris states that he died in 1746 at the age of 66.

All the aforementioned historians are in agreement that the youthful Andrew was educated in Ballymote's elusive hedge-school of the penal times. In 1710 he travelled to Paris in defiance of the law that forbade Catholics from these islands going abroad for education. Disguised as a sailor and toiling under the authority of a friendly Catholic sea-captain was a frequent means of escape. Fr Swords believes that it was likely that all the classical education of the young Ballymote clerical student was acquired at home prior to his trip to mainland Europe.

Andrew enrolled in the Irish College and was ordained in due course. To supplement his philosophical and theological education, his academic career followed an impressive ascending path. In October 1718 he registered in the Faculty of Law in the University of Paris where he was awarded a Baccalaureate and a Licentiate in Law. In June 1722 Rev Dr Andrew Donlevy was appointed the founding Prefect of the Community of Clerics and Scholars (clerical students) in College des Lombardes on Rue des Carmes by the incumbent Archbishop of Paris, Louis de Noailles.

Within a decade of gaining authority in the Irish College, Dr Donlevy found himself embroiled in a bitter controversy and in conflict with the majority of the Irish bishops. His zeal for administering the Irish College along the lines envisaged by the

Council of Trent (1545 – 1573) thrust the Ballymote cleric into a reforming role. During the 1600s the relative poverty of the Irish students for the priesthood travelling to mainland Europe gave rise to the practice of ordaining young men in their mid-twenties in Ireland before they proceeded abroad for their necessary clerical higher education. This meant that as ordained priests these students could make a meagre living by ministering as priests and receiving stipends for masses. Within the Irish College in Paris these priest-students, the Community of Priests, were governed by four 'provisours', elected every three years by the members of the body of ordained students for each of the four Irish provinces.

By the 1730s the severity of the Penal laws in Ireland was waning. Some leading Irish ecclesiastics argued that ordaining older students before sending them abroad for clerical education led to abuses. Some pre-educated ordained priests refused to leave Ireland after ordination while some others were unruly influences in the streets of continental cities and were less amenable to discipline in the Irish colleges. Furthermore, in the Irish College in Paris there was rivalry between the ordained students and Donlevy's clerical students due to the superior income of the priest-students who benefited from mass stipends.

In Paris the drive for reform was spearheaded by Dr Andrew Donlevy, and he enjoyed the support of Abbé de Vaubrun, a major-superior of the Irish College and by Cardinal de Fleury, the new Archbishop of Paris who also held the post of First Minister to King Louis XV. Two other superiors in the Irish College, Rev John Burke of Cashel and Rev Walter Daton of



Dr Andrew Donlevy is buried in the vaults of L'Eglise St Ephraim des Syriens

Ossory also favoured reform. The reformers believed that only non-ordained students should be accepted in the Irish Colleges all over Europe and that the practice of ordaining priests prior to their clerical education should be discontinued. Archbishop Butler of Cashel agreed with Abbé de Vaubrun and Dr Donlevy that there was an overabundance of priests in Ireland and that the ordination and reception of regular novitiates should be suspended for five years. In 1733 Abbé de Vaubrun estimated that there were about 300 Irish priests in Paris and many of them were seeking admission to the Irish College where there was insufficient accommodation.

The majority of Irish bishops disagreed with Dr Donlevy and the other reformers, and they wanted no change to the existing system. The Irish bishops argued that a majority of the younger clerical students from the Community of Clerics and Scholars under Dr Donlevy's authority in the Irish College remained in France on completion of their studies rather than returning to Ireland.

Fr Terence O'Gara, Fr Dominick Kearney and the other Achonry priests in Paris were among the 114 signatories to two petitions in protest against Dr Donlevy's campaign for reform that were sent to Rome for

the attention of Cardinal Imperiali, the Cardinal Protector of Ireland. In 1736 a French Royal Commission was on the point of ruling in favour of Dr Donlevy and the reformers. The Commission's judgement was ready for delivery to Versailles to receive the King's signature when the Vatican-based Cardinal Imperiali wrote to Cardinal Archbishop de Fleury in Paris, asking him to side with the priest-students. As a result of this intervention by the Papal authorities the publication of the expected royal decree was suspended and Dr Donlevy's campaign for reform was effectively thwarted. The clerics of the Congregation of the Faith in the Vatican were also swayed by the arguments of the Irish Bishops. The Vatican authorities were keenly aware that victory for Dr Donlevy and the Parisian reformers would influence the enrolment policies of all the Irish Colleges in Europe.

The Bishop of Kilfenora, then residing in Tournai, wrote to Bishop John O'Hart of Achonry to ask that Dr Andrew Donlevy be recalled to his home diocese. Bishop O'Hart seems to have ignored this request. In the Irish College in Paris the status quo remained and priest-students continued to study at the college until the French Revolution. King Louis XV issued a decree abolishing elections in the Irish College and from then on superiors were appointed by the Archbishop of Paris for an unlimited term. Dr Andrew Donlevy remained as head of the student community until his death in 1746.

His status as an Irish churchman does not seem to have been seriously diminished because he was subsequently appointed Dean of Raphoe Diocese. However, there is no record of him ever visiting Donegal. Dr Donlevy continued to enjoy a pre-eminence in the intellectual circles of Paris. It is significant that the Irish historian Walter Harris acknowledged the many favours he had received from Andrew who borrowed and transmitted to him in Ireland many useful books out of King Louis'

library and other Parisian libraries. Harris was engaged in translating Sir James Ware's *History of Ireland* from Latin to English (1631 and 1639).

In 1775, 29 years after Dr Donlevy's death, the Community of Students and Clerics was transferred from the Lombard College to a new college in Rue de Cheval Vert, renamed Rue des Irlandais in 1807 by the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, leaving the priest-students in the old Rue des Carmes Lombard College. The college in Rue des Irlandais is now the Irish Cultural Centre.

Dr Donlevy continued in his secondary role as a Professor of Catechetics in the Sorbonne and his work there found expression in his catechetics publication *An Teagas Criosduidhe do réir Ceasda agus Freagartha*. The first edition of Rev Dr Andrew Donlevy's *Catechism of Christian Doctrine* was published in Paris in 1742. A second edition was published in Dublin in 1822 and a third edition was printed in 1848. The third edition, except for a condensation of the preface, reproduced the Catechism as it appeared in the first edition in 1742. The author is eager to emphasise that his Catechism is not a concise summary merely suitable for children, but a full treatise of both dogma and morals, and it was designed for the great masses of the Irish people who knew no English. The first edition was an octavo volume of 574 pages with the text in both Irish and English, the pages being printed alternately in Irish and English characters. The Catechism is written in a style of stern clarity and defining uniformity of doctrine required by the Council of Trent and it received the imprimatur of Michael O'Gara, Archbishop of Tuam, two other Irish bishops, six Doctors of Divinity from the Sorbonne and the Principal of the Irish College. These eminent ecclesiastics confirm that the Catechism is, in all points, very conformable to both scripture and tradition.

Dr Donlevy was very clear in his objectives and in his own preface he outlined his *modus operandi* with

these sentiments: ‘The plainest and most obvious Irish is used throughout, preferring, with St. Augustine, to be censured by grammarians, rather than not to be understood by the people. Foreign expressions, except those consecrated to religion, are diligently avoided. The English part is, perhaps, too literal a translation from the Irish. It is for the sake of those who only understand the English or who may be inclined to learn the Irish by means of this translation.’

Fr Liam Swords has noted that Irish was mostly a spoken rather than a written language during the early 1700s and that more than two million Irish speakers in Ireland and abroad were illiterate in Irish, but used English, Latin, French or even Italian when the written word was needed. Dr Donlevy clearly intended to instruct the plain people and clergy of Ireland in the tenets of their Catholic faith and to perhaps raise the literacy levels in the Irish language among Irish people at home and abroad. It is also clear that he first wrote the catechism in the Irish language and then translated the work as literally as possible into English. The population of Ireland in 1742 was an estimated 2,850,000 after the famine of 1740, which resulted in 400,000 deaths.

The small number of questions and answers quoted here from the third edition of the catechism represent a miniscule extract from the work. The Irish versions as written by Dr Donlevy are presented first and then followed by his English translations. The topics are chosen at random, are out of context, and they are specifically selected to demonstrate some brief examples of Dr Donlevy’s writing in his native language. It seems likely that Irish was Andrew’s first language since even a century later Irish was still being used in the rural areas around Ballymote. These short answers are extracted from much more lengthy series of questions and answers that investigate each topic. For instance, the chapter dealing with meditation or mental prayer involves thirteen pages in each



The ‘S’ seat along the tree trail in the grounds of IT Sligo that was inspired by Andrew Donlevy’s Gaelic letter and tree list. The sapling in the background is a willow or *saileach*.

language and is profound, detailed, extensive, thought-provoking and remarkably modern in its approach. In the first and third editions of Donlevy’s *Teagasg Críosduidhe* the Irish sections were in Gaelic characters or font. Of necessity I have provided the following Irish examples from Dr Donlevy’s Catechism printed in Roman script and the letter ‘h’ is always used instead of a ‘séimhiú’ to aspirate consonants.

D’ON TREAS AITHNE. -- Coimhíd an tSaoire mar is cóir. (The Third Commandment – Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day).

Ceas: Creud é an ní horduighthe aris an aithne-si? Freagar: Orduighthe ar dúinn an Domhnach, Lá an Tighearna, do choimheud agus do naomhadh, do réir mar orduigheas Dia agus an Eaglais.

Q: What is required in this Commandment? A: We are required to keep and sanctify Sunday, the Lord’s day, as God and the Church order us. Exod. 20, 8, 9, 10; Jer 17, 27. (The relevant scriptural passages or Church Council Documents that give authority to each response are quoted after every answer.)

C: Creud iad na hoibre a tá toirmisgthe

oruinn annsa Naomh Lá-so? F: Oibre saothracha nó corpordha mar a tá, treabhadh agus foirseadh; reic agus ceannach; agus a leithéide eile, go háirighe gach uile ghné peacaidh.

Q: What works are forbidden on this sacred day? A: Servile or laborious bodily works, such as ploughing and harrowing; buying and selling and such like; but particularly all sort of sin.

C: Creud is cóir dúinn do dhéanamh an lá-so tar lá eile? F: Urnaighthe agus oibre díagha: mar a tá Aifrionn go cinnte, agus seanmóir d’éisdeacht, leabhair spiorádalta do léigheadh, an Paidrín do rádh, no deághoibre eile do dhéanamh.

Q: What are we obliged to do on this day more than another? A: To pray and do Godly works; such as to hear mass punctually; to assist at the sermon; to read spiritual books; to say the beads; or to do some other good works.

In the chapter dealing with the Mass we read the following explanations:

C: Cia hiad an drong nach néisdeann an tAifrionn go modhamhuil? F: An mhuintir fhéuchas no amharcas a nunn agus a nall, ag comhrádh ré cheile nó ag amhuillidh air feadh mhór-choda do’n Aifrionn agus fós an

dream éisteach é ar leath-ghlún no air leath-luige ré taca.

Q: Who are they who hear Mass with disrespect? A: Those who gaze or look about, talking to one another, or amuse themselves with trifles during a considerable part of the Mass, and also those who hear it upon one knee, or leaning half stretched upon any thing.

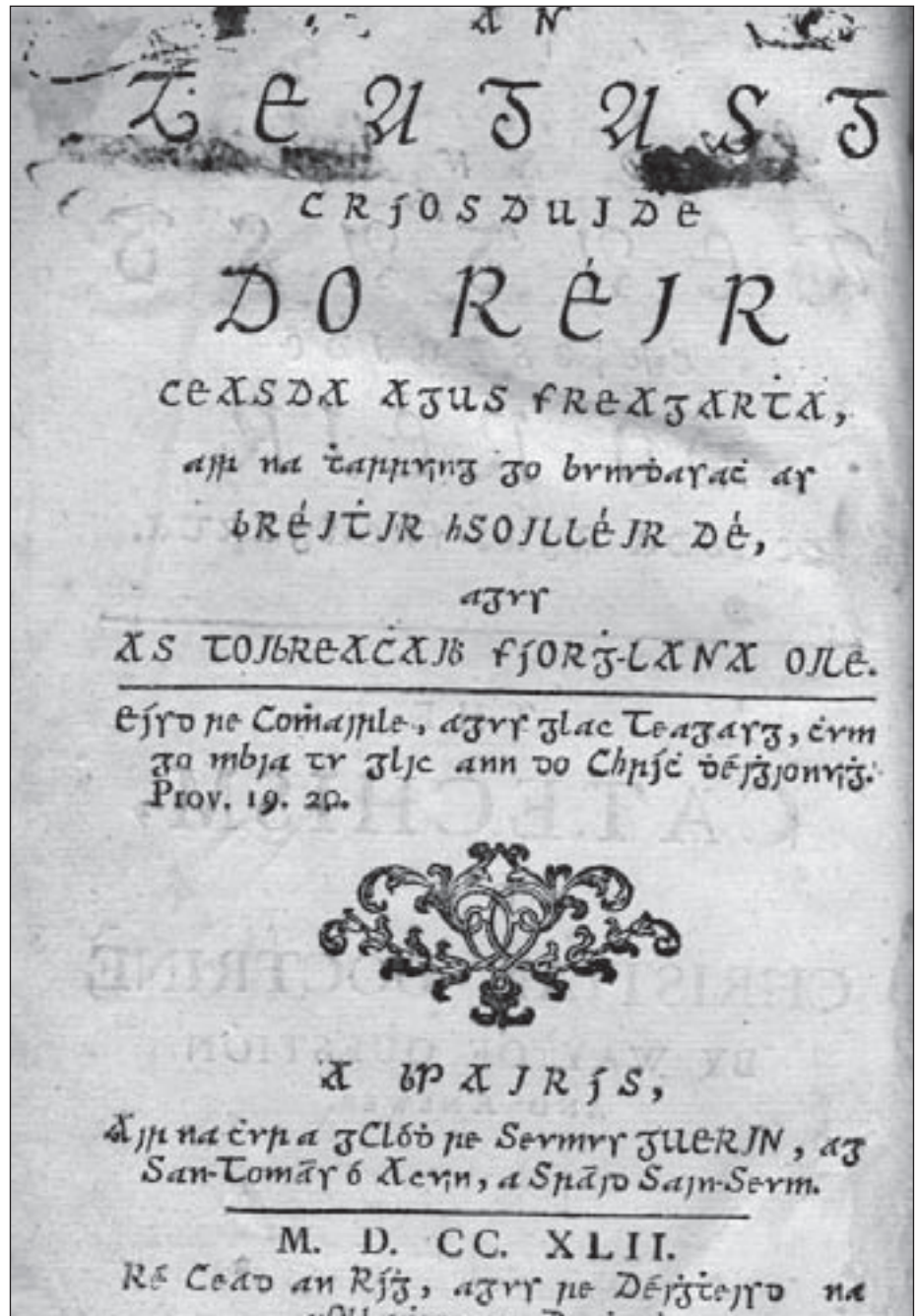
C: Creud is indhéunta chum Aifrionn d'éisdeacht go cráibhtheach? F: Is cóir do neach é féin d'iomchar go gnaoidheamhuil, tromdha; agus Dia do ghuidhe ó chroidhe agus ó aighneadh; 'óir is Spiorad Dia agus an dream adhras é is éigin dóibh a adhradh a Spiorad agus a bhfrinne.'

Q: What is to be done in order to hear Mass devoutly? A: One ought to behave himself modestly and gravely, and to pray to God with all his heart and soul; for 'God is a spirit and they who adore him must adore Him in spirit and in truth.'

C: Nach díoghbhálach do chách, an tAifrionn a rádh a dteangaidh nach dtuigid uile? F: Ní díoghbhálach: óir ní bhfuil is an Aifrionn acht urnuigh agus íodhbairt, a tá d'ualach air an "tSagart amháin" do dhéanamh chum Dé ar son an phobuil. Os a cionn sin, aithnighe an Eaglais do gach sagart parráiste, cuid éigin do'n Aifrionn do mhínioghadh do chách, nó thabhairt fá deara a mhínioghadh dhóibh go minic, agus go háirighe air laethibh saoire agus Domhnaigh.

Q: Is it not hurtful to the people that the Mass should be celebrated in a language that is not understood by all of them? A: It is not; for the Mass is only a prayer and sacrifice; which the priest alone is obliged to offer for the people. Moreover, the Church commands every parish priest to expound often some part of the Mass to the people, or to get it expounded for them, and particularly on Sundays and holydays.

D'on Seachtmhadh & d'on Deachmhadh hAithne. The sins against the 7th & 10th Commandments



The title page of Dr Andrew Donlevy's Catechism

comprise a litany of the usual acts of injustice with which we are all familiar since our religious formation in school, and through instruction as adults by way of homilies in church. I have taken particular notice of the following morally proscribed actions because they seem to be relevant to the lifestyle of young men who were contemporaries of Dr Donlevy, perhaps as soldiers of the Irish Brigades, with whom the author was very familiar:

'An té do ní mealltóireacht lé tomhas lochtach, ré himirt maille ré

cardaoibh géarrtha, lé dírlibh meallta, ré comhartha sóirt, nó tré ainbhfhios an cheárbbhuidh'.

'By him who cheats in bargaining; deceives by false weights and measures; by playing with set cards; by cogged or false dice; by making signs to his partner; or through the ignorance of the gamester'.

As one of the addenda to his *Teagasg Criosduighe* Andrew included a brief catechism-cum-prayerbook in 60 quatrain verses, totally in Irish, that had been composed by a Franciscan priest, Fr Bonaventure O'Hussey, in the early 1600s.

With an eye to providing a teaching aid to help Irish Catholics to read and speak their native language, the second addenda that Dr Donlevy incorporated in his book of catechetics was an Irish grammar entitled *The Elements of the Irish Language*. Vowels, diphthongs (eg 'ao'); triphthongs (eg 'eoi') and consonants are outlined with special emphasis on pronunciation and the changes that occur in the various grammatical cases and declensions. For the really serious students of Irish the author recommended that the more laborious Irish grammar of M. Hugh McCurtain be consulted.

James Foran of the Institute of Technology, Sligo, has described the work done in the Sligo College in 2000AD to illustrate the method described by Dr Donlevy by which means reading the Irish language could be taught using a list of eighteen trees, each being associated with one of the Irish letters. At the Sligo College a footpath and a tree trail was established to illustrate the Irish alphabet using Dr Donlevy's letter and tree list and an illustrated leaflet was produced to interpret the walk. Individual seats were carved from stone to represent each letter in the vicinity of an example of each of the native Irish trees.

The 18 letters of the Irish alphabet are presented here under the following headings:

Name of letter

Its corresponding tree

The letter in Gaelic print

Each letter's phonic pronunciation as in Latin, French, English or Greek

This presentation is based on Rev Dr Donlevy's language teaching suggestions.

Ailm (Elm) = A , a : Sounds like A as in Latin, French and English;

Beith (Birch) = B , b : i.e. B sound as in English

Coll or **Ceith** (Hazel): C , C : i.e. K sound as in English

Duir or **Deith** (Oak): D , d : i.e. D sound as in English

Eadha (Aspen): E , e : i.e. E sound as in Latin or French

Fearn = (Alder): F , f : i.e. F sound as in English

Gort or **Geith** = (Ivy): G , g : i.e. G sound as in Greek

Uath or **Uathadh** = (Hawthorn): H , h : i.e. H sound as in English

Iogha = (Yew): I , i : i.e. I or i sound as in French or English

Luis = (Rowan): L , l : i.e. L sound as in English

Muin = (Vine): M , m : i.e. M sound as in English

Nuin = (Ash): N , n : i.e. N sound as in English

Onn = (Whin or Gorse): O , O : i.e. O sound as in English

Peathboc or **Peith** = (Dwarf Elder): P , p : i.e. P sound as in English

Ruis = (Elder): R , R : i.e. R sound as in English

Suil = (Willow): S , S : i.e. S sound as in English

Tine or **Teith** = (Holly): T , T : i.e. T sound as in English

Uir = (Heather): U , v , U : i.e. U sound or oo as in English.

The foregoing letter name and tree list is drawn from Donlevy's Catechism.

The Maynooth College-based author of the Preface of the 1848 third edition of Dr Andrew Dunlevy's 1742 *Teagasg Críosduidhe* has noted the fact that this bilingual catechism was the last book of Catholic religious instruction to be printed in Gaelic characters or font on the Continent, and that the third edition (1848) was the first such publication to be printed in Ireland in Gaelic font. Andrew certainly did not set out to amass distinctions of a material nature in the world of Gaelic printing, and the fact that he did not allow his name to be printed as the author of the first edition of *An Teagasg Críosduidhe* is ample proof of his self-effacing approach to his sacred and profound task. He died in 1746 owning neither property nor wealth and was buried in the vaults of the Irish College chapel in Rue des Carmes which is today L'Église St

Ephraim des Syriens. His tombstone is as here inscribed: *Hic jacet – Andreas Donlevy – Communitatis Clericorum Hibernorum, per 24 annos Praefectus et Ejusdem Restaurator – Suae potius Fundator; Obiit die 7a Xbris, 1746 – aetatis 66. Requiescat in Pace.*

The following is a translation of the title page of the 1742 edition:

The Catechism of Christian Doctrine by way of Question and Answer drawn chiefly from The Express Word of God and Other Pure Sources. 'Hear counsel and receive instruction that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end' – Proverbs xix. 20. Paris. Printed by Seumus (Jacques) Guerin at St. Thomas Aquinas, Rue St. Séverin (1742) with the permission of The King and the Imprimatur of the Doctors of Divinity.

Sources: *An Teagasg Críosduidhe* - 3rd Edition – Rev Dr Andrew Donlevy LLD (Published by J. Duffy for Maynooth College, 1848)

The History of Sligo – Town & County, Vol 2. - Archdeacon O'Rorke
Worthies of Sligo – John C. McTernan
Emlaghfad and the Parish of Ballymote – J.C. McDonagh ;

A Hidden Church – The Diocese of Achonry, 1689-1818 – Fr Liam Swords
The Naturalists – Institute of Technology, Sligo (2000 AD)
Irish Language Books in the Collection of the Library of Institute of Technology, Sligo – James Foran (*Corran Herald*, Issue No. 41)

Dunlevy's Irish Catechism – Rev Thomas Mulligan (*Corran Herald*, issue No. 28)

Three Books of Ballymote – Tom McGettrick (*Corran Herald*, Issue No. 24)

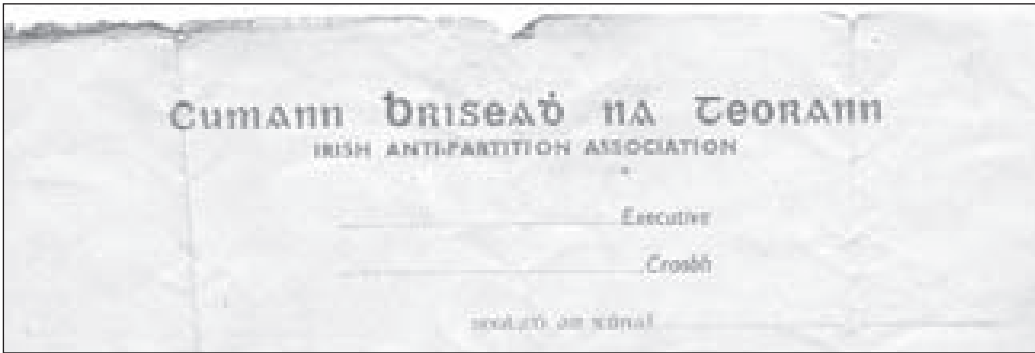
17th & 18th Century Ballymote: Fitzmaurices and Dunleavys – Padraig Doddy (*Corran Herald*, Issue No. 39); Centre Culturel Irlandais, Paris – Historique

Rivalry and Reform in the Irish College, Paris, 1676 – 1775. Essay by Dr Liam Chambers, Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick.

Achonry and Its Churches (6th Century to the 3rd Millenium) – Fr Liam Swords; *Treasures of the Irish Language* – Dublin City Public Libraries.

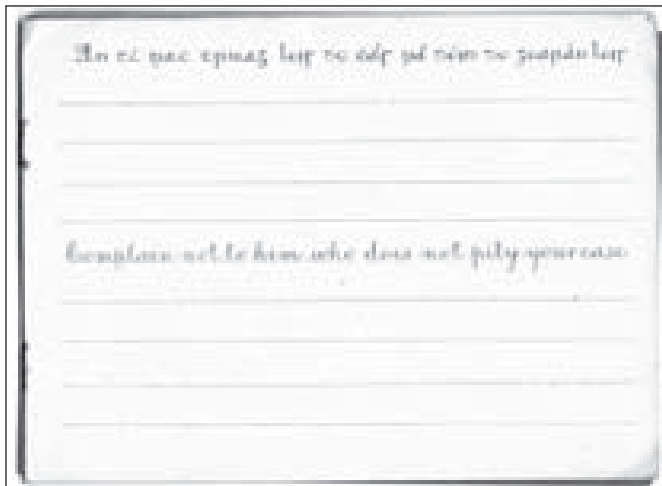
The Irish Anti-Partition League

Submitted by John Coleman

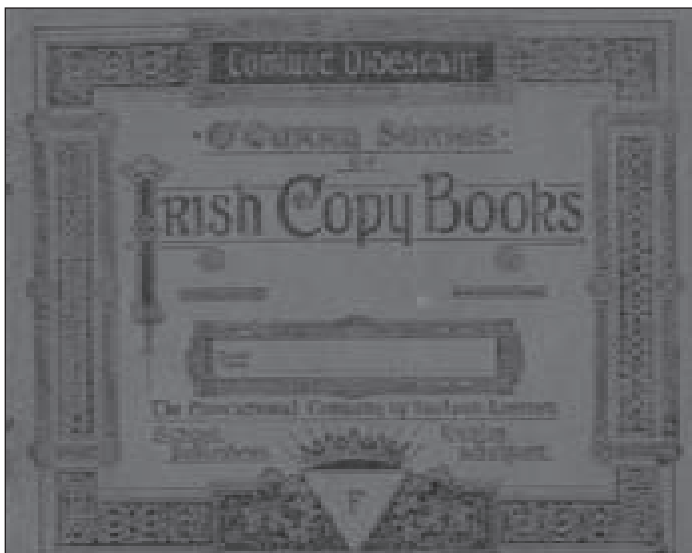


The Irish Anti-Partition League was established in 1945 and was particularly active in Ireland north and south and in England from then into the 1950s

O'Curry Copy Book



Cover and sample page from the O'Curry copy book which was used to teach children writing, including cursive script which was standard for use in writing in English and the Gaelic script which was taught in schools during the first decades of the new state.



Concert Poster 1962

PRIMARY SCHOOLS' CONCERT
AT BALLYMOTE
ON WEDNESDAY, 21st MARCH, 1962

PROGRAMME.

IRISH DANCING.	BOYS' BAND.
ACTION SONG.	CELTIC MUSIC.
"THE IRISH COLLEENS."	INFANTS.
VIOLIN SOLO.	"THE WONDERFUL DOLLIES."
SEAMUS MCGUIRE.	IRISH DANCING.
FOLK DANCE.	FLOWER DRELL.
PICCOLO SOLO.	ACTION SONG—"ALICE BLUE GOWN." Parnell Henry.
PATRICK CHAMBERS.	GIRLS' BAND.
CHORUS.	"SANCTA LUCIA."
"CHUIRNI MUIRE"	SELECTIONS FROM "OKLAHOMA."
"THE WHISTLING GIPSY."	CHORUS.
IRISH DANCING.	"THE BARCAROLLE"
SHOW BAND.	ACCORDEON SOLO.
	JIMMY DONDUGHUE.

Doors open 8 p.m. Commencing 8.30 (sharp).

ADMISSION . . . 3/- & 2/-

Flier for Primary schools' concert Ballymote on 21st March 1962

Under African Skies

By *Bernie Doyle*

Palm trees waving in the breeze and the shimmer of the sun on the sea greeted me in the morning. Mombasa Beach Hotel, owned by a safari group, is built in the Afrikaner style with wide open spaces in the hall, dining-room and along the landings upstairs to allow the pleasant breezes from the Indian Ocean to filter through.

The hotel grounds were patrolled by security men at all times and one was not encouraged to go outside except in a minibus or taxi. I drifted down by the waterfalls and out of the hotel grounds to paddle in the Indian Ocean. At once I was surrounded by African men all beseeching me to come and buy in their shops. These shops consisted of a mat, or even a flat stone beneath an overhanging cliff, on which they laid out their wares. What a wonderful talent for carving they had – all the animals in different sizes carved in mahogany, ebony and soapstone. I bought from them until my purse was empty and consoled myself by knowing that I was giving directly to people in need. There is such visible extreme poverty in and around Mombasa.

One of the traders, who also sold boat trips out to the coral reef, had asked me to come out to his house and he would take me to an African supermarket where I would meet the real people of Kenya. I would have dearly loved to have done this but I was a bit nervous about going far from the usual tourist trail. The following evening he sold me a picture – very colourful on a black background – for £5 and a nail-scissors and the flip-flops off my feet.

A tour of Mombasa showed us the antiquity of the city, now 2000 years old, and once a great slave-trading port. Arabs, Portuguese and English

fought over this strategic port. Leaning on the old sea wall it was easy to feel its antiquity and to imagine the scenes of cruelty of bygone years as we watched the workers toil under great loads unloading a cargo ship. The old mission bell still hangs in its campanile, where once it rang out a warning to the natives that the slave traders were approaching. It gave some of them time to escape the ‘blackberrying’ ships. Fort Jesus, the enormous, impenetrable military fort built by the Portuguese in 1595 and subsequently used as a prison by the British, is still intact. Its cannons and guns are in place but it is now used as a historical museum.

Moi Avenue, the principal street in Mombasa, is dominated by the giant (aluminium) white elephant tusks presented by Queen Elizabeth. We walked through the municipal fruit and vegetable market, with its pyramids and mounds of exotic and colourful fruits. On to the tea, coffee and spice bazaar just opposite, where we were expected and greeted with a free bottle of mineral water. As eighty per cent of the people are Muslim, it is not surprising to find so many mosques both old and new. Jami Mosque, built in the 1960s, of white marble with fantastic carvings and mosaics, is open to the public. A local co-operative factory was housed in long, low open-sided thatched huts. The men, who work when and for as long as they wish, sit on an earthen floor. They carve and polish the most beautiful images. They must sell their products in the co-op shop. It is an Aladdin’s Cave with carvings of jungle animals, as well as human heads and statues. All the carvings are exquisitely done and come in all sizes, from life-size to one inch

high. Our minibus weaved in and out, jostling for position with taxis, trucks, minibuses, safari jeeps and bicycles as we moved past run-down tenements.

Accommodation is expensive in Mombasa: 400 to 600 Kenyan shillings for a room without water or electricity. Most people (in the 1990s) earned about 400 shillings a month. Slightly better rooms in different blocks cost 2,400 shillings per month for water and electricity supplied, eg a tap and light bulb. There are no sockets so one cannot even plug in an electric kettle. As a result most workers live outside the city and walk six to eight kilometres to work. A few streets have modern well-built buildings, such as Treasury Street, which houses the banks, commercial insurance and oil companies. Senior government officials, army personnel and rich businessmen live in wonderful houses. There is such a contrast between the sumptuous hotels and fabulous houses and the native huts and tenements in the city. There seems to be no in-between. You live in luxury or poverty.

I booked a safari in Shimba Hills with a stay in a tree-house in the tropical rainforest. With an English couple I set off in a safari jeep through the city and on to the Likoni ferry, which takes only five or ten minutes to cross over to the southern mainland. Thousands of people make the daily crossing in both directions and there are stalls of fruit and food set up beside the ferries. Another couple joined us at Diani Reef Hotel and we set off at breakneck speed for the Shimba Hills. This is the old road to the border with Tanzania and is a heavily populated area with farms and some brick-built houses, but mainly the traditional thatched-roofed huts.

The tree house is situated eight kilometres into the tropical rainforest and is a delight to behold. Built of wooden logs around a large tree, it overlooks a waterhole for animals. We were unlucky that the monsoon rains had been late that season so thirsty animals were scarce. There are open spaces along the corridors and in the bar (where a bush baby visits) and the dining-room. Although there is a limited supply of electricity, each room is supplied with a lantern, candles and matches and has an old-fashioned heavy-bladed ceiling fan and a balcony overlooking the waterhole. Along the corridor were separate washrooms and toilets for each sex.

My most vivid recollection of the rainforest is of the sounds. There is a non-stop chatter of wildlife with thousands of insects flying around, joined by bats after dark. There are really three layers of sound: a deep base hum or buzz overlaid with a constant chatter, overlaid again with the chirps and calls of the birds. And then there was the hum of the fan! An early call with a pot of tea at 5.15am heralded the day. A bat must have flown in while the door was open. I left my door open and headed down to the ladies' bathroom, hoping he would fly out again. Here I surprised an elderly German man in the shower. He promptly bolted into the loo while I retreated back to my room. The bat was still in occupation, while behind me the German was coming with stealthy steps to try to regain his room opposite mine. I chanced going into my room, and as soon as possible, fled again, but I got rid of the bat.

Long dirt roads spread out for miles, with flat signposts on tree stumps at intervals. The morning was overcast and misty, and out of the mist emerged two giraffes on to the roadway ahead. We watched as they made their way gracefully into a field to graze. There were many traces of leopard spoor but

he hides so well that it is difficult to get a sighting. We were very lucky that morning as we came across a herd of sable antelope and buffalo. We met another jeep of tourists who had not seen anything at all! That evening we went on a walking safari – we drove for a few miles and then went on foot. As we drove along the roadway our driver stopped and pointed down beneath the road. We counted eight elephants, as close to us as the end of a house, all eating leaves from the trees. Our guide carried a loaded elephant gun, so heavy it was hard to lift, which he would use only if an animal charged us. But, he reminded us, they are wild animals and this is their territory.

Round a campfire, where we were supposed to watch the sunset only it was cloudy, we had drinks and snacks and talked to our guide. In the distance we saw a lone bull elephant, whose herd had been taken over by a younger bull. The local farmers are not in favour of safari game parks. For instance, one farmer in this particular area had harvested his crop of oranges, laid them in a pile covered with straw under a tarpaulin, to await collection by a truck to take them to the port early next morning. During the night a herd of elephants had eaten, squashed and destroyed his entire crop of oranges. Cattle and sheep had been attacked by leopards and lions. So the local people want the parks fenced, which would destroy the animal and plant life.

We also went on a trip to Mtwapa Creek in a glass-bottomed boat, which allowed us to see a variety of colourful fish of strange shapes and sizes as we sailed down by the hotels and houses. We met yachts, motor boats and the Arab dhows that have sailed these seas for centuries. When we came to the palatial residence of a German family, who own hotels and safari tour companies, the crew laughed: 'You know, he has not got Alsations guarding his estate. No, he has lions!'

We pulled into a village of 9,000 native people who lived in huts scattered through the trees. There was a small circular school nearby and a very deep well with a stone-built wall and cover. Six or seven women were taking turns operating the pulley to lower and raise their buckets. They then filled containers with the water and took them into the forest to sell to other families. Here I saw the only well-fed, spirited and happy children I had seen in Kenya. They played and ran and laughed as children ought to.

In a clearing, long logs had been laid in a circle around an arena of compacted earth. We sat on the logs and watched a cabaret: dancing by costumed girls, marvellous gymnastics, fire-eating and juggling. It was a wonderful performance and well worth the few shillings we contributed. But best of all was the sight of young children outside the circle performing all the gymnastics and juggling. It gladdened my heart.

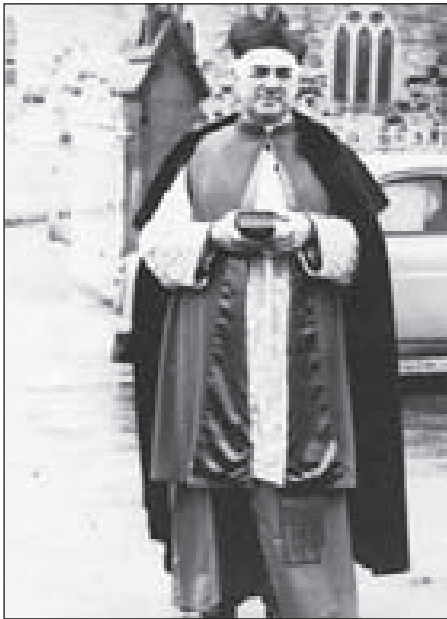
While this was in progress two young girls had made my acquaintance. One had a baby with her, the other was at school. Both needed help. We were going to a snake farm to view several varieties of snakes and turtle. They ranged from tiny thin green snakes (invisible in grass I would think) to huge thick, wonderfully marked pythons, none of which I would care to meet outside their cages! The man who had originally put the collection together retired from the business after he had received sixty-five snakebites in total and just survived the last one. There is always a time to shout 'Stop'.

When I came out again there were my two friends who chatted to me and escorted me back to the boat. They told me of the native cure for malaria – the Neem tree. Burn the leaves and the smoke drives out the mosquitoes. Boil the leaves and bark and the resultant juice cures malaria.

I would love to go back to Kenya and Tanzania.

A Memorable Monsignor

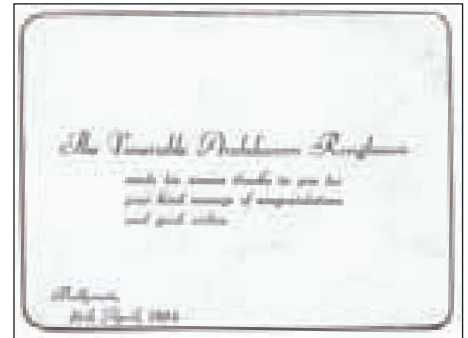
Submitted by John Coleman: Photograph and Card from the collection of the late Maisie McGovern



Monsignor Patrick J Roughneen was parish priest of Ballymote from 1943 until his death in 1970.

The title of Monsignor (My Lord) or domestic prelate was bestowed by Pope Pius XII in 1954 as a mark of distinguished service to the church. The full splendour of the official dress included touches of purple. Monsignor Roughneen had been educated in the Irish College in Rome and attended Vatican II. He was a great advocate of the siesta having experienced its benefits during his youth in Italy.

He brought the St John of God sisters to Ballymote and vacated his house beside the castle to accommodate them. He had two full-time housekeepers Anne Rochford and Delia McGettrick in residence



and they always dressed in black.

As can be seen from the photograph he was an impressive figure and those who remember him can vividly recall him striding along purposefully with his chest thrust forward and it was not difficult to believe the legend that in his youth he had rescued a man from drowning.

The Venerable Nicholas Postgate

By Frank Tivnan

Dr Nicholas Postgate was a heroic martyr priest of the Yorkshire Moors. According to tradition of the Eske Valley, Nicholas Postgate was born at Kirkdale House near Egton in North Yorkshire circa 1596. He was educated at Douay College in France where he obtained a Doctorate of Divinity. He was ordained priest for the English mission on 20 March, 1628 and returned to England when he was 32.

For a number of years he worked as chaplain for rich recusant Catholic families in Yorkshire. Around the 1660s he finally established his base in Ugthorpe in South Yorkshire where he remained travelling on foot the length and breadth of Blackmoor as a disguised travelling priest. He refused the offer of a horse and insisted on walking all over his huge mountain parish.

He gave spiritual nourishment and practical help to everyone, regardless of their place in society or religious persuasion. He aided the poor and gave them food and clothes; in short he was a 17th century Good Samaritan.

Owing to Titus Oates' feigned Popish Plot, in which he claimed

there was a conspiracy to install a Catholic king, he managed to ferment a renewed and fierce persecution of English Catholics. It was to be the last time that Catholics were put to death in England for their faith. One of the last victims - though not the very last - was Nicholas Postgate.

During the panic engineered by Oates, a prominent Protestant magistrate in London, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, was murdered and Oates loudly blamed the Catholics. Sir Edmund's manservant, John Reeves, set out to get his revenge. For reasons which are not clear, he decided to base his actions in the Whitby area, possibly because he knew that priests arrived there from France. Nicholas Postgate was hunted and caught, and he was hanged, drawn and quartered at Knavesmire outside the city of York in 1679, at the age of 82.

He is one of the 85 martyrs of England and Wales and was beatified by Pope John Paul II.

In St Hedda's Church in Egton Bridge there is a magnificent stained glass window by Thomas Denny depicting Fr Nicholas Postgate walking along a moorland path. His

lower jawbone is venerated in the Church of the English Martyrs, Dalton Terrace, York City. We celebrate his feast day on August 7th.



Divisions within the Sligo Volunteers at the outbreak of the First World War

By Pdraig Deignan

We don't know where we stand, and it is time enough for us to shout for our friends when we know who they are.

Seamus Ó'Cinnéide, Ballymote Volunteer Corps, 1914

Britain's declaration of war on 4 August 1914 prevented conflict between nationalists and unionists and both the Ulster Volunteers and the Irish Volunteers were encouraged by their political leaders to support Britain in wartime. In order to guarantee Home Rule, Redmond wished to show that the nationalists of Ireland were behind Britain in the war, and on 3 August 1914 he promised the support of the Irish Volunteers for Britain's war effort and their co-operation with unionists in defending Ireland.

However, Home Rule was still not on the statute books when war was declared in August 1914 and the Sligo Champion, a strong supporter of John Redmond and the IPP, was keen to highlight this fact. In an editorial on 8 August 1914 the Sligo Champion expressed the belief that if Ireland was going to support Britain in the war, then the country should Carson inspecting the Ulster Volunteers, 1913 be treated with justice in peacetime.¹ Edward Carson had pledged the support of the Ulster Volunteers for Britain and in an editorial on 8 August 1914 the Sligo Independent, the chief unionist organ in Sligo, praised both Carson's 'patriotic offer' of the Ulster Volunteers, and Redmond's offer of the Irish Volunteers.

On 1 February 1914 a meeting was held at Sligo Town Hall, where over 450 men enrolled in the Sligo Branch of the Irish Volunteers, which was one of the first in the country.² At the beginning of August there were almost 5,000 enrolled as members across the county. There

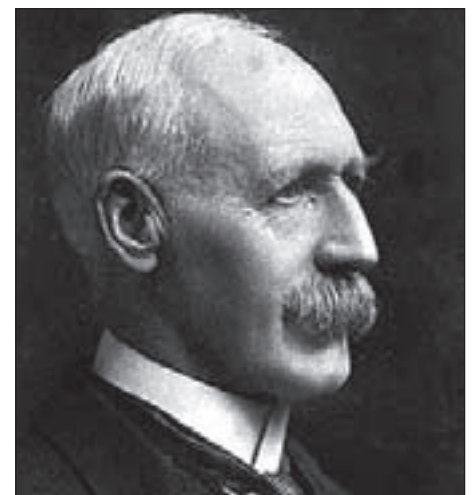


Carson inspecting the Ulster Volunteers, 1913

was a shortage of nationalist officers in Sligo to train new Volunteers and many from the Protestant unionist landed families who had experience in drilling men offered their services to help organise and instruct the Volunteers. On 9 August 1914, one such man, Major Richard W Hillas, a unionist and Protestant landowner of Donnecoy, Templeboy, Co Sligo,³ wrote to Colonel Maurice Moore, the commander of the Irish Volunteers, offering to train and organise the Irish Volunteers in Sligo.⁴ On 11 August 1914, in the absence of a senior nationalist officer, Colonel Moore appointed Major Hillas the County Inspection Officer for all Volunteers in Sligo.⁵ Hillas submitted an article to the Sligo Champion encouraging Sligomen to join the Irish Volunteers saying: 'It is the bounden duty of every man fit to bear arms to enrol himself in the Irish Volunteers.'⁶ The question now was, how would Sligo nationalists respond to the increasing unionist involvement in the Irish Volunteers?

On 22 August 1914 the Sligo Champion editorial expressed the concern that unionists were taking

over the Volunteers and shaping the organisation to their own ends.⁷ Seamus T Ó'Cinnéide of the Ballymote Volunteer Corps, Co Sligo, voiced concerns over the appointment of Major Hillas in a letter to Colonel Moore.⁸ Ó'Cinnéide complained that some Sligo Volunteers were opposed to 'unionist officers' and they did not believe that Major Hillas was sympathetic to the aims of the Volunteer movement. Ó'Cinnéide demanded the removal of Hillas, maintaining that if he wasn't replaced then Volunteer commanders in



Colonel Maurice Moore

the surrounding districts would endeavour to have their units attached to a neighbouring county's Volunteer Corps.

On 20 August 1914 Colonel Moore wrote to Ó'Cinnéide emphasising the difficulty of finding experienced officers with nationalist views willing to train Volunteer units and he maintained that 'It seems to be a choice between unionists officers or no officers.'⁹ Colonel Moore took the long-term pragmatic approach towards Volunteer training in Co Sligo and he asked the local commanders to work with Hillas for the moment, arguing that 'When our officers are trained we can do as we like.'¹⁰ This seemed like a reasonable request and Colonel Moore, as overall commander of the Irish Volunteers, could obviously see the benefits of using unionist officers. But would the local Volunteers accept his wisdom in permitting Hillas to impart his military experience?

When Hillas was appointed he wrote to fifteen Volunteer corps in Co Sligo requesting information on training and logistics. However, on 2 September 1914 Hillas reported that he had only received five replies. He interpreted the slow response to his request for information as opposition to him and tendered his resignation, maintaining that 'It is too evident that people of my class are not required by certain supporters of the movement in the Irish Volunteers ... under these circumstances the Irish Volunteers must always remain an undisciplined disorganised mob and I for one could not remain as a responsible officer of this force.'¹¹ Colonel Moore tried to calm Hillas and pleaded with him to wait and be patient with what he called the 'casual methods' of his subordinates.¹² Moore argued that the delay in answering the requests for information 'Is due to carelessness rather than any presumed hostility.'¹³ However Hillas refused to see it from Moore's perspective and he was determined to resign.¹⁴ Did Hillas act too impulsively?

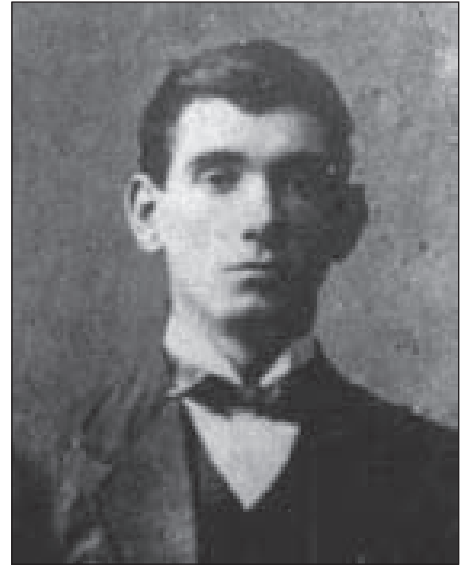
Hillas may have been overly sensitive and it seemed that many



Alec McCabe

strongly nationalist Volunteer Corps commanders in Sligo were determined to secure the best possible training for their units. Some of those that responded promptly to Hillas's request for information later featured very prominently in the republican movement. In fact, even before he received a request for information from Hillas, Alec McCabe (1886-1972), commander of the Keash Volunteers, Ballymote, wrote to Hillas on 18 August 1914. He reported himself as company commander and added that he was 'delighted to have some sensible person placed at the head of affairs in the county.'¹⁵ On 23 August 1914, after he had received Hillas's letter, McCabe responded with detailed information concerning the Keash Volunteer Corps.¹⁶ McCabe, the principal of Drumnagranchy National School near Keash, was a member of the militant republican organisation, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) and later commanded IRA forces in Sligo during the War of Independence and Free State troops during the Civil War.¹⁷ Two other commanders with strong nationalist views who responded promptly to Hillas were Owen Tansy, Gurteen Volunteers, and Seamus Devins, Grange Volunteers.¹⁸ Both men later took a very active role in the republican movement during the War of Independence and the Civil War. It seemed as if these men shared the pragmatism of Colonel Moore and

were willing to accept training and organisation from a unionist officer at least until they themselves gained the necessary experience.



Owen Tansy

It also seemed that more than five Sligo Volunteer commanders responded to Hillas's request for information concerning the commanders, numbers, training and experience of their units by the time he resigned. In addition to Alec McCabe, Owen Tansy and Seamus Devins, seven other officers in the Irish Volunteers, representing six corps of the County Sligo Volunteers, dated their replies to Hillas's enquiries before 31 August 1914. The Sligo Volunteer commanders, William Lipsett and Domnick Bree of the Collooney Corps, Michael McDonagh, Geevagh Corps, William Caffrey, Easkey Corps, Robert Anderson, Calry Corps, Thomas Clarke, Skreen/Dromard Corps and Tom Deignan, Maugherow Corps, all responded to Hillas before his resignation on 2 September 1914.¹⁹ It is not known if Hillas received all the replies to his request for information before he took the decision to resign, and Colonel Moore was probably correct when he asked Hillas to be patient with his subordinates.

However, there was undoubtedly some opposition to Hillas amongst the ranks of the Sligo Volunteer movement and it seemed to be enough to persuade him that he was

not acceptable as the Irish Volunteers County Sligo Inspection Officer. In addition to his own complaints concerning the distrust of many within the Sligo Volunteers over his unionist politics and his Protestant land-owning background, Hillas received a letter dated 2 September 1914 from Diarmuid Coffey, secretary to the chief of staff of the Irish Volunteers, informing Hillas that two south Sligo Corps areas were now attached to the Ballina and Charlestown Corps of the Irish Volunteers in Co Mayo.²⁰ No specific reason for this regional transfer is made apparent in the letter and it could quite possibly be due to an organisational change. However, it is more likely that the territorial change was the result of displeasure with Hillas within the Sligo Volunteers, especially considering the earlier hostility expressed towards him by some Volunteers in south Sligo, represented in particular by Seamus Ó'Cinnéide's letter on 20 August 1914. On 1 September 1914 the Mayor of Sligo, John Jinks, who had earlier supported Colonel Moore's appointment of Major Hillas,²¹ wrote to Moore expressing his sorrow at Hillas's decision to resign and recommended that a Captain Foley of Rossaville take his place.²² In a letter to Jinks dated 2 September 1914, Moore, aware of the time constraints in preparing the Volunteers during wartime, immediately appointed



John Jinks



Thomas Scanlon speaking to crowd outside Sligo Town Hall

Captain Foley as Inspector of the County Sligo Volunteers.²³ Foley later declined the offer of the position in the Volunteers, as he was preparing to serve in the British army.²⁴

There seemed to have been a hardening of nationalist attitude in Sligo at this time and on 29 August 1914 the Sligo Champion argued that Home Rule must be on the statute books before the Volunteers would fight for Britain, saying that 'If not, English legislators will find that the invitation to Irishmen to go to be shot to pieces for King and Country will not be responded to with any great enthusiasm.'²⁵ On the same date a small piece appeared in the Sligo Champion, which was probably submitted by Ó'Cinnéide or a member of the Ballymote Volunteer Corps, declaring that the Volunteers should 'not be too sanguine to express opinions on the present European struggle. We don't know where we stand, and it is time enough for us to shout for our friends when we know who they are.'²⁶ However, with the trouble over unionist involvement in the Irish Volunteers and the lingering doubts over Home Rule aside, the RIC Inspector for Co Sligo was able to report at the end of August 1914 that people's sympathies were with the British forces.²⁷

On 18 September 1914 Home Rule became law and was suspended until the end of the war. The next day Thomas Scanlon MP visited Sligo

town and spoke to a large crowd outside the town hall declaring, 'Ireland is now and shall be for all times a nation once again.'²⁸ Scanlon argued that Ireland had received its freedom from a country at war and stressed Ireland's obligations to the British Empire. If Scanlon believed that his triumphant speech was going to go down well with all sections of Sligo society he was sorely mistaken, and the speech received a very mixed response from the crowd with some calling him a liar and shouting 'To Hell with the Empire.'²⁹ Fighting then broke out amongst the crowd, which was reported by the Sligo Independent.

John Redmond had no doubts on what Ireland should do in wartime and on 20 September 1914 he gave a



Redmond calling on volunteers to recruit

speech at Woodenbridge, Co Wexford, urging the Irish Volunteers to join the British army to guarantee the granting of Home Rule after the war.³⁰ Would Redmond's support for the British war effort divide nationalists? Eoin MacNeill, the founder of the Volunteers, and some Volunteer leaders did not support Redmond's position. The Volunteer movement was split between the majority, who now called themselves Irish National Volunteers (INV) (generally referred to as the National Volunteers), who backed Redmond, and the minority, the Irish Volunteers, who remained under MacNeill's leadership. The Sligo Champion remained firm and supported the official party line of the IPP and supported Redmond and the National Volunteers, declaring that 'Mr Redmond and the Irish Party are the nearest thing to a government that we possess and simple commonsense demands that they should have the controlling voice in the direction of the Volunteer force.'³¹

The next step for the Redmond



Eoin MacNeill

supporters in Sligo was to ensure that most Volunteers in the county joined the National Volunteers and not the Irish Volunteers, and on 30 September 1914 a meeting was held in Sligo Town Hall to form a County Board for the National Volunteers. The mayor, John Jinks, John O'Dowd and Thomas Scanlon, along with delegates from twenty-four Irish Volunteer Corps around Co Sligo, attended the meeting. The meeting was a success for the IPP and showed



Irish Volunteers on parade

that the majority of Volunteers in the county supported John Redmond's position. However, the meeting failed to form a working County Board for the Volunteers. On 30 September 1914 the Sligo Champion argued that the majority of Volunteers in Co Sligo took Redmond's side and Volunteers in Sligo were 'true to a man to Mr Redmond and the Party.'³² The various branches passed resolutions of support for Redmond in September and October. However, support for the IPP's position was not universal, and on 8 October 1914 the Tubbercurry Irish Volunteer Corps passed a resolution affirming their allegiance to MacNeill.³³

However, a letter from Charles McCoy, Ballylara, near Tubbercurry, to Volunteer headquarters in early November claimed that the 8 October meeting of Tubbercurry Volunteers was not representative.³⁴ McCoy believed that what he described as 'general apathy' had reduced active

membership from 300 to seventeen and he claimed that the seventeen men were branding Redmond as 'the mercenary recruiting agent of the British Government.' However McCoy's real purpose seemed to be exploiting the opportunity to promote himself within the Volunteer movement and he mentioned 'that he would be prepared to undertake organising work in this county if the committee requires such', and listed out his credentials saying he had plenty of experience in organising men and that he was a retired RIC sergeant.³⁵

It seemed that National Volunteer HQ did not take McCoy's concerns seriously and later on 22 February 1915 McCoy again wrote to Volunteer HQ complaining that they had done nothing in relation to his letter dated 8 October 1914 to revive the Volunteer Corps in Tubbercurry, and that there were no National Volunteers in Tubbercurry. He believed that he



John Redmond inspecting the Irish Volunteers, 1914.

could have done something if he had received 'assistance, guidance or encouragement from the executive authority to proceed.'³⁶ An RIC report on the meeting in Tubbercurry on 8 October mentioned that the meeting was attended by thirteen men who were opposed to Redmond's policy of support for Britain.³⁷

A small number of others were also opposed to Redmond and in late October 1914 anti-recruiting posters were found all over Sligo town. They dismissed Redmond's policy of cooperation and declared that the Volunteers were for the defence of Ireland, and 'that individual Volunteers must be true to their pledge and not desert Ireland or Ireland's army for England's army.'³⁸ At the end of October 1914 the RIC Co Sligo Inspector reported that three branches of the Volunteers – Keash, Tubbercurry and Grange – were remaining as Irish Volunteers and were supporting MacNeill.³⁹ However out of the estimated 5,000 members of the Volunteers in October 1914 only 280 supported MacNeill. From the IPP's perspective the numbers opposing them in Co Sligo were very small and most probably did not concern them too much.

of the skilled instructors joined up as well. Reports on local National Volunteer units in the Sligo Champion mention this and on 10 October only very small numbers were attending drill practice in Riverstown and Skreen/Dromard in Co Sligo.⁴⁰ On 7 November 1914 reports in the Sligo Champion indicated that there was a general 'slacking off' in Volunteer units in the county.⁴¹

Why did it take so long to organise the Volunteers in Co Sligo after the declaration of war? Much can be blamed on the lack of Volunteer interest after Home Rule was achieved, and while many of the original members enlisted, few others seemed willing to take on the thankless and demanding task of organising the National Volunteers in Sligo. The trouble with Hillas had also delayed organisation at a crucial time. However, although there were local problems in organising the Volunteers the British government could have done much more to help the National Volunteers in the country. After all, the National Volunteers had been committed to supporting Britain in the war and had recruited thousands of men around Ireland for the British army. The British government never

Further Reading

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Farry, Michael, *Sligo 1914-1921: a chronicle of conflict* (Trim, 1994).

Farry, Michael, *The Irish revolution 1912-13, Sligo* (Dublin, 2012).

Endnotes

1 S.C., 8 Aug. 1914.

2 *Ibid.*, 7 Feb. 1914.

3 Hillas Family Papers (of Seaview, otherwise Donecoy) (Sligo Co. Library [S.C.L.], Estate records, No. 589); Celeste Byrne, 'Hillas of County Sligo' in *The Irish Ancestor*, iv, No.1, (1972), pp 26-9.

4 Major R.W. Hillas to Colonel Maurice Moore, 9 Aug. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).

5 Colonel Maurice Moore to Major R.W. Hillas, 11 Aug. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).

6 S.C. 15 Aug. 1914.

7 *Ibid.*, 22 Aug. 1914.

8 Seamus T. Ó'Cinnéide to Colonel Maurice Moore, 18 Aug. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).

9 Colonel Maurice Moore to Seamus T. Ó'Cinnéide, Ballymote Sligo Volunteer Corps, 20 Aug. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).

10 *Ibid.*

11 Major R.W. Hillas to Colonel Maurice Moore, 2 Sept. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).

12 Colonel Maurice Moore to Major R.W. Hillas, 3 Sept. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).

13 *Ibid.*

14 Major R.W. Hillas to Colonel Maurice Moore, 5 Sept. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).

15 Alec McCabe to Major Hillas, 18 Aug. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).

16 *Ibid.*, 23 Aug. 1914.

17 John C. McTernan, *Worthies of Sligo* (Sligo, 1994), pp 189-93.

18 Owen Tansey to Major Hillas, 26 Aug. 1914; Seamus Devins to Major Hillas, 28 Aug. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).

19 William Lipsett, Collooney Corps to Hillas, 20 Aug. 1914; Domnick Bree, Collooney Corps to Hillas, 26 Aug 1914; Michael McDonagh, Geevagh Corps to Hillas, 21 Aug. 1914; William Caffrey, Easkey Corps to Hillas, 28 Aug. 1914; R. B. Anderson, Calry Corps to Hillas, 29 Aug 1914; Thomas Clarke, Skreen and Dromard Corps to Hillas, 31 Aug 1914; Tom Deignan, Maugherow Corps to Hillas, 31 Aug. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).



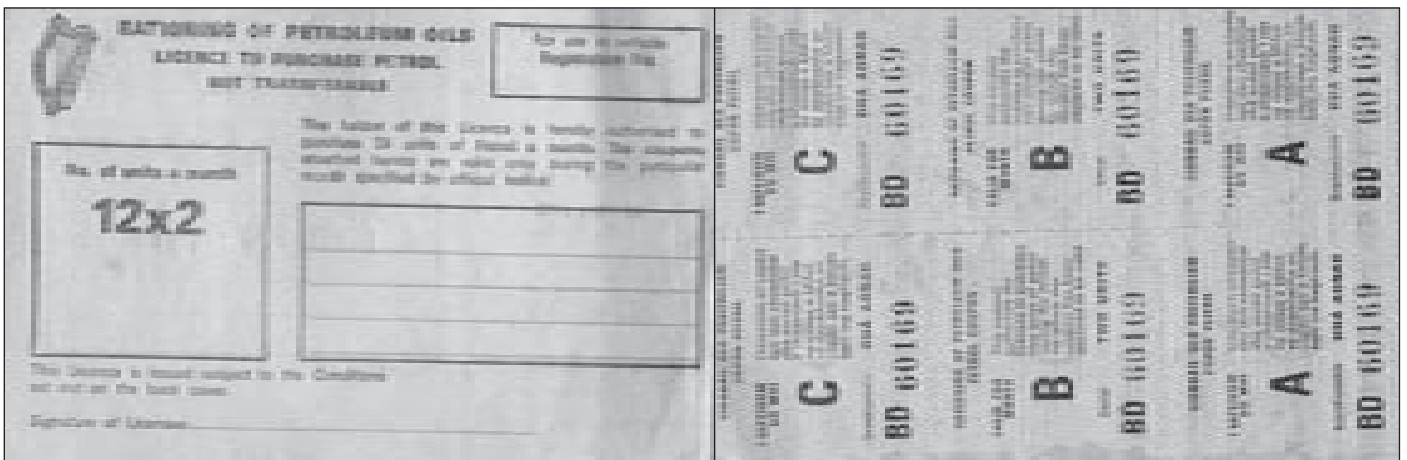
John Redmond presents an Irish flag to the Irish Volunteers about 1915

After the IPP secured Home Rule and the declarations of support for Redmond and the most enthusiastic members had joined up, there seemed to be no real role for the Volunteers and there was a falling off in support for the National Volunteers. Most

did much to encourage the National Volunteers, who had not joined the British army, in their efforts to become involved in home defence. As David Fitzpatrick has argued, most probably the government remained suspicious of all nationalists.⁴²

- 20 Diarmiad Coffey to Hillas 2 Sept. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).
- 21 John Jinks to Colonel Moore, 19 Aug. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).
- 22 Ibid., 1 Sept. 1914.
- 23 Colonel Moore to John Jinks, 2 Sept. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).
- 24 Captain Foley to Colonel Moore, 4 Sept. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).
- 25 S.C., 29 Aug. 1914.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 S.C.I. R.I.C. M.R., 1 Sept. 1914 (T.N.A., CO/904: microfilm, N.L.I., POS 8537).
- 28 S.C., 26 Sept. 1914; S.I., 26 Sept. 1914.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 S.C., 26 Sept 1914.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 S.C., 3 Oct. 1914.
- 33 S.C., 10 Oct. 1914.
- 34 Charles McCoy to Volunteer H.Q., 5 Nov. 1914 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Charles McCoy to Volunteer H.Q., 22 Feb. 1915 (N.L.I., Maurice Moore papers, MS 10550).
- 37 S.C.I. R.I.C. M.R., 1 Nov. 1914 (T.N.A., CO/904: microfilm, N.L.I., POS 8537).
- 38 S.I., 31 Oct. 1914.
- 39 S.C.I. R.I.C. M.R., 1 Nov. 1914 (T.N.A., CO/904: microfilm, N.L.I., POS 8537).
- 40 S.C., 10 Oct. 1914.
- 41 Ibid., 7 Nov. 1914.
- 42 David Fitzpatrick, *Politics and Irish life, 1913-1921* (Dublin, 1977), p. 54.

Memorabilia from our Recent Past



Petrol rationing coupons dating from the oil crisis of the early 1970's when OPEC limited supplies to western nations.



Share Certificate for the North-West Regional Co-operative Society Ltd 1958, signed by Directors Stan Casey and Dr Tommy Taheny. The company was set up to establish a mart in Ballymote, but was wound down after NCF took over running the mart.

The French at Mullaghmore

By Joe McGowan

*The hilltops with glory were glowing,
T'was the eve of a bright harvest day
When the ships we'd been wearily
waiting
Sailed into Killala's broad bay*
- The Men of the West, by the Clancy Brothers

Just over two hundred years ago the light of freedom burned fiercely in every Irish heart. Carricknagat, Vinegar Hill, Castlebar, Collooney and Killala: these names are etched in history's pages. In 1798, French General Humbert landed a small expeditionary force in Kilcummin, County Mayo. The force was sent at the invitation of the United Irishmen. Irish volunteers flocked to join the French ranks and soon General Humbert's Franco-Irish Army took the city of Killala following the 'Battle of Killala'.

But what of Mullaghmore? Look where you will and the name is nowhere to be found. Yet here in North Sligo, men dared to struggle one more time for freedom too; their hearts beat in unison with the hopes, the promise, the dream of Irishmen and women everywhere for a free Irish nation. But it was not to be.

When leaving France, Humbert had been assured that several expeditions would land simultaneously with his at various points along the coast. Part of the original invasion plan was to land some of the French fleet with munitions and soldiers at Mullaghmore harbour. The plan of action was to march southwards, take Sligo town, and, crushing all resistance in their path, join up with Humbert's troops marching northward from Killala.

The English, anticipating just such a move, had planned well. They impounded all the horses and asses in Mullaghmore and surrounding villages. Without draught animals to draw the carts, transport of any kind was impossible.



General Humbert

When the French ships, so anxiously awaited, eventually appeared off Mullaghmore Head three local men went out in their fishing boat to the man-o'-war. Their mission was to explain to the Frenchmen that there was no way to transport munitions and supplies because of the seizures. The captain of the French boat, taking the three men aboard as volunteers, decided to sail for Killala to join up with the main invasion fleet.

On their way south, near Inishmurray Island, an English cutter coming from the direction of the Donegal shore intercepted them. Following a fierce engagement the French boat, pounded with canon and musket fire, was captured.

In later years, when recounting their adventures, the Mullaghmore men recollected in vivid detail the events of the day. They recalled that early in the fight one of the ship's officers, assessing their situation as hopeless, attempted to fly the white flag of surrender. After a fierce argument with his superior officer, whose orders were to fight on, the junior officer was shot dead where he stood.

In another incident during the fierce struggle, the top of a French marine's

head was blown off by an English cannon ball. It landed at the foot of the gangway to the hold where the three fishermen, being unarmed, had taken refuge. Describing the event later, they recalled that the skull looked like a bloody red bowl.

When the fight was over the French captain was forced to surrender his ship and all hands were taken prisoner. The Mullaghmore men's position was desperate. It was English practice at that time to give honourable surrender terms to the French and treat them as prisoners of war. The fate of the Irish, being British subjects, and as such regarded as traitors, was to be tortured and executed out of hand.

On arrival in London the Frenchmen were released and given safe passage to France but our three friends were tried, sentenced to death and brought to the Tower of London to await execution. Sitting in their grim cell we can imagine that the sentence of death echoed in their ears, disturbing their days and haunting their sleep. Darkness increased their terror. The judge's pitiless face and his black cap of death burned in their brain. They remembered his macabre sentence word for awful word: 'You are to be hanged by the neck, but cut down before you are dead, your bowels shall be taken out and burnt before your face, your head shall be cut off, and your body divided into four quarters to be disposed of as his Majesty pleases.'

Looking at the comfortless steel door and iron bars they wished for the daub floor and thatched roof of home, for the warmth and comfort of neighbours who must by now have given them up for dead.

On the eve of their execution the governor of the jail, as was customary, paid the Mullaghmore men a last visit. During the course of the discussion that followed they discovered that the governor was a good friend and old schoolmate of Colonel Dickson

of Tullaghan, a townland in the neighbouring county of Leitrim. Moved by their plight he granted the three men a stay of execution telling them that he would contact Dickson. If the colonel replied with a reference of good conduct for the prisoners, they could go free.

Another month went by. The three men, buoyed now by a glimmer of hope, waited for the fateful answer. In

time Colonel Dickson responded to the Governor's inquiry with the word that the men were indeed hard-working fishermen from Mullaghmore. On the strength of this testimony they were set at liberty and given free passage to Derry quay.

From there the men walked home where they told and retold their fantastic story of '98 for many a year. The names of the three men, whose

story I now tell, were Barry, Mc Cannon and Kelly.

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Author's note: This account was told to me by Bernie Barry of Bunduff, RIP. It had been handed down from generation to generation in his family from 1798. His ancestor was the Barry mentioned in the account.

Coal mining in Arigna

By Michael Lavin

On the other side of the mountain from where I live in Sligo is the area known as Arigna, which was a coal mining area until it closed in 1990. The biggest mining company was known as Arigna Collieries Ltd owned by the Leydon family. There were also a number of smaller mines in the area such as Flynn and Lehany, Tiernans, Noonan and Greens.

The main road into the mine was known as the 'straight road' and the other smaller roads were known as 'branches'. The coal was cut at the coalface by the coal cutters lying on their sides. These men were known as 'brushers' and also prepared the

mine for the next day's work. They also used the explosives and extended the roads. The hutches were filled and pushed out to the straight road by men known as 'drawers'. The hutches were then linked to a wire rope which pulled them outside by means of a small engine.

It was then tipped on to a screen, which kept the big coal on top and let the smaller stuff down below, sometimes known as 'slack' or 'culm'. Timber props were sometimes used to keep up the roof in weaker spots.

Some of the coal was sold locally, some to local hospitals, schools and other small businesses. However the

biggest customer was Arigna Power Station, which was used to produce electricity. It was built in 1958 on the shores of Lough Allen and was the first major power station generating station in Connacht.

The power station closed down in 1991, leaving the mine without its biggest customer, and this along with coal being imported led to the closure of the mines. There is a place known as the Arigna Mining Experience which has an exhibition and an underground tour by former miners. It attracts a lot of visitors in cars and bus tours. Every year at Christmas, Santa comes to the mine and that also is a big attraction for the children to see Santa underground.

Some years before the mine closed the coal was taken out by 'opencast', which means the bog and the rock was taken out from the top with big machinery to get at the coal below. This in turn led to a new industry starting in the form of a stone quarry. The quarry in turn employed some of the men laid off by the closure of the coalmines. The stone from the quarry is used in the making of roads and in foundations for local housing projects.

The quarry supplies some decorative stone too for garden edges, graves tops and such things. Recently Kilronan Castle was renovated and sixty houses were built in the grounds and the local quarry supplied the stone.



The Arigna power plant

Gathering at Carrowmore in 3,500 BC

By Lynda Hart

2013 was the year of the ‘Gathering’, when people came back to Ireland to reunite with family and friends and to trace long-forgotten roots. It was a great success, with many more visitors coming to the ‘home place’. But is this gathering of family, of clan, a new phenomenon? By looking at one of our most ancient Sligo sites we can now say that people have been ‘gathering’ on this island for a very long time.

Carrowmore is a Neolithic ritual site that nestles in the centre of the Cuil Iorra peninsula, a landscape dominated by Knocknarea mountain with the famous Maeve’s Cairn at its summit. The surrounding area has ancient remains from every pre-historic era.

Carrowmore is a passage-tomb complex, of which there are four main sites in Ireland – Carrowmore and Carrowkeel in County Sligo and Lough Crew and the Boyne Valley complex (Newgrange, Knowth, Dowth) in County Meath.

Carrowmore, unlike the other three sites, is not considered a ‘classic’ passage-tomb complex, as it does not have the cruciform chambers of the other sites. This may be due to the fact it is older than the other sites and it is where the Neolithic in Ireland began. Most passage tombs are dated from 3500 BC to 3000 BC, but recent dating from bone-pins taken from Carrowmore have placed the monuments from 3700 BC to 3100 BC(1), making it not only one of the earliest Neolithic sites in Ireland but also in Great Britain.

The Carrowmore complex consists of a large central chamber named Listoghil, surrounded by small satellite monuments. There are approximately 29 remaining in various conditions. Some are as good as the day they were first constructed, others a few stones in a field. Since 2003 Listoghil has

been surrounded by a reconstructed cairn (mound of rocks). In antiquity a cairn of sorts covered the central monument, but when it was first constructed and what it looked like remain a mystery.

The central chamber at Listoghil is a box-like structure. Like all the monuments at Carrowmore it has five upright stones with a capstone resting upon them. Listoghil also has a front ‘blocking’ stone which is pointed.

Also like the rest of the small monuments, Listoghil was probably free-standing when it was built. An artificial platform about 48 metres in diameter was first built, then the chamber placed upon it and it was surrounded by up to three stone circles.

In 2008 it was discovered that on two occasions during the year the sun enters the chamber at Listoghil.

Our Neolithic ancestors were the first farmers. They were far more ‘in tune’ with nature than we have been for a very long time. The seasons were their calendars. Through the subtle changes that start each season they knew when it was time to sow, tend and reap their crops. They would have been able to tell the best times for the animals to breed or to be killed for food.

Today, the beginnings of the seasons

are still marked, some by saint’s days (St Brigid) or by festivals (Garland Sunday). The pagan Gaelic calendar gave the names to these seasonal periods. Samhain (beginning of winter), Imbolc (spring), Bealtaine (summer) and Lunasa (autumn).

To our ancestors Samhain would have the most important of these seasons. (This is not to say that the names or the exact times of these periods were known to the ancients, but by using the path of the sun and the seasonal changes they could mark the seasonal cusps).

At Newgrange, we can see one of the most impressive sun alignments at the winter solstice. On the shortest day of the year (21 December), at dawn, the rising sun travels down the passage and illuminates the chamber.

Stonehenge, possibly the most iconic of monuments, was known to mark the sunrise on the longest day of the year (21 June). Recent studies by the Riverside Project have shown that the primary use for the site and the surrounding areas was at the winter solstice sunset, and that huge gatherings would take place at this time with feasting and people and animals travelling from as far away as Cornwall and Scotland.

Back at Carrowmore on the



The sun rises in the saddle of the mountains

morning of 31 October, 2008, my colleague Pdraig Meehan waited for the sunrise. As the sky lightened the first rays of the sun began to appear. (2) Looking towards the Ballgawley mountains there is a 'saddle' or dip. At each end of this saddle is a natural marker, and as the sun begins to rise it did so in this saddle between the two markers.

As this was happening something remarkable began in the chamber at Listoghil. The sun struck the pointed front stone causing a spear of light to travel across the underside of the capstone, and then as the sun rose higher the whole of the chamber was filled with an orange glow that emanated from the monument, as if it were filled by fire. This lasted for about ten minutes and then it was gone. Within a few days the sun's path has taken it away from the saddle and the tomb, moving along the Ballygawley mountains until at mid-winter it comes to a standstill. Then it starts to make its way back, rising again in the saddle at around 9/10 February and again lighting the chamber at Listoghil.

The end of October and the beginning of November mark Samhain, the seasonal cusp between the end of autumn and the beginning of winter. For our Neolithic ancestors this would have been a time of great importance. The crops would have been harvested. The fruits and berries would now be coming to an end, spoiled by the first harsh frosts, and animals would need to be culled. Only the strongest of the breeding stock would be kept as there would not be enough food to keep them all through the winter months.

So this was a time for coming together, for gathering. The excess meat and crops would be eaten at great feasts. Were the monuments at Carrowmore built to celebrate this important time? Did our ancestors travel great distances bringing not only the fruits of their labours but also the bones of their ancestors to be interred in these small, simple but hugely important tombs?



A tomb at Carrowmore

Ancestor worship was possibly the single most important part of these people's lives. Their belief in the power of their ancestors drove them on, clearing and working the land with their stone tools and antler picks.

Once arrived at Carrowmore there was plenty of time to feast and to party, but also to reflect and honour the ancestors that played such an important part in their everyday life. There would have been music, singing, chanting, clapping and shouting. Musical instruments could have been made from the bones and horns of their cattle. Unions would have been made and families and friends re-united.

Excavations at the central monument showed that on each side of the chamber large fires had been lit, ceremonial fires that warmed the bones of both the living and the dead. These gatherings would have lasted for many days and nights, and when the sun rose and entered the chamber our ancestors would have honoured their ancestors.

When the Neolithic era ended these monuments were not abandoned. We see re-use in both the Bronze and Iron Ages. Different belief doctrines, but still a sacred place where the bones of the ancestors could be placed and revered. The sunrise was still important in the Bronze Age

and marked at another monument at Carrowmore which is in line with the central chamber. It is possible that the first people to inhabit the island of Ireland, the Mesolithic people, also marked the seasonal cusp by watching the sunrise in the Ballygawleys.

Today people travel from all over the world to visit Carrowmore, some because it is an important site in prehistory, others to tick it off the 'what we saw in Ireland' list.

For others it has a deeper, spiritual draw, a place for meditation and reflection.

Carrowmore has always been a special, sacred place where the bones of our ancestors sleep in peace.

A great deal of faith in the Irish weather is needed and on the 31st October and the 10th February usually only grey skies prevail but on those dates there is a gathering of people hopeful of seeing the sunrise at Listoghil as their ancestors did 5500 years ago.

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(1) Bergh, S and Hensey, R., 2013 – *Unpicking the chronology of Carrowmore*

(2) Meehan, P, 2013 – *Listoghil: A Seasonal Alignment?*

Some 19th century Sligo townland maps in the National Library of Ireland

By Martin A Timoney

The National Library of Ireland, on Kildare St, Dublin 2, is open to all. You need ID and you apply in person for a reader's ticket. They take your photo and you get a card to wear around your neck as you enter into a wonderful store of Irish culture.

The Reading Room is in the main building on the north side of Dáil Square and the Manuscript Room is down at the TCD end of Kildare St, the building with the monkeys playing billiards on a sloping table. The Photographic Archive is in Temple Bar. The Genealogical Advisory Service, where people can be advised in their pursuit of recent or historical family trees, is in the main building.

You read the books or manuscripts in the reading rooms, you cannot take them away to read at your leisure, but the reading rooms are very conducive to doing research. You can copy material under certain conditions but older works deserve extra care and it is best to let the seasoned staff do the handling in order to protect the books.

NLI was opened in 1890. Under copyright law a copy of all publications from within the State are to be sent to NLI. This in itself has built up a great store of books but the collection includes many earlier works acquired through purchase and donation. There are also manuscripts, microfilms, photographs and all sorts of materials on our country's past.

The staff at the duty desk are fountains of help and information and often they have come back to me suggesting other works that might be of use and telling me of others researching similar fields. Their personal touch has been of great benefit more than once.

Researching

The Reading Room and the Manuscript

Room have many reference works on the open shelves and many index volumes – 'finding aids' as some call them – that allow you to spend endless hours in research. The large brown Guard Books and the Hayes Catalogues have served and continue to serve the people of Ireland. Today one can access this index information online through the website, nli.ie, but that method of doing research is not quite as effective as using the hard copy. How often have I found a significant or long-lost reference in the Guard Books while looking for something else! Before using a computer search engine you must know what you are looking for and someone must have presented that information in the way you are searching!

Catherine Fagan Chase

One of these indexes that I have often found very useful is the Map Index, a bound typescript of about fifty pages. Recently I got it out in desperation while confirming that Catherine Fagan, Dr Kieran D O'Connor's ancestor in the 1730s, was from Felton outside of Boyle, and not Feltrim, Co Dublin, as had been believed from a mention in one of Charles O'Connor's letters. Felton was confirmed on two maps, 14A1(30) Patrick's Well for 1824, and 14A2(7) Sandhill for 1834, but this placename is not of a townland today.

Rockingham Estate Maps

That Map Index brought me to three large volumes of manuscript maps of the Lorton King Harman Rockingham estates around Boyle. These three volumes, 14A1, 14A2 and 14A3, have well over two hundred mainly 19th-century hand-drawn maps. The titles suggest that the first two are of Roscommon and the third is

of Sligo but this is not consistent. The binding seems to date to 1904 when Alex Dickie signed it on 25th January of that year. Considering the fire at Rockingham House on 10th September 1957, are we not so lucky that these maps have been in a secure long-term store since the early 20th century at least?

The maps are large, 50 cm by 70 cm, though some are as much as two metres across. They generally show a single townland or part of one, though some show several townlands.

The scale is given, not as a bar scale, but normally as '20 perches to 1 inch'. Because the originals have been creased in the past our reproductions here may not be consistent across any one map.

There is also an 18th century series of 36 maps of this Sligo and Roscommon estate, NLI 21F13, by Thomas Cuttle and further maps are among the Longfield maps, NLI 21F43 to 21F45 of this area.

Estate Maps in Themselves

These maps are mainly from a time before the Ordnance Survey 6" maps that record our county in the 1830s. They are unique, painstaking, ornate pieces of work, worthy of being put on display in the Big House. Today, these historical documents are often traded as antiques and left to fade on a drawing room wall. Many have the cartographer's name at the foot of an elaborately written title and the devices are works of art in themselves. I often wonder about the descendants of these surveyors or cartographers, artists in their own right. Not all maps are dated, though the cartographic style may allow a future researcher to extrapolate date and cartographer in some cases. In some instances the presence of a road might date a map.

It is possible that some of the post-1838 maps have been copied from those sheets using a pantograph, those were the days before photocopying.

These maps show a landscape, inherited from long before the present owners. They proudly say 'This is my property, where I get rent from; these people are my subjects.' They also tell the next generation what they have inherited from the past, and what they hold to pass to the next generation.

The orientation diagrams, cardinal-points, can be beautiful works of art, and we often wish that the map detailing was equally detailed. The maps were for specific purpose and were orientated to suit that purpose. North, normally at the top, can be at the side or the bottom, or tilted at an angle, to accommodate the shape of a townland on the rectangular sheet of paper.

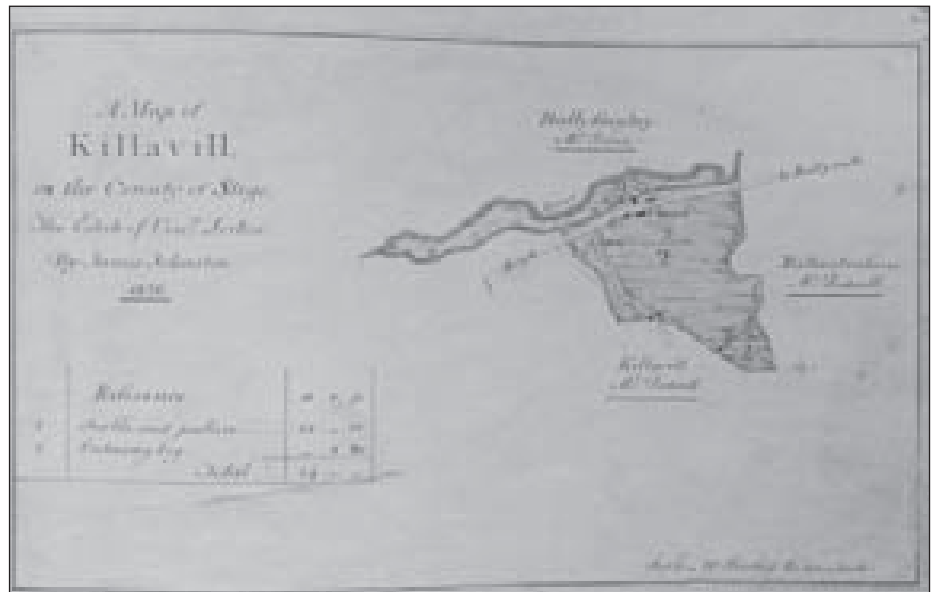
Spellings can vary, even on one map, and some are rendered phonetically. Local placenames tell us so much of our local geography.

What is shown

These maps show the fields, their acreages and potential usage. Heights are not given, but mountains are shown by shading and rivers and lakes are also shown. Bogs, bottoms and heathy mountain and other poor land are indicated – these maps were for collecting rents. They are rent potential maps, not far off 'land use potential' maps, a theme frequently heard from Brendán MacAódha, my Geography professor. Houses, buildings and the occasional monument are shown. Surrounding townlands with their owners' names are given. Some maps have properties numbered; hopefully the corresponding lists have survived.

Very few monuments are shown. Absence of features does not mean that they were not there, the content was selected. To a geographer or historian they are not just works of art but a record or snapshot of a small area at a point in time.

The nuggets of undated penciled additional information can be infuriating, such as changes of acreages. Some show the 'intended



Killavill in 1826, Copyright National Library of Ireland

line' of a new road or 'road under construction' as that on the map of Derrygollagh. Even more informative is 'New road from Templehouse made to this' and then further north 'Intended road' for the next section of road leading north to the Tubbercurry to Coollaney road. Map 14A3(49) of Brougher in the Ballinafad Valley, surveyed 1843, shows the 'Old Road' which is of medieval or earlier date and today is a most beautiful waking road and to the south of it 'New Intended Line of Road'. Several clachans or clusters of houses are shown. It is most regrettable that milestones are not shown considering Foran's recognition of the milestone on Two Mile Hill in Ballyglass on the Sligo to Dublin road through Calry (Foran 2013, 298; Timoney 2013-2014, 19-20). Dr Arnold Horner suggests that it dates from the period 1630 to 1750 and has something to do with Grand Juries.

Making Use of these maps

Landlord, tenant and family lineages can be analysed. The historical information in these maps can be used in conjunction with the Griffith Valuation, Tithe Aplotment records and the Registry of Deeds. The Synge Survey of 1749 covers the Dioceses of Elphin, and so the eastern part of Co Sligo, though one has to advise cross-checking the original manuscript version with the published 2004

edition. A very useful exercise for a local nineteenth century local historian would be to index the 229 14A 1-2-3 maps and the Cuttle volume as well, picking up not just the places given in the map titles but also the names of places, features and people.

Some of the Sligo Maps Killavill

Map 14A3(3) is Killavill by James Johnston in 1826. The property is shown rotated clockwise about 45 degrees. It shows a property of 13a arable and 3r-20p of cut-away bog and totalling 14a; the total area of Killavill today is 137a. Somewhere there may still exist an account book telling us of who held the lands. Irwin owns for Ballyfaighey across the river, Dodwell for Ballantrufane and Killavill. This map of 1826 shows four buildings close together. There is a mill and a house on the west side of the road. On the east side of the road a house and a single-part chapel is shown close to and parallel to the road. One minor road winds its way NW to Ballyfahey across the Black River. The other road goes SE and has a building either side of the road where it exits the property.

By 1838 the OS map of Killavill shows three features. Beside the Mill Ruin a Kiln is shown. The R. C. Chapel is shown as an L-shaped building with the main part parallel to the road, as on the 1826 map but with an extension eastwards from the

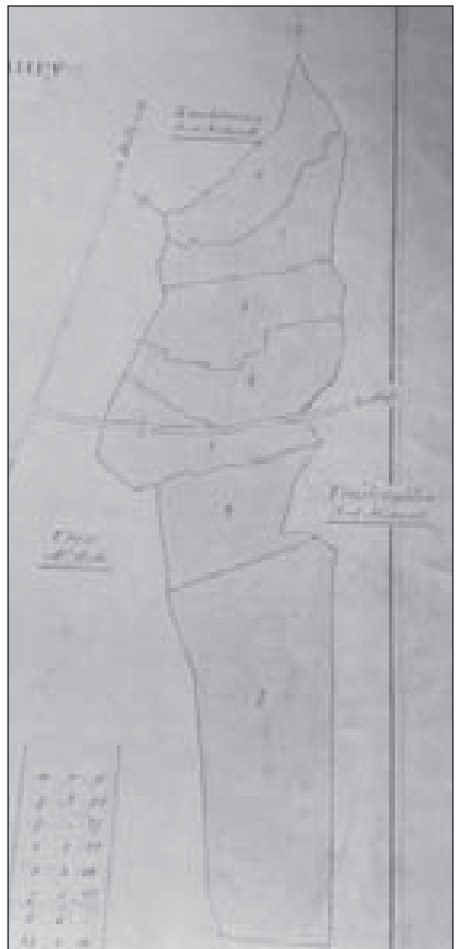
north end. By the OS 1:2,500 plan of 1911-1912, the mill is gone as is the old church and a new R. C. Church is shown further in off the road. The field boundaries of 1826 are reflected in these later maps and in the present day field system.

This map is most important in that it shows a chapel here in 1826, two years before Catholic Emancipation; the present Keash church dates to 1809 and even that had a predecessor from at least the 18th century (Timoney 2009-2010). Cliffoney also has a pre-Emancipation chapel (Palmerston Estate map, NLI 16F17, of 1814-1815).

Tonaponra

Map 14A3(1) is, regrettably, an undated map of Toniponra. The 39 acres mapped are parcelled out among Mat (or Mall) Cryan 15 acres, Michl Gafney 14 acres, Domnk Dowd & Co. 5 acres, and finally (Wm) Bell 5 acres; the mountainside is not mapped.

Map 14A1(26), dated 1822 is titled Tonipoanry, though pencilled



Toniponra, nowadays Tonaponra, in 1822; Copyright NLI

corrections give us Toniponra. The 72 acres with the exception of about 24 acres of 'Heathy mountain' is shared out among six holdings of 'arable and pasture', each between 7 and 9 acres. These are, from NW to SE, Bartly Dowd, Domnick and John Brannen, Michael Gaffney, Bartly Dowd and Edwd Gaffney, James Brannen & Mannion, and, finally, James Conlan & Keelty. Four of these six properties were held in a joint partnership. The surrounding townlands were Cross held by Mr Duke, Knocknacroy held by Lord Kirkwall, and Toniloughlin held by Lord Kirkwall.

Toniloughlin is not a designated townland now; it is shown on 14A1(26) as being within Drumnagranshy and to the east of the road from Cross townland in Keash through to the Meeting House at Graniamore. Local knowledge today, from Paddy Brennan, Tommy and Phil Dyer and Mary Dyer, is that it was of about 25 acres but that it was to the west of that road and immediately north of the western part of Tonaponra in Drumnagranshy. One part of it goes by the name Sleibhín.

Dr Conchubhar Ó Cruaíoch informs me that the Placenames Branch has no historical evidence for 'Toniloughlin', but he notes that Lochlainn occurs as a personal name among the Mhic Dhonncha and he suggests something like Tamhnaigh Lochlainn, 'Lochlainn's patch of green land (usually surrounded by

poorer land)' as a precursor.

Lurgan

The 1822 map of Lurga, 14A3(22) gives us Lurgan, 111 acres between Feenagh Lough and Bunamuck Lough. Access to this drumlin townland was from the south. On the 1838 OS map that access is shown as being by a footbridge at this point. It seems as if the settlement focus was at the centre of the townland but no house is shown. Five parcels of land are detailed in the index; only one is attributed, No 5, and that is to a Mr John Taaffe. Lord Kirkwall held Kingsfort and Clooneen, Lord Lorton held Feenagh and Knockbrack.

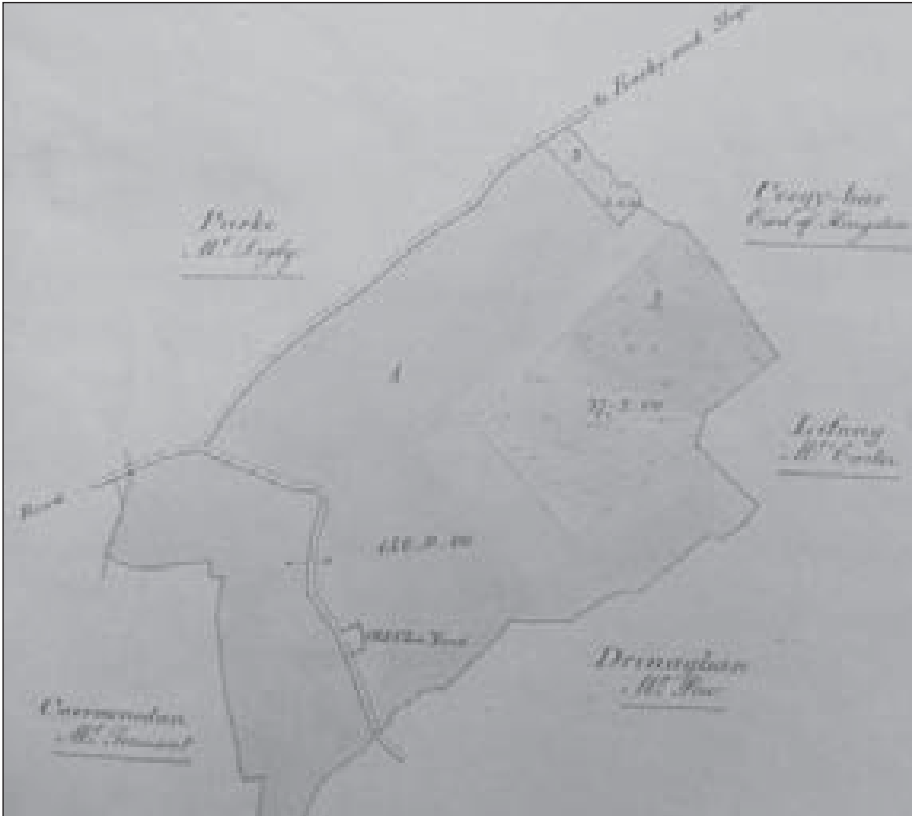
A more colourful map of Lurgan, 14A3(25), is the survey work of JD Hall from 1827 for Lord Lorton. This map has a decorative north-point, adorned with a quiver of arrows. The map is shown as being NE-SW while in fact the townland is NW-SE. The land is held by Andr Baker Esq, and four Scanlans: Laurence, Thomas, Laurence Jr and John. There are variations of property boundaries between these two maps, particularly around the centre where three buildings are now shown in 1827; two or three buildings are shown further south in the townland.

Kilglass

The map on the left side of 14A3(23) shows Kilglass for 1823 by James Johnston.



Lurgan in 1822; Copyright NLI



Kilglass in 1823; Copyright NLI

Kilglass is a townland of 190a to the north of Inishcrone. The owners of the surrounding townlands are Park Mr Digby, Coogy-bar Earl of Kingston, Lefany Mr Carter, Drinaghan Mr Pew and Carrownedan Mr Tennant. Coogy-bar is nowadays Quigabar.

The key gives ‘Arable and pasture’, ‘Heathy bottoms’ and ‘School House tenement’, a parcel of 2a 2r 30p, up in the north corner of the townland, on the east side of the road towards Easky. The map gives ‘Old Chu Yard’ with the little block outside the graveyard being the medieval church itself.



Emlifad, nowadays Emlaghfad, in 1823; Copyright NLI

Emlaghfad

The map on the right of 14A3(23) shows Emlifad, nowadays Emlaghfad for 1823 by James Johnston.

The surrounding owners are Woodfield Lord Kirkwall, Keenaghan, Kingsfort and Cloonagun Lord Kirkwall, Carrowcaleany Lord Lorton and Crookgrana Mr Dodwell. Crookgrana is Knockgrania and Carrowcaleany is Carrowmacleany. The index tells us of a 20a Glebe in the north of the townland. The rest is shown in the index as arable and pasture, 322a, and two twenty-acre bogs. The plot for the graveyard is shown as a trapezium but no buildings are shown. The present road up to the graveyard from the SE continues around the graveyard towards Ballymote and a minor road is shown continuing NW on into the fields.

The road from Ballymote is shown as continuing SE towards ‘Keshcurran’.

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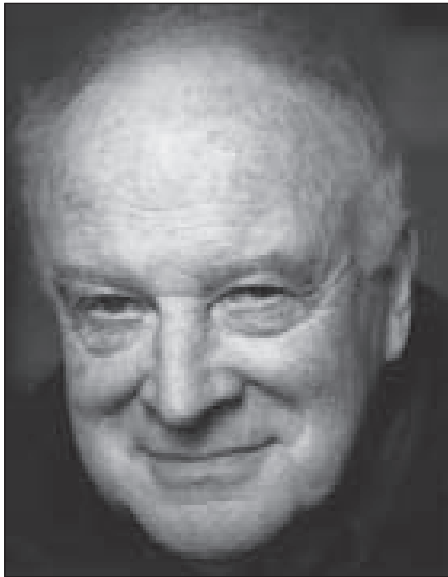
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Deaths of two notable Ballymote residents Jim Kielty and Bernie Dwyer

By John Coleman



Bernie Dwyer

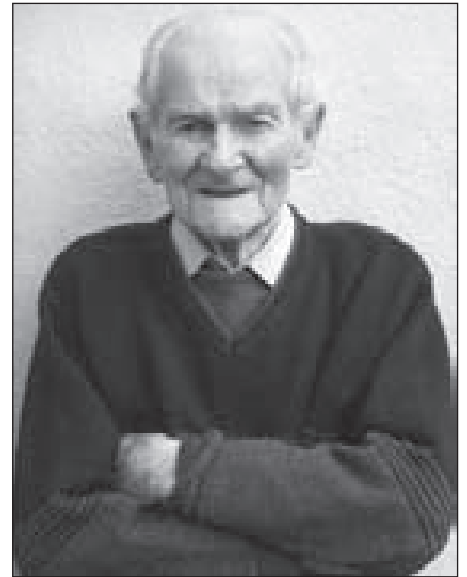
It is appropriate that the *Corran Herald* should mark the passing of Ballymote's oldest resident Jim Kielty (born 1917) who died last year and Bernie Dwyer (born 1936) who died earlier this year. Jim and Bernie lived all their lives on O'Connell Street and both featured in James Fennell and Turtle Bunbury's beautiful 2009 book *Vanishing Ireland - Further Chronicles of a Disappearing world*. James Fennell's superb photographs of both Jim and Bernie are reproduced here.

Jim lived through a period of extraordinary change and he loved to recount stories from memories of his youth and of the earlier history of the town in which he took great pride. He told Turtle Bunbury the history of the important Norman castle and of the Book of Ballymote, held in the Royal Irish Academy. Of particular interest in this anniversary year of the commencement of the First World War, Jim spoke of traumatised veterans visiting his father's pub and he recalled Martin Moffatt, a

private in the Leinster regiment who won the Victoria Cross.

Bernie was passionate about history and was a devoted supporter of Ballymote Heritage Weekends, particularly enjoying the coach outings to visit historic sites. But Bernie's interests were wider than local or national heritage and he loved to travel and see for himself the great cultural sites of Europe and the Middle East. He loved to talk of his visits to Rome and Athens. I remembered telling Bernie that I had visited Cannes in the south of France and Bernie remarked 'there's a very nice hotel on the beach' – and indeed he was right.

Bernie was particularly proud of the beautiful and unique shop front of the family business, a product of local art and craft. He knew the importance of preserving the painted wooden doors and windows in their distinctive blue colour and would have been horrified by their replacement with PVC. He ensured that the hall door and the gateway were appropriately



Jim Kielty

repaired but sadly did not have the funds to maintain the shop doors and windows and these are now in need of some loving care. It would be a great monument to Bernie that this rare surviving important historic façade and shop front be preserved and restored as it is such a beautiful feature of the town.

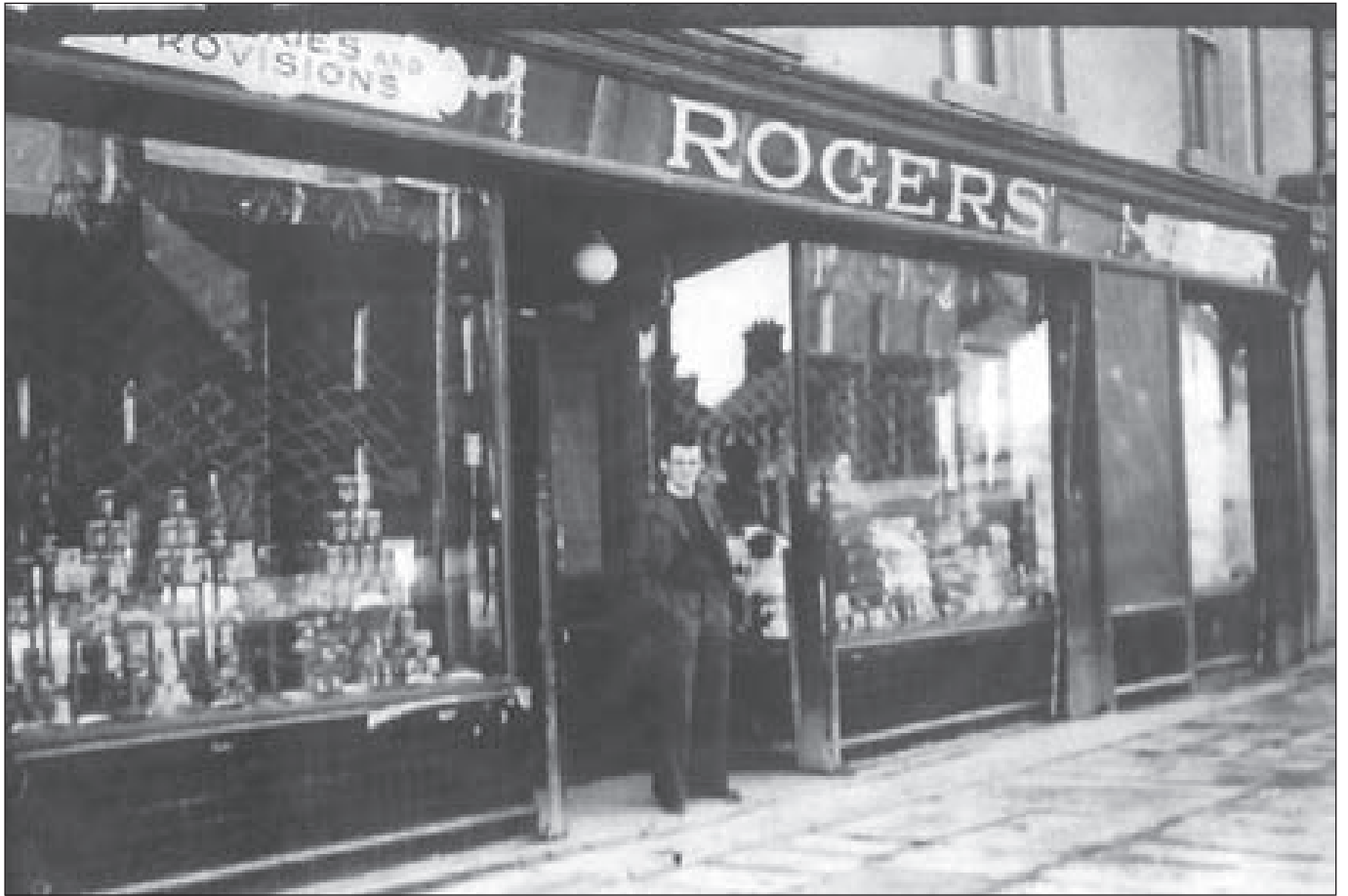


Bernie at his shop

Vanished Shop Fronts - 2

Photographs collected for the Gathering photography exhibition (For Vanished Shop Fronts - 1, see issue No.46)





‘Sincere but Mistaken Men’ – the letters of Joseph McGarrity

By Michael Farry

Sunday, 30 July 1911, was a glorious day, much appreciated by those attending the various Garland Sunday outings in County Sligo, including the annual pilgrimage to the holy well, Tubbernault, beside Sligo town. Among those who attended were two south Sligo friends, employees at Achonry Co-operative Creamery, who stopped on the way to take photographs at the Teeling monument outside Collooney. This monument to the 1798 Irish and French insurgents who defeated an English force nearby had been erected as a result of the centenary celebrations of 1898.

While the men were taking photographs a motor stopped. The occupants, an Irish American couple touring the country, engaged the men in conversation, which, in view of the venue, naturally turned to politics and nationalism. The Americans and Irish discovered that their attitudes to current political developments coincided and they exchanged names and addresses. Later, when the Americans returned home, the men engaged in a short correspondence.

The Sligo men were 24-year-old James Marren of Carrownedan, Mullinabreena, and 18-year-old Thomas O’Grady, Doomore, Cloonacool. Both were farmers’ sons. O’Grady was assistant manager at Achonry creamery and Marren was also employed there. The Irish Americans were Joseph McGarrity (1874-1940) and his wife Kathryn. Joseph was born in Carrickmore, County Tyrone, emigrated to the USA in 1892 and settled in Philadelphia. The couple had married in Philadelphia in June 1911, and their Irish visit was part of an extended European honeymoon. Joseph was a successful businessman and a leading member of Clan na Gael, the Irish republican organisation



Joseph McGarrity driving his father John. Taken in Ireland, date unknown.

(Joseph McGarrity Collection. Digital Library@Villanova University).

whose objective it was to assist the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) to achieve an independent Ireland.

O’Grady took a photograph for Mrs McGarrity, presumably of the couple at the monument, and they parted. The men attended the pattern at Tubbernault and the McGarritys continued their Irish tour, sending a postcard to O’Grady from Belfast.

In the McGarrity Papers in the National Library, Dublin, there are five letters to McGarrity, three from Marren and two from O’Grady, and a draft of a reply from McGarrity to O’Grady. The letters were written during the period December 1911 to May 1912 and we have no way of knowing if the correspondence continued after that time. McGarrity wrote at least three letters to one or other of the two men and also sent some copies of the weekly newspaper, *Gaelic American*, ‘A journal devoted to the cause of Irish independence,

Irish literature, and the interests of the Irish race.’ McGarrity supported this newspaper, which was run by the Irish American Fenian, John Devoy.

The surviving correspondence, though short, is interesting in that it shows that in spite of the impression given in local nationalist newspapers such as the *Sligo Champion* and the *Sligo Nationalist*, there was some dissatisfaction with the activities, aims and achievements of the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) under its leader John Redmond.

On the surface County Sligo was thoroughly loyal to the party with a well-organized, active, county-wide network of parish-based branches of the United Irish League (UIL). These operated as constituency branches of the IPP and their monthly meetings passed regular resolutions of support for Redmond and the IPP.

Neither Marren nor O’Grady supported Redmond or the IPP.



A postcard included by Thomas O'Grady in his letter to McGarrity, 14 January 1912. It shows the Teeling Monument and the Catholic Cathedral in Sligo. (*National Library of Ireland*)

Both were steeped in the tradition of revolutionary nationalism and their heroes were generally physical force men – Wolfe Tone, Michael Dwyer and Robert Emmet. They contrasted the idealism and selflessness of these with the IPP politicians of the day. Their ultimate aim was the complete independence of Ireland. Their reading matter included John Mitchel's *Jail Journal* and *History of Ireland*, and the poems and stories of William Rooney. Marren told McGarrity that he had just read George Bermingham's *Northern Iron*, published in 1907, a historical novel about the United Irishmen's uprising in 1798 in which the protagonist is the son of a Presbyterian clergyman. They read radical newspapers, *Irish Freedom* and *Sinn Féin*. The former was published monthly by the IRB in Dublin from 1910 until it was suppressed in 1914. It was controlled by Tom Clarke and Seán McDiarmada, later signatories of the 1916 Proclamation, and was edited by Bulmer Hobson. *Sinn Féin*, a weekly, was edited by Arthur Griffith, published between 1906 and 1914.

Marren told McGarrity that on holidays in mid-May 1912 he visited places of separatist nationalist interest including Limerick and its famous

Treaty Stone, 'that silent witness of British perfidy.' He also visited the memorial to the Fenian Peter O'Neill Crowley, in Kilclooney Wood, between Mitchelstown and Kildorrery, County Cork. O'Neill Crowley had been killed during the Fenian rising of 1867.

O'Grady praised Marren calling him 'a staunch patriot and as sound an Irishman as ever trod this glorious sod', and noted that Marren had been engaged in promoting the purchase of Irish-made goods, in teaching Irish in the area and in distributing radical newspapers such as *Irish Freedom*.

The correspondence coincided with the final stages of drafting and the publication of the 1912 Home Rule Bill. Redmond's alliance with the Liberals had resulted in the 1911 Parliament Act which removed the House of Lords' right to veto bills passed in the Commons and meant that the upper house could not block a home rule bill. The Home Rule Bill was being drafted during 1911 and while the *Sligo Champion* was certain that it would be a good bill, it showed little interest in the details of its provisions. Both Sligo MPs, Thomas Scanlan for North Sligo and John O'Dowd for South Sligo, rallied constituents for what Scanlan called

'the last battle for Home Rule.'

O'Dowd told a South Sligo UIL executive meeting in Ballymote in December 1911: 'We are in sight of the promised land and now stand on the threshold of freedom . . . which will enable each and every one of us to live in a free and happy Ireland, governed by Ireland's own laws and representatives subject only to an Irish executive.' He also paid tribute to the importance of Irish America to the IPP and its constitutional fight for independence: 'If it were not for Ireland's standing army represented by the millions of her exiled children scattered all over the globe, the Irish Party could never have brought you so far on the road to freedom.'

When the third Home Rule Bill was eventually introduced in April 1912 the *Sligo Champion* welcomed it as 'far and away the best Home Rule measure that Ireland has ever had a chance of obtaining', and the IPP and local MPs supported it unreservedly. In his letter to Marren, McGarrity was scathing about the bill calling it a 'pig in a poke'. Referred to Redmond's statement 'that it will make the Irish loyal and the Empire secure', he said 'I would rather see Ireland sink in the sea than to see her loyal to England.' Marren agreed: 'It is not even Home Rule in its ordinary restricted sense, and certainly it is nothing in the nature of a national settlement . . . Why Ireland should give up her high and holy ideas to willingly become a province of any Empire but above all of Britain's pirate empire seems too unintelligible.'

This correspondence also coincided with McGarrity's campaign against the Abbey Players performances of *The Playboy of the Western World* in Philadelphia. The January 1907 performances of Synge's play at the Abbey Theatre had been disrupted by some nationalists who denounced the play as a libel upon Irish peasant men and, worse still, upon Irish peasant girlhood. When in 1911 the Abbey Players embarked on an American tour, with *The Playboy* among the

repertoire, many Irish-American groups expressed alarm regarding the potentially harmful effects of *The Playboy* on the image of the Irish in America. Performances in Boston, Chicago and New York went ahead without serious incident. However in Philadelphia in January 1912 McGarrity was the prime mover in repeated audience disturbances and he was instrumental in having the actors brought to court to answer charges of engaging in a public performance that was 'lascivious, obscene, indecent, sacrilegious or immoral.' The case was dismissed.

McGarrity mentioned the incidents in his letters to the Sligo pair and coverage of the disturbances appeared in the *Gaelic American* newspaper which he sent them. The story was also covered in Irish national newspapers and in *Irish Freedom*. Both Sligo correspondents praised McGarrity for his actions in 'teaching Yeats a lesson', O'Grady adding that he felt 'ashamed that we ever feathered [fathered?] such a vandalised ruffian in Sligo.'

Marren and O'Grady were strong supporters of the Irish language. O'Grady told McGarrity that 'Mr Marren has also made a great headway in this district in Irish teaching.' The 1911 Census Marren family return was completed in Irish though the father signed it in English. All the family were returned as being able to speak Irish. The handwriting suggests that it was James who filled the form in Irish. Their 1901 form had been completed in English. Marren opened each of his three letters with 'A Chara Dhillis' and signed his name in Irish to the first two but signed James Marren to the third. The file contains the envelope addressed by Marren to McGarrity in December 1911 on which he wrote McGarrity's name in Irish (Seosamh Mac Oireachtaigh, Uasal) and beneath in English.

McGarrity encouraged the pair to continue their work in spreading the separatist doctrine. 'You young men of Ireland have the keeping of



A cartoon published in *The Gaelic American* newspaper, 2 December 1911, making fun of Yeats and the Abbey Players, 'protectors' of the playboy in the USA

the national spirit in your hands. On you and you alone depends Ireland's future.' He advised them to write to Patrick McCartan, Carrickmore, Tyrone, an Irish republican who emigrated to the USA as a young man and became a member of Clan na Gael in Philadelphia. He returned to Ireland in 1905 and continued working closely with the IRB.

The ideas espoused by Marren, O'Grady and McGarrity were not popular in 1911/12 when the vast majority of Irish people supported the IPP and expected that party to achieve Home Rule, which would give a limited form of self determination. The attitudes and ideals they shared seemed out-of-date relics of the previous century. But the irony is that within seven years these very attitudes appeared to sweep the country with the rise of Sinn Féin.

By the time of its victory in the 1918 election the network of UIL branches in County Sligo had been replaced by a similar number of Sinn Féin clubs which operated in much the same way. Marren was indeed correct when he told McGarrity that 'an exceptional opportunity will come for those who are in earnest in preaching Irish Independence', but even he couldn't foresee the succession of events which would ensure that opportunity.

While it appears that neither Marren nor O'Grady were members of the IRB or Sinn Féin at the time of this correspondence both seem to have become active soon afterwards when Alec McCabe organised both organisations in the area.

McCabe was born in 1886 in Keash, south Sligo, where his mother was a primary teacher. He also became a teacher and was appointed principal

of Drumnagranchy National School, Keash, in 1910. According to Tom O'Grady's witness statement to the Military Bureau, Marren became IRB centre for Mullinabreena and he himself became centre for Cloonacool. Both were involved in the rapid growth of Sinn Féin in 1917. Marren, with Owen Tansey of Gurteen, became joint secretary of the Sinn Féin South Sligo constituency organisation which was formed in April 1917 and later became the Comhairle Cheantair. In early 1918 Tom O'Grady wrote to Sinn Féin headquarters as assistant secretary of this body.

Marren, Alec McCabe, Pádraic Ó Domhnalláin and Owen Tansey went forward for nomination as Sinn Féin candidate for South Sligo constituency for the 1918 election. Tansy and Marren withdrew before the convention and McCabe was selected. McCabe had an easy victory in the election over the sitting MP, O'Dowd.

Marren and O'Dowd appear not to have taken prominent parts in the IRA campaign during the war of independence. In Tom O'Grady's witness statement he said that from 1918 on 'younger men ... took over from the men responsible for the early organisation of Republican activities' in his and surrounding areas. He would have been only 25 in 1918. Both however are listed on parish IRA company volunteer rolls for 1921, O'Grady for Cloonacool and Marren for Collooney.

At the end of December 1920 Marren was arrested by Crown forces in Collooney and was interned in Ballykinlar Camp, County Down. He was manager of the Collooney Co-Operative Creamery and one of the creamery's main supporters, Charles O'Hara, used his influence to try to have Marren released, saying he 'practically runs the business and the district will suffer much naturally if he has to be interned.' As far as he knew, he said, Marren did not belong to 'the extreme party.' O'Hara was told by Dublin Castle that if Marren

applied for parole his case would be looked into with a view to allowing him back to his employment. When Marren refused to submit his case for investigation O'Hara complained, 'I went to a good deal of trouble on your behalf.'

Joseph McGarrity continued his support for armed separatism until his death in 1940 and was involved with plans for the Easter Rising, support for Sinn Féin and the IRA during the war of independence, the anti-Treaty IRA in the civil war, and post civil war Sinn Féin and IRA activities.

Extracts from the Correspondence

16 December 1911: James Marren to McGarrity

During the coming years we require plain speaking on National questions and no man should be allowed to promise for this nation loyalty to the British Empire in return for an Act-of-Parliament-created legislature. Irishmen can never be loyal to the pirate Empire or any other Empire, and remain true Irishmen.

22 January 1912: James Marren to McGarrity

The work of the immediate present is to keep alive, and spread the doctrine of true Nationality. During recent years but scant attention was paid to those who upheld the flag of Irish Independence, the people looked on them as sincere but mistaken men – they in fact considered that it was the wrong time to raise such an issue, or at least to push it to the front.

A change in Irish conditions must however come during the present year, hence the need now for propaganda work. In the ordinary course of events the recent reaction would be likely to be followed by a period of activity, and considering the circumstances it is safe I think to say that an exceptional opportunity will come for those who are in earnest in preaching Irish Independence.

When it comes we must be prepared but the best thing we can do at

present is to endeavour to get a wider circulation for papers such as 'Irish Freedom' and 'Sinn Féin' also to recommend such books as Mitchel's 'Jail Journal' Rooney's works and others of a similar kind, and as 'Irish Freedom' puts it this month to turn ourselves into National firebrands this together with learning and speaking the Irish language and supporting Irish Industries is to my mind the work of the hour.

The Irish Language should not be left out of any programme we lay out for ourselves, for on no other foundation can an Irish nation be builded (sic). I have secured eight subscribers here for 'Irish Freedom' and hope during the summer to get more.

26 February 1912: Thomas O'Grady to McGarrity

After reading your patriotic letter many times in succession, I found a fresh zeal of Nationality creep around me as indeed it was one of the most interesting letters I have ever read, therefore; I owe you a great deal for all the information I have received. Your very nice remarks with regards to the outlook of political affairs in Ireland has my confirmation, as every word bears testimony to what I can see and read of every day in the political atmosphere.

I cannot tell you presently what kind of measure it will be and I am of the opinion that 25% of our MPs are equally as ignorant. The majority of the Irish people are anticipating great benefits by it, and as regards this point I cannot tell. Some people are predicting it will be only a subordinate Parliament thereby meaning that every bill to be passed in this so called Parliament will have to go before the English Parliament, and if this is so, every bill that will be passed for the good of Ireland will receive its mutilation as sure as the Treaty of Limerick was violated on the banks of the Shannon. In my opinion at the present time this is the Parliament 'that will have the green flag flying over it' as many times



The headline from *The Gaelic American*, 27 January 1912, regarding the protests in Philadelphia against the *Playboy*.

stated by our Irishmen on U.I.L. and A.O.H. platforms.

17 April 1912: McGarrity to Marren. Draft.

The Home Rule Bill is I fear a 'Pig in a Poke' and Mr Redmond's statement that it will make the Irish loyal and the Empire secure is if told as a truth by the man is nothing less than treason to Ireland. I say from my heart if Home Rule makes Ireland loyal may it never pass. I would rather see Ireland sink in the sea than to see here loyal to England.

... But bill or no bill you young men of Ireland have the keeping of the national spirit in your hands. On you and you alone depends Ireland's future.

27 May 1912: James Marren to McGarrity

I also saw by the Irish and American papers that you were looking after the 'Playboy of the Western World'. The staging of such plays in America or other countries should be resented. Filthy plays in any case should not be allowed, but when these plays are staged in foreign countries and when they are taken as typical of Irish life they are especially hurtful to our feelings. Irish America in this case did its part.

Since I wrote you last the long

promised Home Rule Bill has been introduced. It is not even Home Rule in its ordinary restricted sense, and certainly it is nothing in the nature of a national settlement. To offer the assistance of the Irish people in building up the British Empire in return for this miserable Bill is to offer what no man or no party has the right to offer. Why Ireland should give up her high and holy ideas to willingly become a province of any Empire but above all of Britain's pirate empire seems too unintelligible.

If the bill were offered to Parnell (sic) in his day he would probably have accepted it for what it was and make use of it to get more, in fact make it a stepping stone to Irish Independence. Parnell's word that 'no man can set bounds to the march of a nation' are conveniently forgotten by the men who claim to be his successors. The chief is in his grave and British Liberalism plays hide-and-go-seek with Ireland at Westminster. This to some extent is what might have been expected once Ireland began to bargain with England by sending members to her parliament thereby acknowledging English supremacy she was bound to whittle down her national demands. With a strong man at the helm possibly the party would not have fallen so low, with its present leaders and advisors it has cut itself away

from the movements of the past. But Redmond or no other man can sell to Britain the rising manhood of Ireland and the generations yet unborn. They will owe allegiance to Ireland and to Ireland alone.

I am writing to Dr McCartan and hope to be able to do something more to increase the circulation of 'Irish Freedom'.

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Remembering Keenan Johnson

Reprinted from *The Law Society Gazette*

Judge Patrick Keenan Johnson was born in Ballymote, Co Sligo, in 1922. He was the second youngest of six children and attended Ballymote National School, where he was taught by the late John A Barnes (father of former DPP Eamonn Barnes).

At that time, very few children got the opportunity to avail of a second-level education. Keenan was fortunate that Master Barnes took a keen interest in his pupils and in developing their talents. Master Barnes tutored Keenan for his matriculation examination, which enabled him to proceed to university and study law in 1938 when he was 16 years old. It is a notable achievement that Keenan went directly to university from national school, without ever attending secondary school.

In 1939, he was awarded a silver medal in the Law Society Preliminary Examination. He qualified as a solicitor in 1943 and was awarded a special certificate in his final examination. As he was only 20 when he qualified, at that time he was still considered a minor, so he had to wait seven months post-qualification to reach his 21st birthday – then the age of majority – before setting up his own practice in Ballymote, with a sub-office in Riverstown.

In the early years, together with a group of friends, he took great delight in putting on shows featuring local artists. He wrote many of the comic sketches and sometimes rendered piano accompaniment. He married Helen Stephens in 1949 and they had five children. Keenan was devastated at Helen's untimely death after a short illness in 1966. His deep religious conviction was his mainstay during this difficult and lonely



Judge Patrick Keenan Johnson

period. He also immersed himself in his work and in providing support and guidance to his children. In 1970, Keenan married Therese Campbell, the newly appointed district health nurse from Trillick, Co Tyrone. It was a whirlwind romance, with Keenan proposing after four weeks of courtship and marrying within five months. It proved to be a long and happy union. Keenan and Therese were blessed with two girls, Helen and Geraldine. Keenan was also blessed with ten grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. He always said that Helen and Geraldine kept him young at heart, and he revelled in the fact that his daughters were the same age as his older grandsons.

Keenan always took a genuine interest in young people and was a great man to provoke debate and discussion with them. In later years, this was to prove an immense benefit to him and, following his retirement as a judge of the District Court, he

went on to lecture and tutor law students at the Society's Law School. Keenan was appointed a judge of the District Court in 1975 and, having spent a year as a moveable judge, he was assigned to the then district of Rathfarnham and Dundrum. He was appointed to the District Court area of Waterford and Kilkenny in 1979 and served there until his retirement in 1992. In 1982, he was appointed a member of the Special Criminal Court.

While serving as a judge, Keenan was renowned for his energy as a worker and his keen interest in the law. He always liked to administer justice with compassion and humanity.

Outside of the law, he continued to be involved in community activity and was a driving force behind the acquisition of a permanent residence for the Waterford charity, Children's Group Link. In his years working as a judge, Keenan realised that children from troubled backgrounds and difficult home environments needed the stability and consistency that organisations like Children's Group Link provide. In 2005, he returned to his native Sligo, where he continued to enjoy a happy and fulfilled retirement. Fortunately, Keenan's final illness was relatively short and, though his passing leaves a huge gap in the lives of his family and friends, they have the consolation of knowing that he led a happy, complete and fulfilled life. He died on 23 February 2013, aged 90 years. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife, Therese; his daughters, Ann, Patricia, Helen and Geraldine; his sons, Brendan, Keenan and Hugh; and to his extended family. Ar dheis Dé go raibh an am d'fils.

A mathematical giant from Skreen

By Nial Friel

On 24 May 2000 at the College de France in Paris, the so-called Millennium Prize problems were announced. These are seven problems considered to be the most challenging in mathematics. One of these, as yet unsolved problems, was to prove the Navier-Stokes equation. And the prize for solving this? An incredible one million dollars.

It is not an understatement to say that the mathematician who derived this equation, George Gabriel Stokes, is considered one of the most important figures in the history of mathematics. Any student of mathematical physics will almost certainly know of his work through several eponymous theorems and laws, including the aforementioned Navier-Stokes equations, Stokes' law and Stokes' theorem. Simply put, his work has had a profound impact on science and engineering.

Early Life In Skreen

Stokes was born in Skreen, Co Sligo on 13 August 1819. He was the youngest of six children born to Gabriel Stokes, the Protestant minister of the parish of Skreen. His mother, Elizabeth Haughton, was herself the daughter of a protestant minister from Kilrea, Co Derry. Evidently George Stokes' upbringing was a very religious one. Indeed, every one of his three older brothers went on to become a priest. Stokes received some schooling at home where his father taught him Latin grammar. Life in Skreen appeared to be idyllic. The renowned mathematician Joseph Lamor described his early life thus¹: "The home-life in the Rectory at Skreen was very happy, and the children grew up in the fresh sea-air with well-knit frames and active minds. Great economy was required to meet the educational needs of the large family..." At the age of 13 Stokes began his formal education in Dublin where he attended Rev R H Wall's school in Hume Street.

Education in England

In 1835, aged 16, he moved to

England to study at Bristol College. There he studied a wide curriculum that included pure mathematics, Newtonian mechanics, hydrostatics, optics and astronomy, all topics that Stokes would later make profound contributions to. Stokes was in esteemed company in Bristol – one of his fellow students was John William Strutt Rayleigh, later to become the Nobel physics laureate, Lord Rayleigh.

Stokes' was heavily influenced by his mathematics teacher, Francis Newman. As an interesting aside, Newman was the brother of Cardinal John Newman, who later founded the Catholic University of Ireland, which is today known as University College Dublin. While at Bristol his eminence as a scientist was foretold through several prizes in mathematics which he won. Following the encouragement of Newman, he entered Cambridge University in 1837 as an undergraduate in Pembroke College. He was to remain in Cambridge for the rest of academic career.

Life in Cambridge

By all accounts Stokes' was a prodigious undergraduate student. He graduated in 1841 as senior wrangler in mathematics, a title given to the top placed student in mathematics. Upon graduating he immediately embarked on what was to become a distinguished career in research and was offered a fellowship at Pembroke College. His life during this period was almost exclusively focused on research and publishing. He published his research findings at an incredibly frequent rate. It was said by his colleagues that there was not a topic in mathematics and physics which he did not work on. His scope and range of work was vast. By contrast, a typical scientist works on very few research topics and develops expertise in a very narrow research area. This was most certainly not the case with Stokes!

In 1849 Stokes was appointed Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge. The Lucasian chair in Cambridge is one of the oldest

and most venerable positions in mathematics. Among the many luminaries to have held this position were Sir Isaac Newton and more recently the well-known mathematical physicist Stephen Hawking.

As mentioned before, Stokes was consumed by research. However, this was soon to change in 1857 when he became engaged to Mary Robinson, the daughter of the astronomer at Armagh observatory. He wrote many letters to her which give an insight into his character and personality. Ever the mathematician, he wrote in one letter: "I too feel that I have been thinking too much of late, but in a different way, my head running on divergent series, the discontinuity of arbitrary constants . . . I often thought that you would do me good by keeping me from being too engrossed by those things."

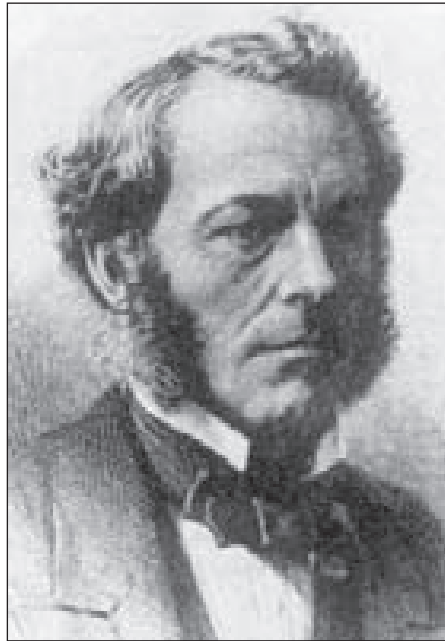
Clearly, such sentiments may not have stoked (no pun intended) the romantic fires as Mary might have hoped. Indeed it was recorded that Stokes at one point wrote her a fifty-five-page letter (!) explaining that the nature of his scientific career may not be well suited to married life. It turned out that she came close to calling off the marriage, leading Stokes to write to her: "Then it is right that you should even now draw back, nor heed though I should go to the grave a thinking machine unenlivened and uncheered and unwarmed by the happiness of domestic affection." However, the marriage did go ahead and this coincided with a dramatic slowdown in research activity. The above quote gives some evidence to the idea that Stokes welcomed this change in lifestyle.

However it did not necessarily imply a slowdown in other aspects of his working life, and he held many important positions outside the university. He was secretary and then president of the Royal Society from 1854 until 1890 and also served as a member of parliament for Cambridge University from 1887 to 1892. Stokes died on 1 February 1903 and is buried in Mill Road cemetery, Cambridge.

Stokes' many contributions

So what were Stokes' great achievements? There are simply too many to note to properly do justice to the impact which his work has had. However, possibly his best known work is the Navier-Stokes equations, one of the seven Millennium Prize problems in mathematics mentioned earlier. These describe mathematically the equations of motion for the flow of fluid or viscous substances. The Navier-Stokes equations are incredibly valuable because they describe many diverse physical situations of interest. For example, they are used in situations ranging from modelling the weather to describing the airflow around an aircraft wing.

It is interesting to note that after Stokes had derived these equations of motion he discovered that he was not the first to do so. A French mathematician, Claude-Louis Navier, had carried out a similar analysis some years previously, although using different assumptions. It is curious to note that the reason for this duplication of research effort was simply that the Cambridge mathematicians were unaware of the work of continental mathematicians at this time, a fact which is of course unimaginable in



George Gabriel Stokes

today's age of the internet. This work was published in 1845 in his seminal paper entitled *On the theories of the internal friction of fluids in motion*. He also published several papers on the effect of internal friction of fluids including the effect of friction on a swinging pendulum.

He also explained mathematically why clouds hang in the air. Broadly speaking, the fall of water droplets

to the earth is offset by the friction of the air around them, so that clouds are essentially suspended water particles. Stokes also provided mathematical explanations to questions including: Why are sounds more difficult to hear standing upwind? What is the nature of X-rays?

Stokes also had interests in optics and here his expertise in the dynamics of fluids led him to make the important discovery that haemoglobin, the red blood pigment, occurs in two different states: with oxygen and without oxygen. Stokes discovered this by analysing the spectrum of light from haemoglobin molecules. In turn this led to understanding the vital function which haemoglobin plays, namely carrying oxygen and taking away carbon dioxide. The breadth and impact of Stokes' work is truly amazing.

Now, time for us to set off to prove the Navier-Stokes equation. A million dollars awaits!

1. J Larmor, *Memoir and scientific correspondence of the late Sir George Gabriel Stokes* (2 vols, Cambridge, 1907)

The FCA in Ballymote



The FCA on Parade in Ballymote,
Photographs collected for the Gathering photography exhibition

Markree Castle and the Cooper family

By Sam Moore

Markree Castle is located in the townland of Markree Demesne in the Barony of Tirerrill and the Civil Parish of Ballysadare in County Sligo. It is currently operating as a three star hotel and is a large country house with clear evidence of 18th and 19th century architecture. Markree is referred to as a castle not due to any archaeological or historical evidence, but because of its elaborate 19th-century gothic architecture. The house is a protected structure under the Sligo County Council record number 294, registered in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage number 32402629 and is listed archaeologically as a 17th-century house in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) SL026-038.

The inventory record (no. 2888 in Egan *et al* 2005, 483) states that the remains of a 17th century house are incorporated into the south west end of the present 18th/19th century Markree Castle and consist of three walls, three stories high, built of random limestone rubble with roughly dressed quoins. It records that the south west wall retains its full length of 19.1m; the north west wall is incomplete and measures 20.9m, while the south east wall has a short return of 5.85m. It also records a slight base batter on the north west wall and that the wall thickness is 1.35m.

Much of the western end of the present building is predominantly the work of Francis Johnston, who remodelled and extended the house in 1802-04 and it is this part of the house that is suggested to be built from the fabric of a 17th century structure. Dramatic alterations and extensions, including the entrance, chapel and dining room, were all executed by Joseph Gilt, the London architect and architectural theorist in the 1840s. Further additions and alterations were carried by Maitland Wardrop in the 1870s and James Monroe in the



South East facade of Markree Castle. Most of the portion of this side of house is the work of Francis Johnston, architect, 1802-4. The left side of the image is part of a late-18th century building

1890s (Redmill 2014). This article deals with the history of the Coopers from the mid-17th century until the beginning of the 19th century with specific reference to their house.

The house is found on an area of flat ground within a drumlin belt 2.28km south-southeast of the confluence of the Owenmore River and the River Unshin. Where they join becomes the Ballysadare River which flows through the important pass of the Colloney Gap in the Ox Mountains and enters Ballysadare Bay after a series of falls (O'Dowd 1991, 2-5). The house is situated on a meander only 19m from the west bank of the River Unshin, which flows to the north west after passing the house. Markree is referred to in various documents or maps by the name of Markrea, Marckrea, Marcre, Macreagh, and Mercury, and is derived from an Anglicisation of *Marcréidh* 'a land suitable for horse-riding' according to logainm.ie (2008-14) (although McTernan (2009b, 46) and O'Rorke (1878, 62) record it as *magh reagh*; 'a brown plain').

Regarding the landownership of Markree, an inquisition held in Sligo town on 26 September 1614, before Sir John King and others, informs us that 'Markrea' was the property of Maurice Caech McDonogh of Cloonamahon in 1598. His lands were granted to Alderman Weston of Dublin. In 1620 the lands, including the 'quarter of Marcre alias Macreagh' passed to Sir Francis Annesley (O'Rorke 1878, 149-51). From a survey in 1635 a soldier called Patrick Crawford was given a grant of lands in and around Markree. Crawford sold his lands to Patrick Plunkett, second son of Sir Christopher Plunkett of Co Louth. Plunkett took up residence on his new estate and remained until after 1641. He took an active part in the insurrection as a confederate and then forfeited his estate (O'Dowd 1991, 93).

Plunkett was involved in various actions during the insurrection including the siege and capture of Sligo town during Christmas of 1641 to January 1642 (*ibid* 105-6). He is

recorded as Captain Patrick Plunkett of 'Rathgrane' in a deposition of Thomas Jans recorded by Richard Coote in May 1653 concerning atrocities carried out at Templehouse during the wars (CULTURA 2014). In the *Calendar of State Papers for Ireland* in 1647 Captain Francis King was given custodianship of the then-ruined Collooney Castle with four quarters of land belonging to Brian Óg McDonagh (who died in an attack on Frederick Hamilton's castle at Manorhamilton) along with the lands of Rathgraney and Markree (12 quarters with a rent of 20 shillings) which were forfeit by Patrick Plunkett (Collooney Castle was a McDonagh towerhouse, owned by O'Conor-Sligo). These lands were to be held for Parliament (Mahaffy 1901, 596).

Following the rebellion of the 1640s the armies of the English Commonwealth, commanded by Cromwell, emerged victorious and began a massive transfer in landownership from Irish Catholics to English Protestants. Edward Cooper was cornet in Sir Charles Coote's regiment of dragoons during the wars. A cornet was originally the third and lowest grade of commissioned officer in a British cavalry troop, after captain and lieutenant. Richard Coote (who took the deposition mentioned above), 1st Lord Coote, Baron of Collooney, was born in 1620. He was the brother of Sir Charles Coote with whom Edward Cooper served, and had gained the rank of Major in the service of the General Monck's Regiment of Horse. Richard was created 1st Lord Coote, Baron of Collooney, Co Sligo on 6 September 1660. He was invested as a Privy Counsellor in December 1660 and died on 10 July 1683 at Christ Church, Dublin.

He was succeeded by his son Richard Coote, 1st Earl of Bellamont and 2nd Lord Coote, Baron of Collooney, who, in 1688 was one of the first to join William of Orange. He held the office of Governor of County Leitrim in 1689. In May 1689 he was attainted in his absence by the Irish Parliament of King James II. He was created 1st

Earl of Bellamont, on 2 November 1689, along with the grant of 77,000 acres of forfeited Irish lands. He died on 5 March 1701 in New York, USA, where he was Governor (Mosely 2003, 1029). Both the 1st and 2nd Earls of Collooney appeared to have played a role in the success of cornet Edward Cooper.

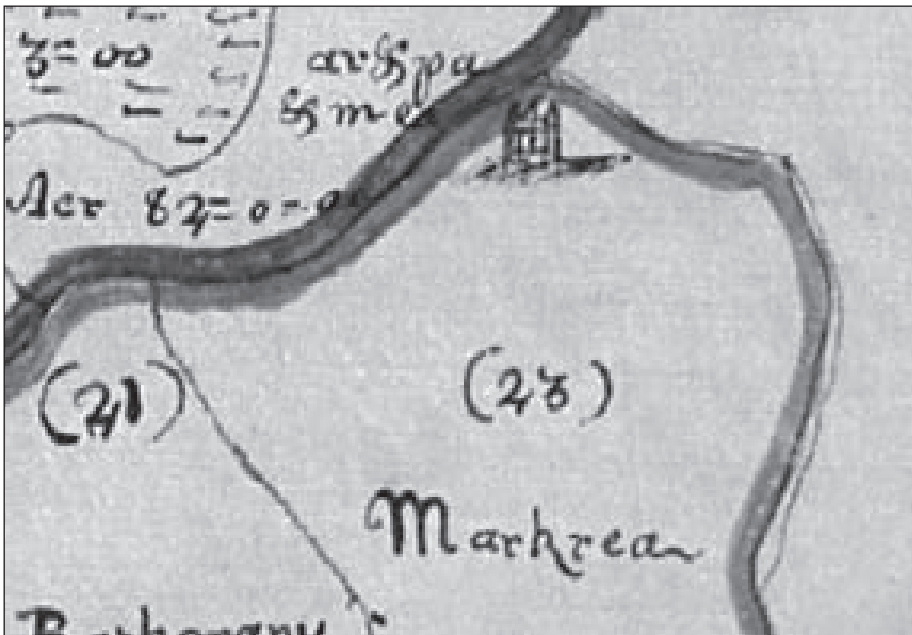
In the 1659 census for the parish of 'Ballissadar'[Ballysadare] we see that Edward Cooper, gent, is listed as a 'titulado' in the townland of 'Marckrea', which had a population of three English and fourteen Irish (Pender 2002; Wood-Martin 1892, 423). The term 'titulado' is a person claiming to be entitled to land, but whose claim, not having been decided on, was thereby rendered titular in point of fact. By 1653 the officers and men who had served with Charles Coote and who were promised arrears had the news from the general council of the army (with Coote being one of its members) that they should be receive lands and should be 'settled in those quarters where they have served and best acquainted.' (Dunlop 1913, 365.)

Co Sligo withdrew from any transplantation because of the influence of officers in Sir Charles Coote's regiment who 'demanded and eventually got a large part of their arrears paid with land.' (O'Dowd 1991, 133.) An aspect of this to happen successfully was for the land to be accurately surveyed and mapped. This task was overseen by the surgeon-general of the English army, William Petty, who created the Down Survey of Ireland in the years 1656-1658. On the Down Survey maps Markree is labelled on the County and Barony Maps. On the Parish Map we see a house marked in Markree, presumably the residence of cornet Edward Cooper, named as being a titulado there in the 1659 census. Although the conventions may not be correct it appears as a house with three chimneys. The date of construction of this house is unclear as it appears to have been the residence of Patrick Plunkett before he forfeit his lands.

The names of 'Rathgrany', 'Rathgran' or 'Rathgrane', the neighbouring townland west of Markree on the Down Survey, appear to be interchangeable with that of Markree. Patrick Plunkett is listed as owning Markree but in the Deposition of 1653 mentioned above he is of Rathgrane and in the Hearth Money Rolls for Sligo in 1665 Edward Cooper is recorded as living at Rathgrany in a house with three chimneys (MacLaysaght 1967, 30). It is recorded that Richard Coote, Lord Baron of Collooney, had an impressive house with ten hearths, also in Rathgrany (*ibid*) and it is known that his house was located somewhere in the modern town of Collooney as noted in Downing's *Description of Sligo* of c.1684 (Ó Muraíle 2002, 241; see also Timoney 2005/6, 24-26). (Downing does not mention the Coopers or Markree.)

MacLysaght (1967, 21, note 6) suggests Rathgrany might refer to the modern townland of Rathgran in Kilvarnet parish, but this is unlikely as it lies 8.7km west of the present townland of Markree Demesne. A large ringfort (SL026-028) in Markree Demesne is called *Rathgran* on the 3rd edition OS map and this townland most likely merged with Markree to form Markree Demesne (a townland today measuring 507 acres) after King James II granted Cooper the power to empark 500 acres in 1686 (see below). By 1662 we can assert that Edward Cooper was living at Markree in a house with three hearths.

O'Rorke (1878, 154-6) records that on 20 September, 1666, the Commissioners certified that 'they have compared and examined the Petition and Schedule of Cornet Edward Cooper and found that the claimant has purchased the debentures hereafter mentioned, from the parties hereunder and hereafter named, whose lots fell in the County Sligo,' and provides the list of purchases made by Cooper. These parcels of land are recorded in the books of Survey and Distribution of c1670 (PRONI



Down Survey Map (detail) of the Parish of Kilross and Ballysadare indicating 'Markree' and a three chimney house.

Ms:MIC532/1-13) which show the proprietors in 1641 on the left and the change of ownership following the Acts of Settlement and Explanations of the 1660s. Edward Cooper is listed as owning the 146 acres, two perches of land at Markree (no. 23) as indicated on the Down Survey map, which was forfeit by Patrick Plunkett. He is unusually listed as a Catholic in the Books of Survey and Distribution and it could be his marriage to a Catholic, Margaret Mahon, or some political reason that this was the case. Within a few years of this, in 1688, he was one of the founders of the Protestant Association of Sligo.

By 1666 Edward Cooper purchased just over 2820 acres in Co Sligo (McTernan 2009b 46). In Kerry he bought debentures to the extent of 1368 acres and in Limerick, he became owner of 1013 acres. The estate in Limerick is probably linked to Edward's marriage to Margaret nee Mahon, the widow of Conor O'Brien who was killed in the Cromwellian siege of Limerick, (*ibid*; O'Rorke 1878 194-5; Bell and Robus 2014, 43). All his lands in Sligo, Limerick, and Kerry amounted to just over 5,200 acres. At his death in 1679, Edward Cooper left the Limerick and Kerry estates to his third son, Richard; the eldest, Edward, having died without

issue, with his second son, Arthur (b. 1667), inheriting the Sligo property (O'Rorke 1878, 156).

In 1686 James II granted Arthur Cooper various denominations of land known as the Manor of Markree. He also granted Arthur Cooper the authority to hold courts, the ability to keep a prison, to empark 500 acres, and 'to hold two yearly fairs for ever on the lands of Tubberscanlon (Tubberscanavin).' (*ibid*, 157-8.) Richard Coote, the 2nd Lord Coote, Baron of Collooney, and Arthur Cooper, as leading members of Protestant Association in Co Sligo founded by 1688, had formed garrisons; Coote at his fortified house in Collooney, and Arthur Cooper, with a garrison of horse, at Markree (Wood-Martin 1889, 106).

However, in the Act of Attainder, passed in the Parliament which James II held at Dublin in 1689, the names of Richard Coote, Arthur Cooper of Markree and his brother, Richard Cooper, also of Markree, were put on a list of the attainted (O'Rorke 1878 66; McTernan 2009b, 46-7). In 1688, the English King James II, driven off by the ascent of William and Mary, came to Ireland with the sole purpose of reclaiming his throne. After his arrival, the Parliament of Ireland assembled a list of names in 1689 of

those reported to have been disloyal to him, eventually tallying between two and three thousand in a bill of attainder. Both Coote and Cooper were quick to join with William, and Arthur Cooper took an active part in the proceedings of the neighbourhood during the period of the Williamite Wars (1688-91), not only keeping a garrison of horse at Markree. In January 1689 Arthur occupied Ballymote castle for a time after defeating Captain Terence McDonagh's company (Childs 2007, 39).

The Coopers re-established themselves at Markree following the Treaty of Limerick in October 1691 (O'Rorke 1878, 158; Bell and Robus 2014, 44). A map dated 1704 drawn by the surveyor George Hillas on behalf of Arthur's son Joshua Cooper, who inherited the estate, indicates the shape and form of the demesne of 'Mercury' (Sligo County Library Map ref 2010; National Library of Ireland Ms 16 I.16 (2)). This map shows the extent of the demesne and provides detail for each field size and names each of them. What is interesting are two fields called 'Brick Kiln Field' and 'Lime Kiln Field', indicating the availability of building materials.

A frustrating element is that details of the form of the house are not very clear. A detailed tracing of the lines, carried out by zooming into to an image of the map, failed to clarify the nature of the plan. A substantial rectangular form with an open rectangular projection on the northeast with a second open ended slightly larger rectangular area to the south of the projection is marked on the map at the present location of the house, but its orientation is more east-west than the house is today. No scale was legible on the map but an approximate comparison by overlaying the 1704 map with a rotated 1917 25"-to-one-mile Ordnance Survey map gives a very approximate dimension of 43m east-west by 20m north-south. As is plain to see the river's size and form has changed and a six-pier bridge is located c120m north west of the present day two-pier bridge (NIA

reg. no. 3240614). Also of note is the lawn, walled garden and ‘wilderness’ (a ‘bosquet’) depicted on the map of 1704, all features of a post-1660 demesne.

By 1727 the Cootes had left Sligo and sold Collooney (alias Cashel) and several other denominations of land in Co Sligo to Joshua Cooper of Markree for £16,945 5s. 6d. From that time until the beginning of the 20th century the Coopers owned all Collooney, with the exception of the spot on which the Methodist chapel now stands, which was sold as a barrack plot in March, 1729. By the purchase of the Coote estates in 1727, and the departure of Lord Bellamont from Collooney, and the addition of them to the Markree estate, Joshua Cooper, the son of Arthur, became one of the largest landed proprietors in Sligo (O’Rorke 1878, 71; McTernan 2009b, 47). Between 1720 until his death in 1757 he represented Sligo County in the Irish Parliament for 37 years (*ibid*). Joshua’s rise to greater power led to him building a new house sometime in the 1730s. Regrettably we do not have a description of this building during this period, only a remark by Rev. William Henry from his *Hints towards a natural and topographical history of the County of Sligo* in 1739, who says:

[97] *Mercury [Marcrea]. The Seat of Joshua Cooper Esquire is a regular and very Elegant piece of Modern Architecture . . . It deserves a more particular Description than I can give, not having seen it since it was finished. This Gentleman has another handsome Seat in the Town of Collooney, which once belonged to the Earl of Bellamont* (Timoney 2013, 151).

This suggests a date of some form new house at Markree built in the 1730s. The ‘handsome Seat’ refers to the former house of Richard Coote, Lord of Collooney (*ibid*).

Joshua Cooper died in 1757 and his son, another Joshua, inherited his estate. Joshua had married Alicia Synge in 1758, the heiress of Edward Synge, Bishop of Elphin, whose wife



Tracing of Hillas’ 1704 map (detail) indicating possible building where Markree Castle is today (original map courtesy Sligo Reference Library)

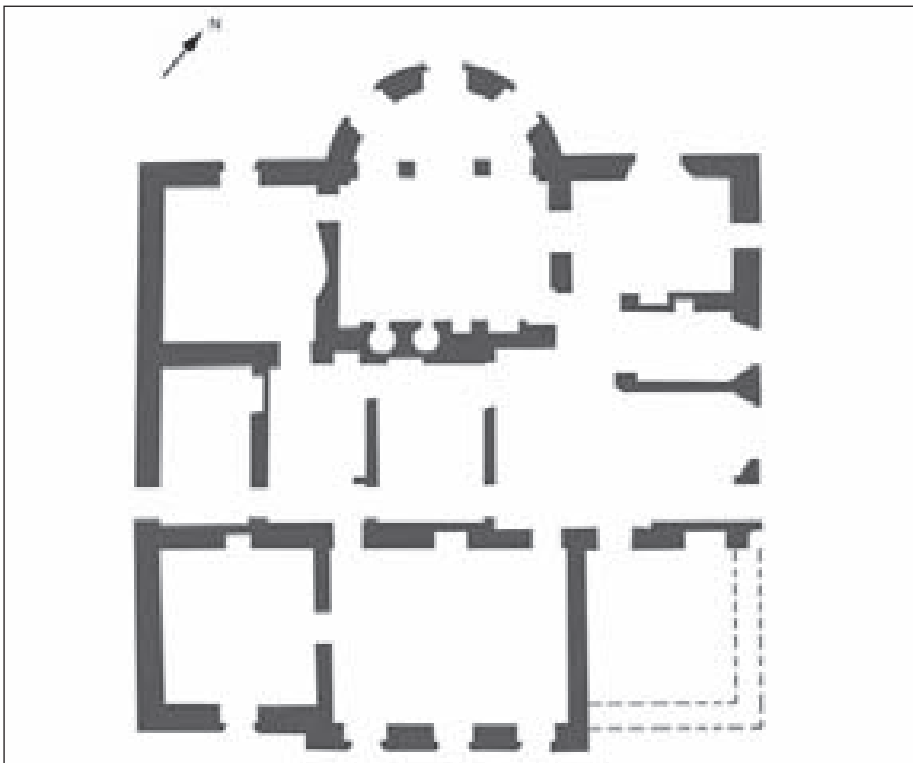
and five of his six children had died, leaving Alicia as his sole heir to his large estate worth approximately £100,000 (Legg 1996, xv). Before his death in 1762 Synge suggested to his son-in-law and Alicia to ‘buy up always all the land they could’ (*ibid*). Joshua Cooper did exactly this and owned an estate of around 36,000 acres with an annual income of £10,000 in rentals as well as becoming one of the first and largest subscribers to the Bank of Ireland in 1783-4 (McTernan 2009b, 47). He opposed the Union and represented Sligo in Parliament from 1768 to 1783.

Joshua Cooper entertained numerous guests at Markree including Arthur Young in 1776 who described Cooper as an industrious and modern farmer (*ibid*; Simms 1961, 158; see also Young’s account of his visit to Markree in Hutton 1892, 234-241). Joshua Cooper also accommodated the Italian artists Beranger and Bigari at ‘Mercrea’ in July 1779 where ‘they were well received, and there they dined, supped and spent the night.’ (Harbison 2002, 100.) Another visitor, Coquebert de Montbert, describes the house in 1791 as a ‘regular and very elegant piece of modern [my emphasis] architecture . . . a fine house surrounded by trees.’ (McTernan 2009a, 392; Ní Chinnéide 1976, 64). It appears there was another modern

house built in the later part of the 18th century, as to be expected, as Joshua Cooper was one of the wealthiest men in the country at the time.

This Joshua died in December 1800, aged 71, and was buried in Collooney. He was succeeded by Joshua Edward Cooper, a colonel in the Sligo Militia. It was he who commissioned Francis Johnston to undertake the gothic architectural transformation of Markree. He modified the River Arrow for fisheries along with his nephew Edward Joshua Cooper of Stephen’s Green, Dublin, who managed the estate following his uncle being declared insane in 1804. Joshua Edward Cooper died in 1837 and the estate went to his brother Edward Synge Cooper (Quinn 2009, 824-7; McTernan 2009b, 47-8). As Mark Bence-Jones describes, concurred by John Redmill and drawn in the plans by Johnston in 1802, the building, before modification by Johnston, was two storeys over basement with a five-bay front, a three-bay break front with a one bay on either side of a curved bay (Bence-Jones 1988, 201-2; Redmill 2014).

Nothing in the present-day architecture suggests anything earlier than the mid-18th century. Based on the late 17th century Down Survey Maps and Hearth Money Rolls, along with the 1704 demesne map



Tracing of the plan of existing 18th century building based on drawings by Francis Johnston 1802-4 (after Redmill 2014)

by Hillas, there was a 17th century house on the site of the present-day Markree Castle. A re-build certainly occurred in the 1730s and again in the mid- to late-18th century based on the architecture and the referral of the Conque de Montbert to Joshua Cooper's modern house in 1791. It is this late 18th century building that one can see in the fabric of the present day house as can be seen from Johnston's drawings of 1802.

Acknowledgements.

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I'll forgive but I'll never forget

By Mary Kelly-White

It was Sunday February 23rd 2014 and the focus for the sermon was 'forgiveness'.

'To forget is to really forgive,' the priest was saying, recalling the words of a song from his teenage years, *I'll forgive and I'll try to forget*.

I was mentally transported back to when I knew and sang that song. Just out of college, madly in love with a boarder from Summerhill College who couldn't wait to leave Sligo and get back to his native Leitrim. July was passed, August closing in and there was I on holidays in the dark upper room of an old thatched cottage. It was as close to a grand parlour as was possible, six large gilt-framed pictures hanging from the green distempered damp walls; melting Irish lace curtains and heavy dark velvet drapes hiding the tiny cobwebbed window. His Master's Voice Victrola / gramophone in a damp case, and a box of vinyl records on a small solid mahogany table between the open fire-grate and a glass-fronted display case.

Part of our family was on holidays from a three-storey town house where we had only ever seen a gramophone in Woolworths and we had no idea how one worked. So finding a gramophone and vinyl records which now belonged to us because our bachelor uncle was dead, we spared no effort getting through the records. We almost wrecked the whole collection by lifting the needle arm half way through the song, we were so anxious to hear all the songs as fast as possible. And if that wasn't awful enough we never changed the needle until it fell out and we replaced it with other rusty needles, until our mother rescued the whole room from us before we had destroyed everything.

It was then we learned that the needles needed to be new and changed often, so a message was sent

by post to the remainder of the family in Sligo to buy needles and either post them to us in Glenkillamey or make sure that whoever was coming on holidays next was carrying the needles. Once the new needles arrived there was no stopping us in the music room.

Our mother, who we called Ma, knew when each record arrived and which of her sisters had brought it from America in the early 1910s or 1920s. Ma liked John McCormack but I don't remember us being impressed with his *Flowers of the Rarest* or *Believe me if all Those Endearing Young Charms*. I suppose we were too young to understand the lyrics, and anyway we thought John McCormack was too slow. Dad on the other hand hadn't a musical note in his head but he loved the lyrics and he was desperately keen for us to listen to the words.

Nell Flaherty's Drake; My name it is Nell and the truth for to tell, I come from Coothill which I'll never deny

I had a fine drake and I'd die for his sake, that my grandmother left me and she going to die

The dear little fellow his legs they were yellow, he could fly like a swallow and swim like a hake

'Till some dirty savage, to grace his white cabbage, most wantonly murdered my beautiful drake.

May his spade never dig, may his sow never pig, may each hair in his wig be well thrashed with the flail

May his door never latch, may his roof have no thatch, may his turkeys not hatch, may the rats eat his meal.

May every old fairy from Cork to Dún Laoghaire dip him snug and airy in river and lake

That the eel and the trout they may dine on the snout of the monster that murdered Nell Flaherty's drake.

May his pig never grunt, may his cat never hunt, may a ghost ever

haunt him at dead of the night

May his hens never lay, may his horse never neigh, may his goat fly away like an old paper kite.

That the flies and the fleas may the wretch ever tease; may the piercing March breeze make him shiver and shake

May the lumps on a stick raise the bumps fast and thick on the monster that murdered Nell Flaherty's drake.

There were at least three more verses. And then there was Lannigan's Ball:

Six long months in Brook's Academy learning to dance for Lannigan's Ball. She stepped out, I stepped in again; I stepped out she stepped in again . . .

And *Danny Boy*. We had learned that song in School 'as Gaeilge': Maidin Uí mBearra, but finding the lyrics in English to the Londonderry Air was a bonus.

I was ready for the real romantic songs, especially where someone died or emigrated such as *The Lament for an Irish Emigrant*:

I am sitting on the style Molly where we sat side by side, on a bright May morning long ago when first you were my bride. . .

But the graveyard lies between Molly and my step might break your rest, for I've laid you darling down to rest with your baby on your breast.

And another, *Red River Valley*: *From this valley they say you are going, we will miss your bright eyes and sweet smile;*

For they sat you are crossing the ocean, to brighten your pathway awhile.

Come and sit by my side if you love me, Do not hasten to bid me adieu But remember the Red River Valley, and the cowboy who loved you so true.

As you go to your home by the ocean may you never forget the sweet hours,

That we spent in The Red River Valley; and the love we exchanged 'mid the flowers.

And finally the song that I couldn't forget. In the song ten years had passed but for me it was only ten weeks:

Do you remember the evening the moon through the bushes did shine

With a smile and a kiss as a token, you promised that you would be mine Then why did you try to deceive me when you knew that my heart was so

true?

True to you who is now going to leave me, I am parting forever from you.

Yes I'll return every token, 'twas a ring and a lock of your hair

A card with your photograph on it, and a face that's as false as it's fair.

I'll take back every fond word and token, let it be as though we never met

And I will return every token, I'll forgive but I'll never forget.

Because Dad couldn't sing he couldn't understand how we didn't

get bored at the constant repetition, but we couldn't get enough of it, singing along with and without the records like karaoke, often forgetting the words that we knew the previous day. But now thinking back it was like spending a few weeks in the Gaelteacht learning Irish, soaking up the experience. We were getting music and poetry which we will never forget.

When I told the priest how his sermon had inspired me he said: "God works in mysterious ways."

1952 Sligo Senior Gaelic football team

Photographs collected for the Gathering photography exhibition



The Sligo senior Gaelic football team that played against Mayo in Charlestown during the 1952 Connaught championships.
Back Row (L-R): Joe Flannery, Fintan Quigley, Frank Gaffney, Brendan Wickham, Nace O'Dowd, Mick Gaffney, Mick Christie, T. J. Murphy, John Cogan, Paddy Dwyer (suit), Joe Masterson, P McGovern (Bro.), Johnnie Durkin, Ray Tully, John J. Lavin (suit).

Front Row: Barney Oates, Ted Nealon, Paddy Mullen, Tommy Ryan, Tom Dunleavy, Paddy Christie, Ned Durkin, Paddy Kennedy, Austin Briody, Frank White, Pat Brennan ('Click') (suit)

The players were identified by John Francis Kelly (Tubbercurry), Tommy Joe Hunt, Jimmy Tighe, Paddy McGuinness and Neal Farry (Ballymote)

Report of the match from Sligo G.A.A. 125 History 1884-2009:

Not for many years had the senior team played with such skill and determination as that displayed in their meeting with all Ireland champions, Mayo, at Charlestown. It was a memorable game, characterised by tough championship exchanges in which Sligo lost two of their best players on the day, Ted Nealon and Ned Durkin, through injury. Mayo were outplayed for long periods before eventually getting through by a margin of three points, 0-9 to 0-6.

Stars of the losing side were Tom Dunleavy at fullback, Barney Oates at right halfback, Ned Durkin at midfield where he outplayed Pdraig Carney for most of the hour, Mick Christie and John Cogan in attack. Substitute Frank White stole the limelight when he replaced Frank Gaffney at midfield in the second half.

Sligo: TJ Murphy, T Nealon, T Dunleavy, P Christie, B Oates, N Durkin, A Briody, F Gaffney, N O'Dowd, P McGovern, J Cogan, M Christie, P Mullen, M Gaffney, T Ryan. Subs: (used) F White, P Kennedy, F Quigley

The Elderly Neighbour

By *Bernie Doyle*

'Bring this roll of butter with you,' said Aunt Mary as I was leaving for Nora's house. It was mid-June and Uncle Mick had asked me to tell Nora that he would be arriving to cut her hay first thing in the morning. I was delighted as I was fond of Nora.

The walls of Nora's farm and the farms of Willie Burke and my uncle merged beside the old stone windmill. Here I had only to cross a small stone wall, but there was a problem – Nora's horse. Why should I, who was used to our own horses and the donkey, fear Nora's horse? But I was afraid of him and of her cattle too, and I couldn't say a word about it in case I became a laughing-stock in the village.

Nora lived alone with only her animals for company. She spoke to the hens, to the horse, to the cow, the calf and the cattle. They were all pets. She only had to stand at the field gate and call out to them and they would all come running. So when they saw or heard anyone coming near the field the horse would trot towards you, followed closely by whatever animals happened to be in the field. You could see my dilemma – when I ran, they ran because they were curious. But I had a plan – a quick hop over the wall, a dash through a gap into an empty field, then a mad sprint down to the gate, over that and I was safe.

But I was lucky that day. When I raised my head above the wall there was Nora and Willie Burke down the field, so I called to them. They came to meet me as I gave them the message. They decided which neighbours would help to save the hay. The three of us walked with the dog down the field leading a procession of horse, cow, calf and five or six cattle. When we came to the gate near the house Willie and I walked through, and Nora turned round and spoke:

'Shoo, shoo! Off with you, Bob, there's no work for you today and you'll be in the stable tomorrow while the hay is being cut. And what's wrong with you, Polly? Didn't I just milk

you? As for you, my little schemer, didn't you drink a bucket of milk a while ago? Shoo, shoo! Away with the lot of you now.'

Nora Moran was about 70 years of age at the time. She was a tidy little woman who always wore a black blouse and a long black skirt down to her ankles, and even a black apron. For her Sunday best she wore a long black coat and a hat (somewhat like Miss Marple's) to Mass or on the odd trip into town. Her kind face was wrinkled and her gray hair was drawn back tightly from her face into a bun at the back. She lived in a little white thatched cottage with small windows. The door was always open and the hens wandered in and out at every opportunity. You walked directly into the kitchen facing a large dresser filled with crockery. A big iron kettle hung from a crane over the open-hearth fire; the table was covered with an oilcloth; an oil lamp hung on the wall and there were three or four kitchen chairs and two stools. Nora sat in a sugán chair beside the fire. She had a separate bedroom and a parlour but I was never in the parlour.

When we came into the house Nora pulled a few red coals onto the hearth and put on some eggs to boil. She lowered the kettle on the crane and put a few kippens and a few clods of turf on the fire. I left the butter on the table for which Nora thanked my aunt. The breakfast dishes had not been washed because Nora had been too busy outside. So I got the basin and some hot water from the kettle and washed the dishes. I must admit to an ulterior motive. Nora's cups had thick black marks round the handles: mourning rings, my aunt called them. When the eggs were boiled Nora took the wheaten bread from the window-sill where it had been cooling. She spread Aunt Mary's butter on the slices and we sat at the table to a tasty meal, while Rover sat on the floor beside Nora, his eyes glued to her.

'There's one sure sign of a mannerly

dog,' said Nora. 'He sits quietly in his own corner while you are having a meal. This old blackguard of mine has me shamed – always begging!'

'Rover is all right. He's a good dog, Mrs Barry. Doesn't he take care of yourself and the animals night and day?' said Willie.

'Indeed, you're right, Willie,' Nora said, delighted to have her dog praised.

'He's a good dog, Mrs Barry. Indeed he is,' Willie agreed. But what was wrong with Willie I asked myself. Didn't he know that Moran was Nora's surname?' Who was this Mrs Barry? I had opened my mouth to settle the question when, luckily, Mrs Brady from the next house came in, and I had to help Nora to get a cup of tea for her as they told her about the hay.

When Mrs Brady rolled up her sleeves Willie made himself scarce, graciously escorted by Nora to his own farm wall. Mrs Brady moved in a whirlwind of organised chaos, reducing the quiet delph, slumbering in their haze of light dust, to rows of gleaming ceramics. The oilcloth was washed, the chairs scrubbed and I swept the floor and brought in two buckets of water from the well.

'Ye made a great job of it,' beamed Nora when she returned.' Now everything is ready for the hay and the meitheal'.

'Ah yes, you have a good team here,' agreed Mrs Brady and they accompanied me to my own wall.

'They're all set for tomorrow,' I told Uncle Mick when I met him in the yard. 'Willie Burke was there but he called Nora 'Mrs Barry'. Why would he do that? Who is this Mrs Barry?'

'Come on inside to your aunt and we'll ask her,' he said. Of course, Aunt Mary solved the mystery. In her youth Nora had married Tom Barry, a much older man. Within seven years he had died suddenly. They had no family. She has been a widow for more than thirty years.

'But why don't they call her by her

married name?’

‘Nora Moran is her maiden name and, I suppose, because her married life was so short they continued to call her Nora Moran. I have never heard her called anything else.’

The weather continued fine. The meitheal of neighbours helped to save the hay. I brought buckets of spring water with a handful of oatmeal dissolved in them out to the men in the field, and helped the women bring out the sandwiches, brown bread, boiled eggs and tea to the field at mid-day. Nora shared these out and in the evening the men returned to her house for the fine meal that was waiting for them. Soon it was time to bring the hay in near the haggard where the long pole awaited the new sheep-cock. The big horse pulled the wide flat bogey,

with the cock of hay winched up on it and tied with a steel rope, and made its way homeward.

The children sat on the rear edges of the bogey behind the cock. The men forked the hay round the pole, while one man remained on top to keep it level and firm. When it reached the desired height it was secured by hay ropes weighted with stones. The cock builder slid down and another man climbed up a ladder and thatched the sheep-cock with straw. In winter the sheep would eat the hay at the bottom and the cock gradually slid down the pole. Children really enjoyed haymaking time.

I didn’t see Nora for a few weeks after that. Then we heard she was sick and we went to see her. We found that she was really ill and was lying

in bed, a thing no one had ever seen her do. Mrs Brady and her family were looking after her and keeping everything shipshape for her. Nora was terrified that she would be sent to hospital. When Aunt Mary was trying to persuade her to send for a doctor Nora pleaded with her:

‘Don’t bring the doctor. He will send me into hospital and I will never come home again. I’ll stay here where I have spent the whole of my life.’ The poor woman had pneumonia and when the doctor was eventually sent for, it was too late to save her. The neighbours respected her wishes and took turns staying up with her at night, and she died peacefully at home.

She left her house and farm to the Brady family but I feel her spirit still lingers there.

Ballymote and the Shelbourne Hotel

By John Coleman

I published two articles in *The Corran Herald* last year and in the 2009/10 issue on the involvement of the Fitzmaurice family with the linen industry in Ballymote. While visiting friends for Christmas, I was leafing through celebrated novelist Elizabeth Bowen’s 1951 history of Dublin’s Shelbourne Hotel when I noted that one of the houses that occupied the site had been the home first of Thomas Fitzmaurice, 21st baron and 1st earl of Kerry, of his second son, John, 1st earl of Shelburne, and of his grandson Thomas Fitzmaurice (1742-93). It would have been used when they attended sittings of Parliament. It was sold for a sum of £6,000 on the latter’s death in 1793 to pay off debts on his bankrupt estates. The house occupied the part of the hotel site at the corner of Kildare Street, to the left in the photograph. The original house was demolished and replaced after neglect under military occupation before establishment in 1824 as a hotel. The hotel name recalls it’s distinguished former residents, though the spelling was varied.



Party Piece to Masterpiece

By PJ Duffy

John Gilmore was a young man who was born and reared within a short distance of Carrowmore and the hill of Knocknashee. According to legend, while still in his youth he showed remarkable skill as a carpenter and stonemason. In his late teens he became involved in the construction business of the day. This activity took place mainly in his local area around the old parish of Achonry. Every time he was on the road going to or from farm work he would see the hill of Knocknashee in the distance. He was very well acquainted with the place, having on several occasions climbed the hill and experienced its breathtaking views of the local countryside. As a young boy he had fished on the river Moy which flowed nearby. He had also bathed in the same river.

Knocknashee, situated in the old parish of Achonry, is a giant hill fort that rises to a height of around of around 900 feet and has a flat top said to contain several acres. The brow of the hill once contained a huge palisade that gave protection to the ancient people who at one time resided there.

Distinct traces of this ancient settlement can still be found there. John Gilmore became involved in a serious quarrel with his farmer workmates and partners in the construction business. The whole episode resulted in him getting into serious trouble with the law of the day. He abandoned his country and a short while later he showed up in South America where he kept a low profile, moving from one job to another.

As was customary at that time emigrants away from home would quickly make contact with one another. This practice usually took place right across America. John Gilmore was invited to a gathering scheduled to take place in Colombia, not far from the South American coastline. Those taking part would usually bring along their instruments

if they were musicians. Others would contribute by singing songs of their former homeland.

John Gilmore was one of those people who could neither sing nor play, so some time before the party he put pen to paper and jotted down a recitation about his native place. It was a nostalgic piece beautifully written about his early days around Carrowmore and the hills of Knocknashee. From reading its contents one soon gathers he had no intention of ever returning to his old homeland. It is obvious he had made friends in his chosen land, perhaps from among the many immigrants who worked and resided there. He began his piece: 'Dear friends we meet in love tonight on Colombia's tranquil shore.' He was aware beforehand that the meeting was to take place near Colombia's coastline.

After he delivered his recitation most of those present thought it was something of a classic, and only Gilmore was capable of doing it. After all he was a gifted fellow who sprang from a family background of exceptionally talented people. One of those present obtained a copy after coming to the conclusion that if a suitable air was added it was the making of a very good ballad. The night came to a conclusion and everyone present went their own way.

But a good while later Gilmore's party piece surfaced as a ballad being sung at a party in another part of America. It was soon being performed as a ballad at parties and concerts in various parts of America, and became extremely popular with Irish emigrants, especially those from the west of Ireland. When recording companies came along searching for talent to put on their 78 recordings, they visited the Irish community to discover musicians and singers worthy of being recorded. One of the ballads chosen was *The Hill of*

Knocknashee. Those people making the record stressed the fact that in making the 78 RPM record alteration would be made, but the theme of the whole thing would remain intact.

When the recording became available to the public it was accompanied by a suitable melody and it soon became extremely popular, especially among the Irish people at home and aboard. During the 1920s and 1930s persons returning from America were likely to take home a record of *The Hill of Knocknashee* in their baggage among the recordings of other Irish artists. Here at home the collection would build up to an enormous box full of 78 records, but numbered among the lot somewhere you would come across *The Hill of Knocknashee*. In recent years with the emergence of local radio the song has been hugely popular and is frequently requested on popular programmes being sung in ballad form by Mullinabreana musician and singer Harry McGowan. The first two verses of the song are as follows:

*Dear friends we meet in love tonight
On Columba's tranquil shore
Three thousand miles from Erin's Isle
That we might see no more
Far dearer still is that fair hill
Than any other to me
And in our own dear native tongue
They call it Knocknashee*

*So dear to me fond memories
Sweet recollections bring
How oft I've listened the live-long day
To the thrush and blackbird sing
How softly did that cuckoo call
From out yon hollow tree
And how sweet the
sound re-echoes around
The hill of Knocknashee*

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Author's note: The above article was taken from the stories and lore of a previous generation.

A treasure of Ballymote

A review by Jim Higgins

History of Ballymote and the Parish of Emlaghfad by James Christopher McDonagh, 1936

Introduction

This wide-ranging, detailed and scholarly examination of ancient texts, manuscripts and folklore attempts to chronicle the story of Ballymote and environs, from the mists of prehistory up until 1936 when the book was first published. Such an undertaking is a mammoth task, by any yardstick, but for a single individual no matter how competent, it would seem impossible.

However, a labour of love overcomes all obstacles and the author tells us of two major individual influences which convinced him to proceed. His father Eugene Andrew McDonagh recited to him many of the traditions of the McDonagh family 'in order that I might write a history of the clan,' and his encounters with Jimmy Tighe of Rosscrib were 'enshrined in the days of my childhood.' He further states that it is his aim to 'review the history of this famed place down through the ages, and so awaken an interest in its local history so long dormant.' The resulting fruit of his labour is an absolute gem and an invaluable reference work for anyone interested in the story of Ballymote. Academic and painstakingly detailed though it may be in part, there is also nevertheless a wealth of folklore and tales of human interest which make it attractive not only to the historian but also to the ordinary reader.

Overview

History and mythology complement each other usefully, as pride in one's native place requires that we trace our roots as far back as possible. As

Romulus and Remus are to Rome, so is Cormaic Mac Áirt to Ballymote—he was reared by a she-wolf in the caves of Keash before ascending to the throne of Tara as Árd Rí from around 227 AD to 266 AD. Ballymote, at the centre of the Barony of Corran, 'may be justly proud' and display Cormaic as 'an example of greatness to its future sons.' Many centuries previously, and following the defeat of the Fir Bolgs by the Tuatha Dé Danann at the battle of Moyturra in the neighbouring Barony of Tirerril, we are told that 'the victors were absorbed by the conquered' and that one such family called O'Bennaghan gave their name to Carrickbanagher (the rock of the O'Bennaghan). It is not clear how this surname may be traced back so many centuries, but it is reassuring and satisfying to know that as we look out across the ring-fort in our back garden, someone called O'Bennaghan may have lived here several thousand years ago!

The 'dinnseanchas' or 'lore of place' found in the Book of Ballymote is explored further and the stories of Fionn Mac Cumhail and the Fianna and the romantic tale of Diarmaid and Gráinne get respectable mention. The coming of Christianity and the difficulties experienced by Saint Patrick are also explained.

As well as being a local history, the narrative now takes on a national dimension as the story of Ballymote becomes the story of Ireland. The Annals of the Four Masters and the Annals of Loch Key are quoted frequently and details of many ancient battles fought in the locality are related. The Battle of Corran in 681 AD and a sequel Battle of Corran in 701 AD are related in some detail. The Vikings arrived in Sligo in 810

AD and the rise of the O'Connors of Connaught to become High Kings take centre stage.

Following the Battle of Clontarf in 1014 and the arrival of the Normans in 1169, the author has finally reached the central core of his work as he traces the fortunes of the McDonagh clann from the construction of Ballymote Castle by Richard de Burgo in 1300. Tomoltagh Mac Donagh came to prominence in 1308 and for almost the next 300 years the family Mac Donagh were involved in the ups and downs of castle ownership until Hugh O'Donnell took possession in 1590. In 1391 the Book of Ballymote was compiled for another Tomoltagh Mac Donagh and there is a fine synopsis of its contents. The author also reminds us that Mary McDonagh of Carrowkeel was the mother of Michael Corcoran of the United States 'Fighting 69th' fame, and that his lineage could be traced as a direct descendent of Patrick Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan.

The Penal laws and religious tensions, the establishment of the linen industry in 1774, as well as the impact of the famine and the subsequent land war, and the war of independence are topics which also receive considerable attention.

The 24 chapters take up just 190 pages and are followed by an appendix which explains the derivation of every town-land in the parish. There is a list of priests of the parish from 1401 and the succession of vicars of the Church of Ireland. The final entry consists of a list of superstitions still remembered in Ballymote in 1936.

In order to give a flavour of the contents I have chosen the following few entries which captured my interest.

How Ballymote got its name

The name of the town which sprung up around the castle in 1300 passed from Áth Cliath An Chorainn to Ballycliath (reminding us of Dublin), or the town of the hurdles. Subsequently it became known as Ballymoat (and later spelled Ballymote), or the town of the moat. Baile An Mhóta as gaeilge. A deep broad trench surrounded the castle and its outbuildings, and this survived down to the end of the 17th Century. The medieval town lay for the most part within this moat.

The Battle of Ceis Corran 971 AD

One of the greatest battles of Celtic Ireland, prior to Clontarf, was fought between, Murchadh, King of Aileach (Innisowen in Donegal) and Cathal, son of Tadhg, King of Connaught in the year 971. Victory went to Murchadh and Cathal was killed, together with ‘countless’ other kings and princes, all of whom are buried in a ‘royal mausoleum’ at the ruins of Toomour Abbey. The scene of the Battle however has been identified as none other than the town-land where I was born – Battlefield, Culfadda. We usually rendered the name as ‘Páirc An Chatha’, but the author here refers to it as ‘Clooncagh’ or the ‘meadow of battle’.

Sale of Ballymote Castle

In the final years of the ‘Nine Years War’ it was vital for the leader of the Gael, Hugh O’Donnell, that he would control the strategic stronghold of Ballymote Castle. To this end, he bought the castle from Clann Mac Donagh at a cost of four hundred pounds and three hundred cows. It was from here that O’Donnell set out for the Battle of the Curlews, where he defeated Sir Conyers Clifford in 1599. The scene of that battle has been marked by a bronze sculpture of a warrior mounted on horseback overlooking Lough Key

on the main Sligo to Dublin road. It was also from Ballymote Castle that O’Donnell, accompanied by Tomaltagh Mac Donagh and others, set out for Kinsale in 1601.

As well as being great warriors the O’Donnells were renowned as book-collectors, and the fame of the Book of Ballymote made them desirous of possessing it. The price they paid for it is recorded in the Book itself as one hundred and forty milch cows. It remained with the O’Donnells until the Flight of the Earls 1607, then to Trinity College in 1620. It disappeared from Trinity some time later and showed up variously in Drogheda 1767 and in Auxerre France in 1779. In 1785 Chevalier O’Gorman of Auxerre made the generous gift of handing it over to the Royal Irish Academy, where it remains to this day as one of Ireland’s most treasured possessions.

Football teams of 1894

There were six active football teams in Ballymote in 1894. At least two of them often brought victory to the parish in the county championships, played in the field at Carrownanty, now the site of Saint Columba’s Cemetery. The team members of the victorious ‘Round Tower’ team of 1894 reads as follows: J. Chambers (captain), M. Dohill, P. Reynolds, B. Henry, M. McGuinness, J. McGuinness, B. Healy, W. Parkes, J. J. Henry, D. McKeown, J. Hannan, J. Mooney, M. Rogers, M. Dunne, J. McNiffe and J. O’Connor.

First Train

On the 3rd of December 1862 the first train passed under the shadows of Ballymote Castle into the brand new station.

Ballymote Shopping Spree 1894

The business houses of that time organised a joint advertising campaign in ballad form as follows:

*Go to Kean’s for lamps,
To Gorman’s for stamps;
Go to Kelly’s for candy,
To Coughlan’s for brandy;
Go to Flannagan’s for malt,
To Roger’s for salt;
Go to Gorman’s for tar,
To Scully for a car;
Go to Dyer’s for jam,
To Hannan’s for ham;
Go to Smith’s for figs,
To Murray’s for gigs;
Go to Mackey’s for hops,
To Flannagan’s for chops;
Go to Keaveney’s for bread,
To McGlynn’s for thread;
Go to McDonough for wicks,
To Ward’s for sticks;
Go To Henery’s for beer,
To Cuffe’s for good cheer;
Go to Keenan’s for meal,
To Dyer’s for veal;
Go to Dockery’s for eggs,
To Henderson’s for pegs;
Go to Clarke’s for boots,
To Hannan’s for suits;
Go to Reilly’s for carts,
To Lyttle’s for tarts;
Go to Gallagher’s for hats,
To Sweeney’s for spats;
Go to Cawley’s for tweeds,
To Barlow’s for the weed;
Go to Farry’s for boards,
To Head McKeno for swords.*

It certainly looks as if the Ballymote of 1894 had far more choice, variety and competition than the town as we know it in 2014!

Conclusion

This book is a treasure trove of information and if reprinted I believe it would be a bestseller not only in Ballymote, but throughout County Sligo and beyond. It is sad and disappointing that not a single copy is available in Ballymote Library. I extend grateful thanks to my brother John Higgins of Culfadda for the loan of his copy to enable me to write this review.

The first motor vehicles in Sligo

By Aidan Mannion

The horseless carriage or motor vehicle was initially seen as a great danger to people on the roads and as a result, registration plates were introduced to identify vehicles. France led the field with licence plates in 1893, followed by Germany in 1896 and the Netherlands started the first national licence plate in 1898. The *Sligo Star* reported on the 26 July 1900 that an 'Aerial 3' wheeled motor cycle passed through Sligo.

The Motor Car Act of 1903 introduced registration to the British Isles, with Ireland allocated two letter registrations always including the letter "I" and county Sligo becoming EI.

A 4.5-horsepower Sterling Panhard Voiturette owned by Mr Robert Simpson-Pettigrew, Ardmore, Sligo, was the first motorcar registered in Sligo, on the 18 February 1903 as 'EI 1'. George Kerr Jnr of William Street had his Ariel 2 and a quarter-horsepower motor bicycle registered on 24 December 1903 as 'EI 2'. The car cost £1 to register and the motor bicycle five shillings.

Five of the first ten vehicles registered in Sligo were English-



O'Connell Street, Sligo, showing the scale of the vehicles to the street size. A Zodia registered EI 3423 and Capri registered BEI 743 are parked on the right-hand side.

based and included a 24 horsepower Whitlock Aster, a six-horsepower rear-driven De Dion, and a 12-horsepower Sunbeam. 'EI 13' was given to Sligo's first omnibus, a Stirling 12-horsepower omnibus owned by Sligo Motor Services of Bridge Street. John Gilbride of Stephen Street registered his Gilbride two-and-a-half horsepower motor bicycle under 'EI 96'.

A real curiosity was the

32-horsepower Metallurgique registered as 'EI 105' by Chas. Alfred Chaplin, 26 Old Bond Street, London. Could this be the little tramp?

Arthur Jackson was the owner of one of the early super cars – a 28-horsepower Daimler seven-seater in park blue with yellow lines and silver pleats, which was given 'EI 123'. The first Rolls Royce 40/50 HP limousine in blue with yellow lines was given 'EI 199', owned by a Mr Robert More of London. The Everitt Company of Victoria Garage, London, registered three of their own Everitt cars as EI 233, EI 234 and EI 235. Are these the first personalised number plates?

The Sopwith Aviation Company Ltd, of Kingston-on-Thames, registered vehicles under EI 252, EI 337, EI 500, EI 502, EI 521, which may reflect the fact that the first aircraft registrations were based on radio call signs allocated in 1913. Irish aircraft are registered with EI at the start of all their registered numbers.

Sir Joss. Gore-Booth, Lissadel, was the first to register agricultural equipment – a Overtune farm tractor and a Wyles motor plough in 1917.



Victoria Bridge, Sligo, before the motor vehicle, circa 1900. Note the early cyclist and horse-drawn bread cart in the background



O'Connell Street, Sligo, with a van HEI 115 coming up the street and two Morris Minors parked on opposite sides of the street (BEI 683 and EEI 925)

In the first six years of registration in Sligo 105 vehicles were registered with the following analysis:

Place of ownership:

Sligo Town	20
Sligo County	6
England	75
Other Irish	4

Type of vehicle:

Motorcars	43
Motorcycles	61
Omnibus	1

Some early registrations

Registration	Vehicle	Owner	Registration date
EI 118	Spyker 15 HP	John Hozie, Castledargan	10-Dec-09
EI 194	NSU Motorbike	PJ McDermott, Bunnadden	9-May-10
EI 224	Sunbeam 12/14	J Flannery, Tubbercurry	29/07/1911
EI 241	Rudge Motorbike	JP Layng, Knockalasa	4-Jan-12
EI 247	Rudge Motorbike	J A Welphy, Ballymote	22/04/1912
EI 219	NSU Motorbike	Rev A M Haire, Gurteen	2-Aug-13
EI 305	NSU Motorbike	Rev J Jordan, Curry	14/06/1913
EI 307	20 HP Ford Motor	Dr E K Frazer, Riverstown	20/06/13
EI 340	Belize Motor 10/12	M J Howley, Tubbercurry	20/01/1914
EI 440	Wall Autowheel 1 HP	Rev P J O'Grady PP, Keash	4-Jul-15
EI 446	Ford Car 20 HP	F McDonagh, Ballymote	21/05/1915

Use of registration numbers over time:

Reg no. range	Dates used
EI – EI9999	12/1903 – 11/1959
AEII – ZEII999	11/1959 – 02/1980
IEI – 9999EI	02/1980 – 04/1986
IAEI – 835AEI	04/1986 – 12/1986
87 SO – 12 SO	01/1987 – 12/2012
131 SO – Present Day	01/2013 –

Sources:

Volume 1 and 2 of the register of motorcars at Sligo County Library

Archives of the *Sligo Star* newspaper

Dedication: This article is dedicated to the memory of Fintan and Eileen Newport, Fintan's Racing Services, Tubbercurry and Bob English, Henderson Motors who were great friends and driving forces behind the revival of the Connacht Motor Club. **About the author:** Aidan Mannion is a local antiquarian with a special interest in motor vehicles and a collector of early postcards, photographs and postal history.

Photographs collected for the Gathering photography exhibition



Coláiste Mhuire Students



Ladies on the way to mass

The Lavin Brothers from Killaraght

By Tommy Kilcoyne



Rev Dr Tom Lavin

Reverend Dr Tom Lavin and John Joe Lavin, two brothers from Killaraght near the Roscommon border in Co Sligo, gave a lifetime of loyalty and service to the Gaelic Athletic Association. Both excelled at athletics and gaelic football.

Tom was excellent at the hurdles and long jump and earned quite a reputation, particularly in schools' athletics. He played football with Gurteen and was a member of the first Sligo team to win an All-Ireland title, the Junior Football Championship of 1935. He played an outstanding part in that campaign, usually at corner forward, but suffered the disappointment of being unable to play in the final. Along with his colleagues Josie McElhone and Gerry Henry he was studying for the priesthood in Maynooth College and the rigid rule of the time did not allow participation in football matches, even an All-Ireland Final. Fr Tom was ordained to the priesthood in 1938.

Reverend Dr Tom Lavin, his title in later years, was a noted scholar who continued to take a keen interest in

Sligo GAA and served as president of Sligo County Committee from 1946 to 1974. He was County Board Patron at the time of his death in 1975. His address to the County Convention each year was always in the Irish language and he never missed an opportunity to preach the Irish way of life. He was in his early sixties when he passed away in 1975.

John Joe Lavin's football career was indeed a colourful one. At club level he represented at different times Gurteen, Coolera, Derroon and Ballymote in Sligo. When he moved to Dublin he played with Geraldines and Westerns. Two of his fondest memories were in winning a Sligo County Junior Championship with Gurteen in 1944 and later a Senior Championship with Ballymote in 1948.

His inter-county involvement spanned a period from 1937 to 1951 and during that spell he was an automatic choice for Connacht Railway Cup teams for eight years. What were his greatest thrills with the Sligo Senior County Team? He had no doubt about that. Coming first in his priorities was that historic draw with All-Ireland Champions Roscommon in Abbey Park, Boyle, in the Connacht Championship of 1944. John Joe's Sligo scared the living daylights out of them on that June Sunday. A draw was the result and Roscommon went on to win the replay and eventually went on to collect their second All-Ireland title. John Joe gave two of his greatest displays in a Sligo jersey in those two memorable encounters. Asked about the player who proved his toughest opponent when he played at centre-half-back for Sligo, he mentioned Cavan's Mick Higgins whom he regarded as the most talented centre-half-forward of his era.

Of the older football brigade in Sligo he regarded the seven Colleran brothers of Curry, Mick Kilcoyne and



John Joe Lavin

Tom 'Click' Brennan of Tubbercurry as his boyhood idols. In later years he had nothing but praise for the talents of Nace O'Dowd, Mick Christie, Tom Dunleavy, Frank White, Jimmy Dooney, Mick Gaffney, Paddy Best and brothers Colm and Aengus McMorrough. He rated Mickey Kearins, whom he described as 'a natural footballer', as the pick of the bunch. He admired Mickey's ability to kick points from any angle with either foot and described him as probably the best player of all time to 'ride a tackle'.

John Joe was also a noted athlete. In local competitions he was regarded as invincible. In 1941 he entered the Connacht Championships and won the long jump and hop, step and jump championship. The following years he added the 100-yard and 220-yard championships of Connacht. In 1943 he carried off the prestigious Flannelly Cup for being the best all-round athlete in Ireland. Many more honours were won in those years. For instance, from 1943 to 1945 he held the national title in the hop, step and jump.

In later years John Joe was domiciled in Dublin and became a regular contributor to GAA discussion programmes on RTE Radio. However his roots and loyalties remained embedded in his native Sligo. From his retirement from inter-county football in 1951 to his death fifty years later he continued to follow closely the fortunes of Sligo GAA, being a regular attendee at all major games while his health allowed. He served as patron of Sligo County Committee before following in the footsteps of his brother Rev Dr Tom in 1976 when he became president, a position he

held until his death in January, 2001.

In 1995 he achieved a notable double which pleased him greatly. In the space of a few months he was awarded the Roscommon Hall of Fame Award for Athletics and the Sligo GAA Hall of Fame Award. The Sligo award was presented to him at his home in Dublin by County Board Chairman Joe Queenan. I had the pleasure of being present on that occasion also. John Joe was in his early eighties when he passed away in 2001.

The ability, achievements and loyalty to Sligo GAA of the Lavin

Brothers from Killaraght over three quarters of a century, ably and constantly supported by their sister Mai Clune, has inspired successive generations of Sligo GAA people and will surely continue to do so long into the future.

Sources

Sligo GAA 125 History
The Sligo Champion
Kilcoyne GAA Park Tubbercurry opening 1964, official programme
Tom Lavin, Geevagh
Tom Clune

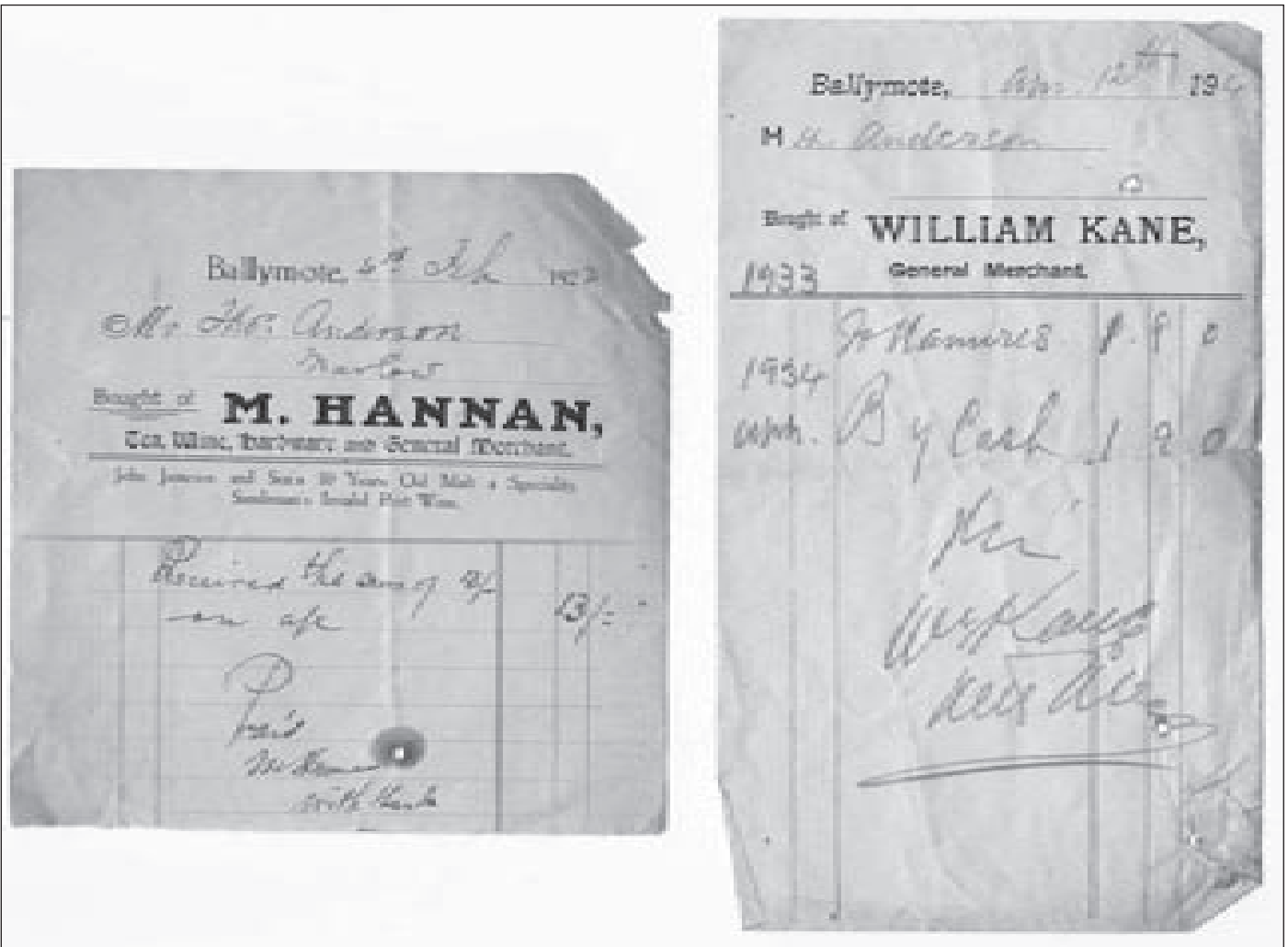
Students at Coláiste Mhuire

Photographs collected for the Gathering photography exhibition

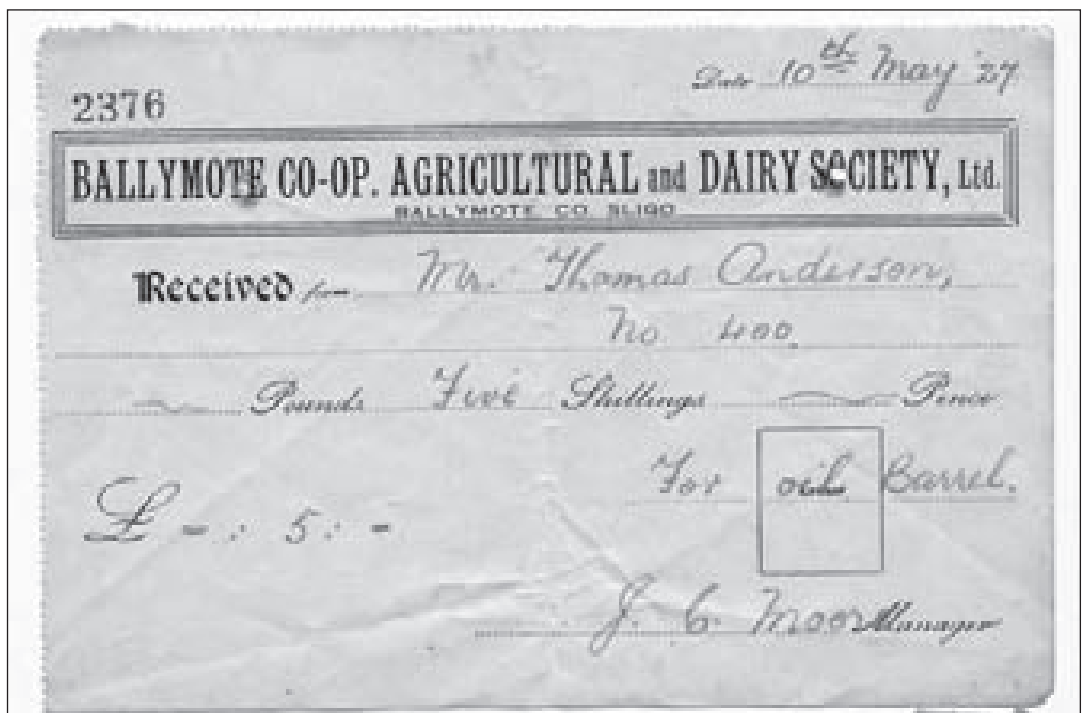


Invoices from Ballymote Businesses

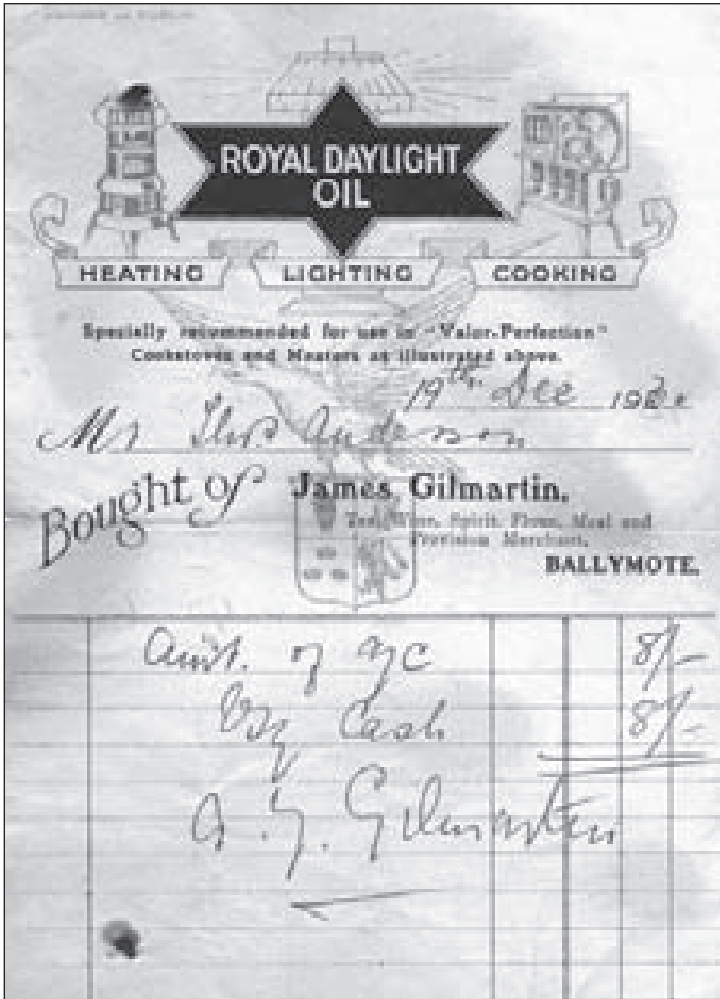
Early 20th Century Invoices from the family collection of Tom Wynne of Lissanney



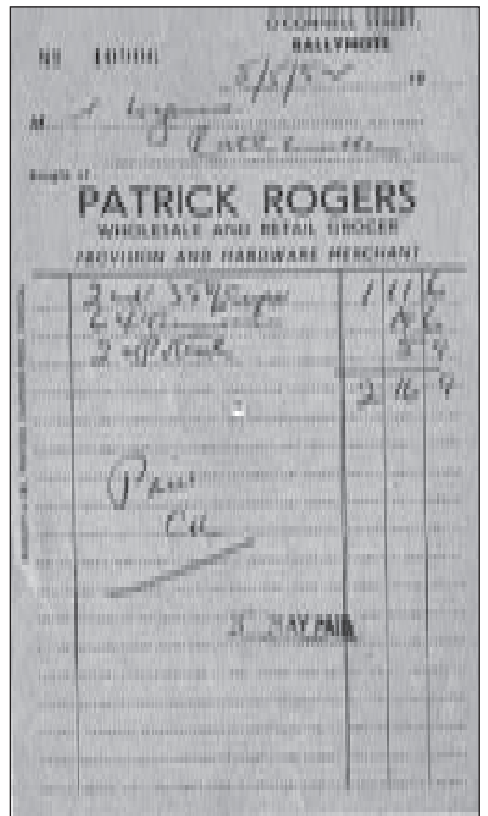
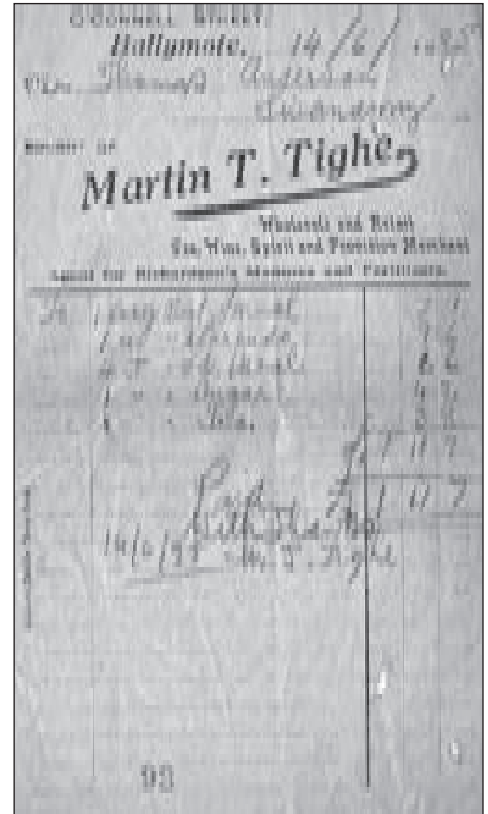
Invoices from William Kane, 1933 and Matthew Hannan, 1922



Receipt from Ballymote CO-OP, 1927



Invoice from James Gilmartin 1930



Invoices from P Rogers, 1952 and Martin Tom Tighe, 1935



Invoice from Ballymote Concrete Products, proprietor PF Begley, 1952

Early Printing in Sligo

By John C McTernan

The art of printing was introduced to Sligo in the latter half of the 18th century, probably in 1750. The earliest recorded printer was Michael Parker of the *Sligo Journal* and over the following century the names of printers and publishers have survived in the various imprints of that period.

Newspapers apart, the output of the early Sligo printing presses was small, and only a handful of items have survived the ravages of time. A number of the extant publications are of an official nature and carry the imprint of Alexander Bolton, Kings Arms Press, Castle Street. Bolton was the Crown printer in Sligo from 1800 to 1830. Practically all the remaining items relate to various religious controversies. The Halliday collection of pamphlets in the Royal Irish Academy contains a number of publications bearing a Sligo imprint.

Sligo made a substantial contribution in the development of the provincial press in Ireland. Between the years 1771 and 1950 over twenty newspapers, magazines and periodicals were printed and published here. The lifespan of the various organs, excluding *The Sligo Champion* which is still flourishing, varied from six months to a century. In 1828 Sligo could boast of two newspapers and that figure increased to three by 1850.

Some insight into the cutthroat competition that existed between the different local organs may be gleaned from the official circulation returns for the mid 19th century. In 1855 weekly sales per issue for the respective papers were as follows:

The Sligo Chronicle 400 copies

The Sligo Journal 135

The Sligo Champion 130

However, a decade later the stamped weekly circulation figures revealed that the *The Champion* had more than doubled to 280, the *The Chronicle* came next at 230, the newly launched

Sligo Independent had 200, while the long established *Journal* was struggling for survival with only a quarter of the *Independent's* total.

Editors and proprietors of local newspapers figured prominently in the public life of Sligo Borough. Four of them held the office of mayor – Alexander Gillmor of *The Sligo Independent*, Charles Sedley of *The Sligo Chronicle* and both Edward Verdon and PA McHugh of *The Sligo Champion*. McHugh was for many years an influential Member of Parliament for the North Sligo constituency.

Sligo Journal [1771-1866]

The *Sligo Journal* was the first in a long line of Sligo newspapers. The date of the first issue is not certain since few copies of the early issues have

survived. In all probability the paper did not appear regularly until 1771, at which date it was published twice weekly, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, by Michael Parker in Castle Street.

In 1793 John Gray became proprietor and he successfully guided its fortunes until his death in 1809. Shortly afterwards it was acquired by Alexander Bolton. Under his control the paper enjoyed improved circulation and the device used in the heading was altered to an oval enclosing the Arms of Sligo surmounted by a crown.

During the cholera outbreak of 1832 Alexander Bolton and his eldest son fell victims to the disease and died on the same day. His widow then assumed the proprietorship and employed Christopher Moore, late of *Saunders News-Letter*, Dublin, as editor. Under his guidance the



Mastheads of 19th and 20th century Sligo Newspapers

paper had achieved a circulation of over five thousand copies by 1837. The following year John P Somers, a candidate in the Borough Election of that year, brought a successful claim for defamation of character against *The Journal*.

Moses Monds, JP, one time Mayor of Sligo and subsequently Secretary of the Harbour Board, replaced Moore in

1839. In 1850 John Gore Jones Jr, of Johnsport, a barrister of note, assumed the role of editor and in September of the following year he proclaimed *The Journal* to be 'the recognised organ of the Protestants of the town and County of Sligo', a claim hotly disputed by the newly founded rival, *The Chronicle*. Over the following decade and a half relationships between both organs

were anything but cordial.

In the issue of 9 March 1866 *The Journal* announced that it was suspending publication but would shortly appear in another form. This, however, was not to be and so Sligo's earliest newspaper collapsed after an existence of almost over one hundred years.

Ballymote Children's Band, 1960s

Submitted by Mollie Cawley



As part of a fancy dress competition, the little boy on the far right (Michael Cawley) leads a donkey and cart in which sits Patricia Tansey and Catherine Cawley (shown) representing 'the beautiful Miss Bradys, in a private ass and cart' in Percy French's comic ballad *Phil the Fluther's Ball*.

Other indentified children include: left side (left to right) Manus McGuire; Cillian Rogers; Roger Cawley; Sean Hargadon; Anthony Hargadon; Dolores Taheny and right side (left to right) 1st, Gerard Banks; 3rd, John Cawley; and 4th, Mary Cawley.

Thanks to Mollie Cawley for the photograph and to Mary Cawley, who features with her brother and sister, for her recollection of the occasion.

Ballymote in Slater's Directory of 1894

By David Casey

Slater's Commercial Directory of Ireland was first published in 1846, with later editions in 1870, 1881 and 1894. The directory of 1894 was published in two volumes. It is subdivided into the provinces and has sections for Dublin and Belfast and sub-sections for Cork, Limerick and Galway.

The location of each town and village in the directory is given in relation to the nearest railway station. There are lists of villages and towns and other places. The population statistics are from the 1891 census of Ireland with a short topographical and geographical summary.

In the 1894 *Slater's Commercial Directory* the town of Ballymote comprised an area of 46 acres with a population of 1,049. The following list is from that edition of the directory. (Bold text has been added for ease of reference.)

Post, Money Order & Telegraph Office & Savings Bank – John Gorman, postmaster. Deliveries, 7 & 11.15 a.m. & 2.50 p.m.; dispatches 2, 10.20 & 10.50 a.m. & 2.15 & 9.10 p.m.

Court House, Jackson Hawkesby, keeper.

Market House, M. Steele, keeper
Dispensary Medical Officer & Registrar, Andrew Mc Munn

Constabulary Station, W.S. Howard, sub-inspector

Church of Ireland – Rev. Thomas Gordon Walker

Catholic – Very Rev. John Mc Dermott D.D., P.P. ; Rev. John Morrin & Rev. Patrick Filan, curates

Wesleyan – Ministers various

National Schools:

Ballymote, Michael Doyle, master; Eliza Kelly, mistress; Marcella Daly, infants' mistress

Carnaree, P. J. Batelle, master

Carrigans, Martin Quigley, master

Carrownagh, P. Brennan, master

Drumcormack, Mary F. Doyle, mistress

Knockminna, Michael Kelly, master

Rathmullen, T. D. Mc Gowan, master
Church Education Society's schools
Knockanarrow – John Carr, master
Church School – Miss Williams, mistress

Railway Station, Patrick Carley, station master

Mail car to Tubbercurry from the post office, at 5.40 a.m. & at noon & returns at 7 p.m.

Private Residents:

Cooper Miss Margaret, Cooper hill

D'Arcy Martin, Doo Castle

Filan Rev. Patrick C.C.

McDermott, Very Rev. John D.D., P.P

McMunn Andrew M.D.

Morrin Rev. John C.C.

O'Hara Chas. W. D.L., J.P., Gurteen

Tew J. M. L

Commercial

Barlow Eliza, egg merchant

Begley James, grocer

Berreen Mary, grocer

Carroll Andrew, tailor

Carroll Thomas, tailor

Cauley Bartholomew, egg merchant

Cawley John, grocer

Coghlan Bartholomew, grocer

Coghlan Patrick W. grocer

Coghlan Patrick, grocer

Cryan Michael, saddler

Cuffe Richard, grocer

Davey Margaret, egg merchant

Davey Martin, grocer

Daveys James, hotel & posting house

Dawson Patrick, grocer

Devaney Jane, grocer

Dockry Bartholomew, china & glass dealer

Dockry John, grocer & china dealer

Dyer Francis, grocer

Dyer James, tailor

Flanagan James, grocer & auctioneer

Flanagan Joseph, butcher

Gallagher Matthew, grocer

Gallagher Thomas, grocer

Gardiner Nicholas, grocer

Gorman, R & R, millers

Gorman Henry, grocer

Gorman John, grocer & ironmonger

Gorman John R. grocer & draper

Hannan & Co. grocers & drapers

Hannon Michael, blacksmith

Hannon Stephen, boot & shoemaker
Hawkesby Jackson, commissioner for oaths

Hayden M. hotel & posting house &c

Henery James, grocer

Henery Paul, grocer

Hogge John, grocer

Keane Robert, boot & shoe maker

Keane William, china &c. dealer

Keveney Patrick, baker

Killoran Thomas M, grocer

McDonagh John P, emigration agent

McDonogh James, grocer & draper

McGaun Andrew, grocer

McGetrick Thomas, grocer

McGinnis Thomas, boot & shoemaker

McGlynn Michael, draper

McGuire Philip, tinsmith

McHugh John, carpenter

McMunn Andrew, M.D. surgeon

Mahon Joseph S, process server

Marcey Hugh, grocer

May James, tailor

Morrison & Son, auctioneers and valuers

Morrison Martin, cooper

Morrison Patrick, cooper

Morrison Robert L, grocer & draper

Muldoon Patrick, baker

Murray & Sons, coach builders

O'Brien James D, timber mer. & grocer

O'Dowd Darby, boot & shoe maker

Phillips Bridget, grocer

Quigley Martin, boot & shoe maker

Reading Room & Library (Mrs & Miss McMunn, hon. librarians)

Rogers Annie, grocer

Rogers Patrick, grocer

Saultry & Sons, carpenters

Sharkey Catherine, boot dealer

Steele, Misses, private school

Sweeney James, grocer & draper

Tew J. M. L. manager Ulster Bank

Ulster Bank (J. M. L. Tew, manager)

Walsh James, boot & shoemaker

Walsh John, boot & shoemaker

Ward Ellen, grocer

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Reference: Slater's Directory 1894

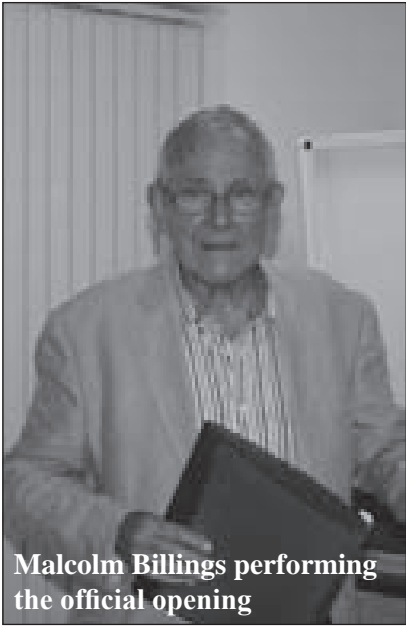
National library of Ireland

Available on microfiche in main reading room at IR 9141 s 30.

Book can be viewed at LO3636 in manuscripts reading room.

Heritage Weekend 2013

Picture of Temple House lunch courtesy of John Cawley, all other pictures taken by Paddy Conboy



Malcolm Billings performing the official opening



Sunday Lunch Temple House



Anne Flanagan and Sr Nell Chambers enjoying a cup of tea after Malcolm Billings' lecture



An appreciative audience



Enjoying lunch in Clogher Parish Hall prepared by staff of Tyrone County Club in Omagh



Visit to Tullynally during the 2013 Heritage Weekend

First Holy Communion class 2014



Scoil Mhuire gan Smal, Ballymote First Communion Photo May 2014

Back Row: Fr Gregory Hannan, Ms. Dolores Taheny Principal, Fr. James McDonagh, Mrs Helen McGetrick class teacher.

Row 3: Ellie Ward, Laura O'Dowd, Sinead Ryan, James Kilcoyne, Senan Fallon, James Healy, Alicia Davey, Ryan Riera, Shellie Ward.

Row 2: Naoise McTiernan, Michael Murtagh, Hollie Kerins, Thomas Sweeney, Jade Flannery, Patrick Coen, Alicia Hogge, Gareth Rogers

Front Row: Daniel Flannery, Louise Anderson, Tiernan Mongey, Adam Benson, Lucy Walker, Aine McGlone, Oisín Glavin, Kaylee McLoughlin

Confirmation classes 2014



5th Class

Back Row: Fr James McDonagh, class teacher Ms. Sinead Gilhooly, & Fr. Gregory Hannan

Row 3: Sarah Tighe, Clara Corcoran, Ciara KIELTY, Clodagh Currid, Bridie Ward, Saskia Davey Buurman, D'Ármuid O'Dowd, Annie Mullen, Grace Rafferty.

Row 2: Cian Kilcoyne, Matthew McGrath, Daire McGee, Rebecca McGlone, Tristan Regan, Sean Cunningham, Jack Lavin, Callum Murrin, Córa Connolly, Níamh Connolly, Katie Egan, Rebecca Murtagh.

Front Row: Oisín Moffatt, Abbi Walker, Nessa Brennan, Roland Scanlon, Ciara Conlon, Bishop Brendan Kelly, Dervilla Donohoe, Anne O'Brien, Latisha Mulligan, Breanna McMorrough, Farrah McDonagh



6th Class

Back Row: Fr James McDonagh, class teacher Ms. Patricia Hunt, Principal Ms. Dolores Taheny, Fr Gregory Hannan.

Row 3: Luke Tarmey, Aaron Keenan, Amy Scanlon, Laura Healy, Aisling Golden, Chloe Healy, Shauna Anderson, Katie Hogge, Leah Reynolds, Thalia Kelly.

Row 2: David Gardiner, Dylan Coggeran, Mark Conlon, Ewan Murrin, James Waters, April McGuinn, Aoife Loughlin, Casey Cullen, Nicola Redican, Megan Scanlon, Michaela KIELTY.

Front Row: Ryan Gallagher, Conor Finn, Darragh MacSharry, Zak O'Dowd, Nathan Egan, Bishop Brendan Kelly, Tom Ward, Eoin Mitchell, Jason Dwyer, Ryon Walker, Kevin Woods.



Knockminna N.S. First Communion 2014

Priest; Fr. James Mc Donagh.

Altar Servers: Brendan Hailstones, Jamie Hannon

Back Row:

Principal: Mrs. Louise King, Daniel King, Joseph Curran, Dalton Taylor, Jamie Quinn, Keilan Hannon, Tiernan O'Connor.

Class Teacher: Mr. Brian Henry.

Front Row: Tomas Faughnan, Michael Kerins, Sinead Nally, Nicole Wynne, Cassandra Clarke-Quigley, Shane Drury,



Knockminna N.S. Confirmation 2014

Back Row: Fr. James Mc Donagh P.P., Fr. Greg Hannan, Curate

Middle Row: Sinead Nally, Kate Brehony, Laoise King, Mrs. Louise King, Principal, Daniel Breslin, John Keenan, James Mc Morrow.

Front Row: Rebecca Cunnane, Lisa Hunt, Ceili Faughnan, Jamie Hannon, Brendan Hailstones, Aaron Brennan.

Seated: Bishop Brendan Kelly.

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Retired Bishop of Achonry

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