

# THE CORRAN HERALD

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## Norah Feehily

### Looks Back

*Interviewer P. J. Duffy*

**O**n the third day of January this year, Miss Norah Feehily celebrated her one hundred birthday.

ON SUNDAY 24TH OF OCTOBER last I visited her house which is situated close to Bunninadden village, and for two and a half hours listened to her reminiscences of her life and times.

This remarkable woman is, despite her years, very alert and has an extraordinary sense of hearing.

Aged seven years at the turn of the century, she clearly recalled many of the stirring events, and those people who were involved in them, from then to the present time.

She told me about the joy of her family in 1906, when they were granted a residential holding of land, by the Congested Districts Board. Small wonder they were elated, for what they inherited was the spacious residence of former landlord Joseph Miles (Joe Mor) McDonald, and a sizeable slice of the land surrounding it.

Anybody who has read local history will quickly recognise what a colourful character he was. During the middle years of the last century

he was a Member of Parliament - who represented the constituency of Mayo in the British House of Commons. She told me a story of how Joe, who at the time resided in a long low thatched house, was reading an English newspaper by his own fireside, when he came across an article by a London critic stating that the Hon. member of Parliament from Co. Mayo, would have been better engaged in keeping the cattle from eating the straw off the roof of his house, than making laws for the English people in the mother of Parliaments. Joe, on reading this statement flew into an uncontrollable rage and hurled the newspaper into the blazing fire. A strong draught caught the lighted paper and carried it up the chimney and out onto the roof which also caught fire and burned the house to the ground.

Joe with the assistance of his son-in-law Dominick Darcy replaced it with a modern slated dwelling, and this was the one into which young Norah Kelleher moved at the age of thirteen years.

Her early memories of the place were of playing with other kids in the shrub-decked gardens which surrounded her new home. The school she attended was situated a short distance down the road. It too owed its existence to the efforts of local M.P. Joe Mor. This, she said, was an academy where boys and girls were strictly segregated, the boys occupying one section of the building and the girls the other portion. Like all of those buildings built during this particular period in time a seven feet high wall divided the playgrounds.

She talked of the strict disci-



MRS. NORAH FEEHILY, photographed by Clare Doohan, a short time before her 100th birthday.

pline operating at the time, and how one of the teachers Miss Breslin was very cross. The other teacher Miss Friar, while less inclined to set out punishment, was also very strict. Yet, she explained, most pupils received a reasonable education there, and for the vast majority, it was the one which prepared them for life.

Norah Feehily talked at length about the country-house dances, which she said, were the great social occasions of her early years. She had vivid memories of a youthful Michael Coleman playing at these functions, and remarked, that as a boy of sixteen or seventeen he already had a master's command of the violin.

She told me a story of one particular occasion when a house was packed to capacity, and a host of musicians were sitting by the back wall giving of their best. Somebody announced, "Mickeen Coleman is here". And old fiddler sitting in a corner by the fireside quickly packed his fiddle and bow into a case, and pushed it back under a pooch-bed behind him, muttering "That garson is a bit too good for my likin". It would seem that even at this stage in his career, may older musicians were very much aware of his genius.

She went on to describe the door dancing. Most country houses had flagstone floors and were entirely unsuitable for step-dancing. The kitchen door which was usually a sturdy ledged and sheeted structure, measuring about six feet by three, was removed from its hinges and laid down on the centre of the kitchen floor, and the dancer displayed his agility by bouncing and sidestepping the length and breadth of the door, without sliding off. She remembered seeing Coleman doing this act, and playing the fiddle at the same time. There was even some young ones around who could do a dance on the largest flagstone on the kitchen floor.

At the tender age of seventeen

## Killavil School

*The following lines were written by Martin Brennan, N.T., around 1920 when he was principal at Killavil N.S.*

Killavill school still occupies  
That frontal river spot  
Where dwelled an old academy  
For many years forgot.

The teacher then was Anderson  
To him tis strange to know  
Our present teacher went to school  
Some fifty years ago.

No horseless cars then whirled by  
No airmen overhead  
No foreign news from round the globe  
At home was daily read.

If fifty years has brought such change  
One cannot imagine how  
The world wide will wag at all  
In fifty years from now.

By courtesy of Mrs. Gormley  
(Carrawoughlin)

years, young Norah Kelleher left it all behind her and headed off for the land of opportunity. She had got good friends and relations in the States, and soon found herself a suitable job in New York city. She later visited Boston which she described as a lovely friendly city with a large Irish population. Sometimes, during holiday time, she had gone on train journeys to other lesser-known parts of the States.

Here again she was to renew her acquaintance with Coleman and his music. This was when his 78 records began streaming out from the recording studios.

"Oh!" she remarked, "That man made a big mistake to have accepted a lump sum for allowing his music to be put on record". Had he been sensible and made a deal for royalties, he would have made a fortune.

April 6th 1917 saw America under Woodrow Wilson declare war on Germany. Norah had vivid memories of the young Irish lads,

and their efforts in trying to avoid being conscripted into the U.S. army. Some had contracted marriages in order to escape the draft. Many more were sent to Europe to fight in the great war. Hundreds of them died on the battlefield.

The old country beckons, and in 1922 Norah Kelleher returned home for good. One thing she missed greatly while abroad was the strolls through the lush, shrub-filled gardens that surrounded her home. Coleman's rendering of the Shaskeen reel had always brought back sweet memories of home. The title of this rousing tune derived from the name of a townland situated nearhand to Doocastle. Then, there was the words of that lovely old ballad which she recited in my presence.

*Doocastle was a lovely place  
When you and I were young  
In the green woods and the  
valleys  
The small birds softly sung.*

*There stands the lofty castle  
With its ivy coated o'er,  
It was planted by James Evans  
And the Cawleys of Doomore.*

Doocastle was still a lovely place in 1922, but a significant change had taken place during those years she had been away. A war of independence had taken place in the meantime. Some of the great landowners had vanished from the scene. People like the Phibbs family of Doobeg House, and the Cookes of Kilterra, whose



*The members of  
Ballymote  
Heritage Group*

*and the Editor of*

**The  
Corran Herald**

*James Flanagan  
would like to wish all our  
readers, contributors and  
advertisers a very happy  
and peaceful Christmas  
and a prosperous New  
Year*

**Nollaig Shona Óhfóh  
Go Léir**

respective townlands were situated nearhand to the Doocastle area.

A native Government was in place at the head of an Irish Free State.

Norah Kelleher married John Feehily in 1923 and she moved to his place at Ballinaraw, Bunninadden. The couple had two sons Kevin and Vincent. Her husband died in 1954, and her youngest son Vincent died in 1970. Vincie, as he was popularly known was a stylish young footballer who played with the 1953 junior Bunninadden football team which won the County final, and his death at the early age of 39 years caused widespread regret in this part of the country.

Nora Feehily to-day can surely lay claim to be one of the few remaining witnesses to many events great and small that have occurred during the course of this century.

She has lived through two World Wars. Ideologies, once believed formidable have risen and fallen. Dictators have come and gone. Our whole way of life has undergone a massive transformation.

After our conversation at her neat home where she resides with her son Kevin, I thought, what a wonderful woman of her years. Wouldn't it be just great if she survived long enough to see the dawn of a new century. And God willing, maybe it is not impossible.

Longevity is a phenomenon that is not peculiar to the Bunninadden area. Her cousin Mrs. Scanlon of Knocknalongh lived to the age of 102 years. There are at least two more people resident within the parish who are climbing close to the summit of their tenth decade. I've been reliably informed that a man named Scanlon, who dwelled in Kilshalvey, at the other end of the parish, had lived to the ripe old age of 109 years, and passed away in the early years of this century.

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## Sligo Champion March 1879

### ST. PATRICK'S DAY AT BALLYMOTE

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SLIGO  
CHAMPION

Sir, — The down-pour of rain and sleet which ushered in the National Festival kept thousands of persons apprehensive that the preparations for its celebration, which had been for a considerable time in progress, would have proved a fruitless task. However, about noon, to the joy of all, the day cleared, and hopefulness of a bright afternoon was in the ascendant. Then multitudes might be seen, from all points of the compass, wending their way towards the point of attraction. Amongst the first arrivals were those from Gevagh, Heaps-town, and Soeey, all respectable in appearance, and headed by Mr. MacDonagh, who displayed considerable tact and energy in his management of all committed to his guidance. They took for their route the Heapstown and Ballindoon road, and on by Castlebaldwin, and on arrival at the cliffs of Keash they were met by the contingent from Riverstown and its vicinity. Here they attended at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the parish chapel, at the conclusion of which, having formed into four deep, they proceeded to Ballymote, where the processionists of that village with band and banners awaited them. The latter body were marshalled by Messrs. McDermott, Walsh, and Cryan. All then proceeded to the Rockfield, by permission of Mr. Patrick Coghlan. At four o'clock p.m. the procession started from this point, led by Messrs. McDermott, MacDonagh, Walsh and Cryan on horseback, immediately followed by the Ballymote band.

All then marched through the town and out on the Ballaghadereen road, on by the church of Emlaghfad, and back to the starting point where they arrived about six o'clock, p.m. A platform having been here erected they were addressed by several speakers on divers interesting topics, amongst the rest, the grievances under which they laboured from the treatment received at the hands of unkind landlords and on their insufficient and unsatisfactory representation in the House of Commons. Suggestions were also offered as to the best means which could be adopted to mitigate such grievances. They were also warmly and deservedly congratulated on the becoming manner in which they had conducted themselves throughout the day, and they were cautioned against any excesses on their way to their respective homes which would reflect discreditably on them and on the great feast which they had met to celebrate. Ten hundred men and youths took part in the procession, each wearing a scarf. Several banners waved along the line in which the most conspicuous inscriptions were, "Saint Patrick", "The harp and Shamrock", "God Save Ireland", "The Sunburst and Shamrock". Some thousands of persons were also amongst the lookers-on. National airs were the order of the day, "Patrick's Day", "Garryowen", "God Save Ireland" and "O'Donnell Aboo", being played alternately.

Over the gateways leading into the field when the procession was marshalled were erected triumphal

arches which were most tastefully decorated, and on which was inscribed conspicuously "Welcome All". I have heard that several persons attended from the counties of Galway and Roscommon. A large constabulary-force drafted from various out-stations was in attendance to preserve order if necessary, but it must be gratifying to all who value the moral reputation of our countrymen, to learn that such a vast concourse of persons assembled, and dispersed without doing any act which would call for the interference of the preservers of the public peace. Evening came, and with it the knowledge that such was the sobriety maintained and such was the good order in every sense preserved, that not a single arrest was made.

*I am, sir,  
truly yours,  
A Lover of the Triple Leaf.*

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# Christmas Reflections

STAN CASEY

**W**inter has arrived and the dark days of November are with us. The leaves are falling, falling with a gentle patter on the roadways and pavements, and finally rest with the soil of mother earth.

All natures children are silent! But hark! the great festival of Christmas is at hand and the heart of man will soon be filled with joy, hope and peace in anticipation of meeting loved ones away, and old friends once again.

Christmas has changed over the past few decades. The commercial life of towns and cities has also changed! No longer do we hear the rumble of carts, and the babble of turkeys and the gaggle of geese at the Christmas markets in our towns.

We all dream of a White Christmas as do our little children, but a white Christmas is rather rare in our country. Changes in weather patterns, caused by the Greenhouse effect or more simply the heating effect, and the ozone layer depletion which results from emissions such as methane C.F.C. etc. The net result of these is a gradual decline in the incidence of the traditional white Christmas.

Santa Claus is now air borne to our supermarkets. I do hope that our little children still hang up their stockings and dream of the "traditional" Santa plodding through the snow with his laden sleigh drawn by reindeer.

The carol singers are and always will be a special feature of the festive season.

One of our most lovely and oldest carols has a very strange origin. It seems that one Christmas Eve in a little village called Augergaten, near Salzburg in Austria, the year being 1818 Pastor Mourd was practising carols for midnight Mass on the old organ in the Church, when suddenly the instrument became silent.



Christmas Candle

## *"We all dream of a White Christmas"*

such as Bing Crosby and throughout the world. Both men were never recognised for this beautiful musical creation, and it is sad to think that both men died in abject poverty.

Lastly, as our own country is presently in the throes of despair and tragedy I am prompted to quote the verse of Thomas Davis.

*What matters that, at different shrines we pray  
unto one God".*

*What matters that at different times our fathers  
won the Sod"*

*In fortune and in name we're bound by stronger  
links than steel,*

*And neither can be safe nor sound, but  
in the other's weal".*



# T. CASEY

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*Christmas Greetings to one and all*

FOLLOWING A SERIES OF MEETINGS recently held at Ballymote which had been most successful and of a most enthusiastic character, the first ordinary business meeting was held in the Court-house on Thursday, 18th inst, at 12 o'clock. On the motion of Canon Walker, Mr. Henry Shaw was moved to the chair. Canon Loftus, PP; Canon Walker, rector; Rev. H. Knox, Mr. J. Gore-Booth, and Mr. Bourne, from the Irish Agricultural Organisation, were also present. The building was crowded by farmers and others interested in the movement, the bench being occupied by ladies. The first business taken up was reading over the long list of applicants for shares (400) who it was proposed should be admitted, members of the society. The number of shares allotted being 1,110 (eleven hundred and ten) which we understand is a record number. The chairman then called on Mr. Bourne, and subsequently on Mr. Gore-Booth who explained fully to the meeting how they were to proceed with election of a committee of management which was no easy matter owing to the vast area embraced by the society and the large number to be represented. Eventually the townlands were grouped and a member elected from each group; only in a few instances was a poll required. Mr. R. A. Duke, D L, Newpark, was elected president; Mr. Henry Shaw, Clooneen, vice-president; Mr. Jackson-Hawksby, secretary; and Mr. J.D. O'Brien and Mr. Hawksby, treas. The Chairman then

SLIGO CHAMPION FEBRUARY 1897

## THE CREAMERIES

### BALLYMOTE CO-OPERATIVE CREAMERY SOCIETY

said as the selection of a site seemed still a matter of considerable difficulty for various reasons, and as he always expected such would be the case, as they might bear in mind, he suggested to them at a former meeting to leave the matter entirely in the hands of Mr. Gore-Booth and Mr. Bourne, as they would take the most important view of the whole matter. However, as these gentlemen seemed to find some difficulty, not knowing what direction the largest supply was likely to come from, he (the chairman) now suggested that Canon Loftus, Canon Walker, Mr Bourne and Mr. Gore-Booth should fix upon the site, their selection to be unanimously agreed upon. This suggestion was eagerly applauded, and was so practical that these gentlemen soon after fixed upon a site, one which now meets with general approval, alongside the railway, convenient to the rectory, where an abundant supply of water is always available. A cordial vote of thanks was accorded the chairman, on the motion of Canon Loftus, and the meeting concluded at 3 o'clock. The committee appointed at the general meeting met again at the Court-house at 4 o'clock, Mr. Henry Shaw again taking the chair, Mr. Gore-

Booth, Mr. Bourne, Canon Loftus, Canon Walker, Rev. Mr. Knox, and almost all the members elected being present. The purchase of site was agreed upon and a large amount of practical work was done; correspondence with firms who supply machinery and other plant, and other measures were taken to get the work in hands as soon as possible. The committee sat till a late hour discussing many things, amongst others, the important matter of the pig trade, Mr. Bourne advising the committee to take immediate measures to send their pigs direct to the curers, which they will take steps as soon as possible to carry out. The society has fairly broken the record, having the largest number of shareholders and largest number of shares allotted of any society yet established. Much credit is due to Miss Letty Reynolds for setting the matter in motion, to Mr. Henry Shaw who did an immense amount of organising work, and who deserves great credit for the energy he displayed in pushing the business on. Mr. Hawksby makes an excellent secretary, and had had a lot of heavy work to get through, Canon Loftus, Canon Walker, Rev. H. Knox, and the Rev. D. O'Grady giving every possible assistance. The harmony existing amongst all classes promises a fine future for this large society. People generally feel much indebted to Mr. Gore-Booth for his assistance, and his very practical addresses and suggestions showing he had a full group of his subject. The applause he received showed he was always in touch with his audience. We sincerely hope the public expectations may be realized in the present creamery movement. The following gentlemen form an excellent Committee:—*Messrs M. Scanlon, R. Orr, T. Cregan, G. Boyers, P. O'Brien, M.P. Scully, R.N. Craig, J.C. Brady, B. Rogers, P. McGetrick, H. Clifford, J. Hannon, P.W. Coghlan, P. Bruen, Honorary Members — The Very Rev. Canon Loftus, PP; the Rev. Canon Walker; the Very Rev. H.M. Knox.* ○

## 1935 AT GURTEEN



Members of the Management and staff of Gurteen creamery pictured by a German photographer in 1935

L to R P. Horan Jnr., P. J. Colleary, Dominick Murray Sec., M. McKeon carrier, J. Cawley, M. Tansey, M. Towey, P. McDonagh, L. Hannon, K. Hannon, M.K. Finn, K. Duffy, H. Horan, P. Horan Manager, father of Harry Horan, former Chemist at Ballymote.

# COLLOONEY CHURCH

MARY WHITE

**1993 WAS A SPECIAL YEAR for Collooney because the Parish Church, dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven, was 150 years old. Two years earlier, while Dean Paddy Higgins was P.P. and Fr. Tommy Johnston Curate they undertook the preparation of the Church for this anniversary, by painting inside, sanding, tarmacing, and flood-lighting outside. To economise on heating the area under the balcony was transformed into a Blessed Sacrament Chapel, for morning Mass, Adoration etc., and the Baptismal Font was re-located at the Sacred Heart Altar. Everybody loved Fr. Johnston and the money came rolling in.**

**A**t the same time The Board of Works/Department of the Environment were doing a splendid job on the Grotto area opposite the Church. The statue of the Sacred Heart was presented by Fr. Towey when he was Curate in Collooney. When Dean Higgins P.P. retired everyone was again delighted by the arrival of the youthful happy Curate Fr. Vincent Sherlock, but the happiness was short lived because Fr. Johnston was made Parish Priest in Mullinabreena, a parish he chose to be near Collooney, and while we were happy for his promotion, we were grieved to lose him. But we still had Fr.

Sherlock. It took a few transition weeks before our new P.P. Fr. Joseph Spelman settled among us because the Parish House was under re-construction, and is now 100% restored to its former beauty. With all that work and dedication the Church end of the town is a sight to behold day and night.

**O**n August 15th, 1993 the actual feast of the Assumption, Mass was broadcast from the Church on N.W.R. and Fr. Spelman delivered the following homily:

*"Under our Diocese Achonry, in the Directory of Catholic Churches, in Ireland, which is published every year since early in the last century, under the heading 'The State of Religion in Achonry', is written (and he quoted) 'There is in the small town of Collooney, a new Catholic Church, in course of erection, which when finished, will be one of the most beautiful, ornamental churches in the entire province. The style of architecture is Gothic. The plan consists of Nave, Aisles, Transept, Chancel, and Tower. The entire length is 110 feet. The Tower which will be 150 feet high, is placed in the western end of the North Aisle. The Church will be dedicated to God under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary. An undertaking of such magnitude in so poor an area, does credit to the pastor of the parish, Very Rev. Dean Patrick Durcan, who was consecrated Bishop of Achonry, in the Church on September 30th 1852, and to the piety and generosity of his worthy parishioners, who have no nobly seconded his laudable efforts in promoting the glory of God, by building a temple worthy of*

## 150 Years



*Mid Majesty'. It is difficult for us in 1993 to understand how they did it. For them failure was out of the question". Concluding Fr. Spelman said "Collooney stands at a gap in the Ox Mountains, a very busy gap. Hundreds of thousands of people have seen the Church, standing guard on its hill beside the town, a monument to those who built it, and a challenge to us to follow them".*

**O**n the 8th of September, 1993 Our Lady's Birthday, the school children got a half day, and local carpenter Mick White was summoned by Jim Gilligan to bore a hole in the new floor of the belfry to allow the rope from the old bell, cast in 1888, through so the bell could toll in celebration. Bishop Thomas Flynn and at least twenty five priests, all of whom had connections with Collooney in the past, attended the special Mass at 8 pm celebrated by Fr. Spelman P.P. Fr. Sherlock was MC for the night (in a class of his own the PP said). The church was filled to capacity, and everyone received a commemorative

booklet on arrival. The offerings included unlit candles, a stone, a stole, a model of the Church by Edel Giblin, the Book of the Dead, The Bread and Wine. The prayers of the faithful were offered for courage, reverence, the sick, the Church, the young and the joy of the night which included a social and dance in the Teeling Centre, with music by Christy O'Grady. Sr. Ann O'Connor provided a beautiful cake which was cut ceremoniously by 87 year old Sr. Philomena O'Dea, Kinvarra and Swinford. Also present were Sr. Consilio, Clifden and Swinford, and many of the sisters who taught in the Convent school down the years.

Other special guests present were Mr. Edward and Lady Diana Cooper of Markree Castle (it was Mr. Joshua Cooper seven generations back who donated the site for the Church) and Mr. Harry O'Rourke, Sligo grand-nephew of Fr. Terence O'Rourke, who was PP in Collooney for fifty five years, 1852 to 1907.

The following was gleaned from the booklet:

In 1798 Mass was offered in all of the following locations – The Glen and Largan called Leim na Heile; by a large ledge of rock over the village of Coney; at Clogh an Sagairt in Kinnegrelly; at Bealachban with an earthen enclosure; in a barn at Largan, South side of the mountain; in 1770 Fr. Watt erected a small slated Chapel at Carhownagh, part of which is incorporated in the present Chapel; at Lisseneena, by a ditch in an open field; and finally in a long thatched house at the angle of the road turning up the hill between Tubberscanavan and Cartron.

The Church was designed by Sir John Benson who was born and reared in Collooney, and Bishop Durcan toyed with the idea of its being a Cathedral before Ballaghderrreen. Saints Feighin and Lassera, to whom the Church in Ballinacarrow is dedicated, were natives. The nicely tapered spire of the Church was completed in 1878, and in September of that year the Cross and Pedestal arrived from Dublin in a case 24 feet long. The Cross was 15 feet, with 9 feet of pedestal set in masonry. It was erected by Mr. Joe Clarence, scaffolder, Johnny Woods Aghamore, and helpers Tom Curran, Eddie McGuinness, Knockbeg, Tommy Hall and Michael McDonnell, Ballisodare, as well as people from Collooney Mills and Markree Castle. The women prayed on the doorsteps, and Dr. O'Rourke read his Office in the Chapel yard for its safe transit.

And finally from Archdeacon O'Rourke's History of the parish: "The architect, the masons, the plasterers, the carpenters, the labourers, all engaged in the erection of the Church were parishioners, and most of the money was collected by the people of the parish". □ □ □

## M.S Readathon

*Stephen Flannery*

M.S Readathon is a fund raising effort in aid of M.S.. Every year Scoil Mhuire gan Smál participates in the Readathon. M.S. stands for Multiple Sclerosis. We read books in order to raise money for the M.S. victims.

### *What is Multiple Sclerosis/M.S?*

It is a disease of the central nervous system. It can affect the ability to walk or to use one's limbs.

### *Who gets it?*

It usually strikes 15 to 40 years olds. Tens, hundreds and even thousands of Irish people are directly affected by Multiple Sclerosis.

### *What causes it and is there a cure?*

The cause is not yet known nor the cure or treatment, but it is said that one day, with our help, it will be found. We are proud to say our school has collected £500 and we have also benefited by the reading done.

A word of thanks to our sponsors too!

*Stephen Flannery, 5th class Age 11  
Scoil Mhuire gan Smál, Ballymote.*

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A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND  
A BRIGHT NEW YEAR

SLIGO STAR JANUARY 1901

# THE INDUSTRIAL MOVEMENT

## LACE MAKING AT BALLYMOTE

The "IRISH DAILY INDEPENDENT" publishes the following particulars concerning the Beechmount Home Industries' Society, and the lace-making carried on under its auspices:—

The society has now been working only eight months, having started operations in May last, when a class of nineteen girls was formed.

Work had however, to be suspended owing to an outbreak of illness in the neighbourhood, and the class was not re-opened till September. Since then decided progress has been made. Over twenty girls now attend the class. They turn out really fine work, which fetches a good price. Almost all the workers employed are now making saleable work. The beginners, of course, get a smaller price than the more advanced pupils — but any remuneration is an object. The prices vary from 3s 9d to 18s the piece; handkerchiefs and collarettes being among the articles made. As an evidence of the perseverance of the workers it may be mentioned that several of them are physically disabled. Their delicacy prevents them from engaging in hard work, and it is only under great difficulties that they can even engage in the lace work. Miss Reynolds personally instructed the girls who, owing to ill-health, were unable to attend the class. One of these girls, who works with her left hand owing to her right hand being powerless, earned 3s 9d for the first piece of work — a small

handkerchief — which she turned out. True heroism is displayed by these brave efforts made under such difficulties and disadvantages. Lace-making may with justice be classed under the heading of those "refining and dignifying handicrafts" above referred to. The habits of thrift, cleanliness and neatness displayed by the workers are remarkable. The Beechmount Industry, though only in its infancy, promises to be of untold benefit to the girls and women of the district. As usual, the question of the sinews of war is a vital one.

The industry, having so lately started, and not being as yet widely known, is struggling.

The difficulty in supporting the classes is great. A teacher has been professionally engaged, and is paid a weekly salary. The payment of this salary, combined with other incidental expenses, is a tax which is met with great difficulty. The society is trying to get assistance from the Congested Districts' Board. If it succeeds in doing so it will be enabled to extend its operation considerably, and benefit the neighbouring congested districts accordingly.

If there is ever an occasion on which the Irish women should feel bound to come to the help of their less fortunately placed countrywomen, it is in a case of this kind. The workers more than do their part, and it is for the spending section of the community now to do theirs. The very name of Irish lace now calls up to the feminine mind visions of "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever". No sacrifice is required from those who patronise home manufacture, for they can-

not possibly get better material for their money. Let all those who think of making themselves or their friends a present of the ever-admired lace remember such enterprises as that organised at the Beechmount, Ballymote, Co. Sligo. They will then have the gratification of knowing that they have helped to keep some of our girls at home under the sheltering shadow of the "Fair Hills of Holy Ireland". □



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# CLOONAMEEHAN GRAVEYARD 1993

*...“to mark the family grave with a piece of cut stone taken from the church, brought the sanctity of the church to the grave plot”*



View of CLOONAMEEHAN DOMINICAN PRIORY from the north west with domestic range to the left

THE DOMINICANS came to Ireland in 1224. They founded three houses in Co. Sligo. These were in Sligo town in 1252 by Maurice Fitzgerald and Ballindoon in 1507 and Cloonameehan in 1488, both by the McDonagh family. Cloonameehan is in Rinnarogue townland, 4 miles west of Ballymote. In 1588, after the suppression of the monasteries, the friary and its lands were granted to Richard Kindlemersh. It later passed to the Taffe family and then to the Earl of Shelburne.

The monastic complex was of a much greater extent than what is within the present graveyard wall; regrettably we do not know what lands or other buildings they possessed. The remains of the buildings stand in the centre of the old graveyard. The ruinous church, like all Dominican houses, had its domestic range to its north. Other orders placed their domestic quarters and cloisters to the south so they would get the maximum sunlight; on the north side the roof of

the church casts a shadow on the living area. This added to the discomfort and penance of Dominican monastic life. The two light east window, the only intact feature, is well carved but it is now in an unstable condition. There is a projection on the inside of the central mullion of the window for holding shutters or framed glass in place. There is a plain piscina in the south wall where the sacred vessels were washed.

On the 1836 Ordnance Survey map the graveyard is kidney shaped, the present Bunninadden to Ballymote road had not yet been built. The entrance to the graveyard was from the north-east corner. The shape of the graveyard at that time can still be seen in the alignment of graves to the west of the priory. These graveplots are the oldest undisturbed graves in the graveyard perhaps dating from as far back as the 18th. century. A few of these graves have been moulded with stones, a feature which can also be seen in other parts of the graveyard.

## Mary B. Timoney

The interior of the church and of the domestic range were used for burials after the Suppression. Many of the graves are marked by marking stones. These stones have no inscriptions and a great many of them were stones taken from the buildings to mark family plots. Several rows of them are within and around the buildings. The oldest dated inscriptions on the grave memorials are from the early 19th. century. The small number of inscribed memorials is not necessarily an indication of poverty. It has to be remembered that not many people were able to read and write then, and it could have been considered more important to mark the family grave with a piece of cut stone taken from the church, bringing the sanctity of the church to the grave plot.

There are some very fine memorials in the graveyard. The most notable of these being the two sandstone memorials made by J. Finn of Bunninadden dating to the second half of the 19th. century and the well carved limestone headstones to Patrick Rogers, who died 1817, and to Rose Druery, who died 1823. There are some fine table tombs which are large stones supported by four legs and look like low tables. Some of the recumbent stones, that is those that lie flat on the ground, have well carved putti (angel) heads in the corners and are the work of a branch of the Diamond family who came from Skreen to work in Bunninadden. Two nationally known people buried here are John O Dowd, M.P. for South Sligo 1900-1918, and Joe O Dowd, Sligo traditional musician.

A FAS graveyard clean up scheme organised by Bunninadden Parish Council with support from Sligo County Council started in September 1993. After two months work the vegetation has been cut back and removed from the graveyard. The areas inside the graveyard walls and around the



*Headstone of the Healy family carved by J. Finn of Bunninadden.*

trees have been cleared of loose stone and rubbish. These stones have been built into a circular platform in a depression to the east of the church. No stone has been removed from the graveyard. A special area will be allocated for the dumping of material in the future. The existing paths have been cleaned and new ones are to be made. The stream inside the roadside wall of the graveyard is to be piped and covered, giving a greater area for parking. All work has been done under constant archaeological supervision.

Maintenance of the graveyard after the proposed clean up should be easy. This should be done as a matter of local pride. Weed killer may seem a simple solution. However the side effects make it unwise. It encourages the growth of moss and coarse weeds for the future and we simply do not know the long term effect of even small quantities of chemicals on stone. As one alternative, the concept of graveyard days could be established. On these days the parishioners would collectively go and cut the fresh growth, grass, small tree shoots and briars, before they get out of hand. This should be in Spring or early Summer; perhaps Good Friday would be an ideal day to begin and again in Autumn. While this may

seem the task of the clergy to organise, individual families must keep their plots in good condition. Alternatively, someone could be employed for a brief period to do this work.

Graveyards very easily can go back to an overgrown condition in a short time. Unfortunately some graveyards which were cleaned up six or seven years ago in the county are now in as bad a condition if not worse. It must not be left to FAS schemes or the County Council to upkeep them. It is a way that people can show respect to their dead. "It is a holy and a wholesome thing to pray for the dead." should have been "It is a holy and a wholesome thing to pray for the dead and to care for their last resting place."

Walking a graveyard can be a pleasant experience. It is important to give our children a pride in their family and community so that they appreciate their graveyard as a part of the history and living heritage of the county. ●●

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I heard a dog "woof, woof,  
I switched on my torch and looked  
around,*

*But there was nothing to be found.*

*Then next evening when walking again,  
I heard a cat "Meow",  
I shone my torch and looked again,  
But nothing did it shine upon.*

*When walking again with my friend,  
I did not hear a dog or cat,  
But heard a horse "neigh",  
I shone my torch,  
But nothing was there except a post,  
Was it a ghost?*

By Niamh Mongey  
Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál  
Age 11  
6th Class



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## SLIGO CHAMPION MARCH 1935 OWNERSHIP OF BALLYMOTE COURTHOUSE

### REPORT TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL

At the meeting of the Co. Council held on Saturday last, the Secretary, Mr. M. Keane, submitted the following report:—

"At meeting of 31st August last, I was directed to look up any records obtainable dealing with Ballymote Courthouse which is presently in need of urgent repair. I, therefore, submit the following particulars:—

- (1) The Ballymote Courthouse and buildings on the plot of ground, attached thereto was built by the Grand Jury in 1813-15 on a lease obtained from the landlord (Gore-Booth) at an annual rent of £5. Those buildings originally cost the Grand Jury about £1750;
- (2) In the year 1885 the Grand Jury handed over to Gore-Booth the premises known as the Bridewell (where, prisoners were kept) and the caretaker's residence, both of those buildings were attached to the courthouse and built on plot referred to, and in later years, about 1915, the Gore-Booth property in and around Ballymote was sold to the Congested Districts Board, who notified the Co. Council in 1921 that the ground rent of £5 was sold to the Ballymote Electric Lighting Company, and to whom this rent has since being paid. It is obvious, therefore, that the courthouse is the property of the Sligo Co. Council, and a sum of £300 was spent by them on putting it into repair in 1925. In March, 1925, the Electric Lighting Company offered to sell the courthouse, etc., to the Sligo Co. Council for the sum of £300. This offer was refused on the grounds that the courthouse was their own property".

The report was referred to the Co. Surveyor to have the necessary repairs carried out. .

## Official Opening of New School

A new era for primary education has begun in Ballymote with the opening of Scoil Mhuire gan Smál. Built as to include and greatly extend the former girls' school it is the result of the amalgamation of that school with the former boys' school and it brings about the full integration of primary education in Ballymote.

The official opening took place on October 29th, 1993. A special Mass was concelebrated in the Parish church, at which the Bishop of Achonry, Most Rev. Dr. Flynn, was chief celebrant. The other celebrants were Very Rev Canon Flynn, P.P., Ballymote, Rev. Fr. O'Mahony, C.C. Ballymote, and Very Rev. Canon Wims. Pupils, teachers and representatives of the fund-raising Committee took part in the liturgy, being involved in reading, singing, Prayers of the Faithful and Offertory Procession. In this Procession models of the two former schools and of the new extension were presented as gifts.

Also present were members of the Board of Management, former teachers, INTO representatives, the president of the Association of Primary Teaching Sisters, Flanagan Bros. (Builders), representatives of B.O.W, Mr Eamonn McGuinness, Divisional Inspector, Local Dáil Deputies and County Councillors.

At the school itself the tape was cut by



**Mr. Eamonn McGuinness, Divisional Inspector, unveiling a plaque to commemorate the renovation and extension of Scoil Mhuire gan Smál**

Bishop and a plaque was unveiled by Mr McGuinness.

The teaching staff of the new school is as follows: *Sr. Regina Lydon* (Principal), *Mrs Dolores Taheny* (Vice-Principal), *Mr N. Farry*, *Mrs N. Tansey*, *Mrs M. Orr*, *Mrs Kennedy-Reilly*, *Mrs O'Connor-Davey*, *Mr M. Heffernan*, *Mrs L. Nollan*, *Mrs M. Crowe*. ○

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## BEECHMOUNT

## HOME INDUSTRIES, BALLYMOTE

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The annual general meeting of the Beechmount Home Industries Society was recently held in the Courthouse, Ballymote.

The Very Rev. Canon Loftus presided.

Amongst those present were: Mrs. Gethin, Earlsfield; Mrs. Walker, Rectory; Mrs. Tighe, Mullaghour Cottage, and the Misses Tighe, Miss Reynolds, Beechmount; Rev. D. Gallagher, C.C.; Rev. D. O'Grady, Adm. Bunninadden; Mr. J. D. O'Brien, J.P.; Dr. Harte, Mr. A. Gillmor, J.P.; Mr. J. G. Reynolds, Mr. J. Reynolds, Mr. J. Tighe, Mr. P. Dawson, Mr. J. Hunter, Mr. M. Davey etc.

Letters expressing inability to attend were read from the Most Rev. Dr. Clancy, Lord Bishop of Elphin; Sir Jocelyn Gore-Booth, Mrs. Percival, Templehouse, president of the Society, Major C.K. O'Hara, Annaghmore, Rev. Canon Walker.

Miss L. Reynolds, hon. sec., read the report of the committee from May 1899, to December 1900. It was to the effect that the Society was formed and the school began to work in May, 1899, but owing to an unfortunate outbreak of scarlatina in the district the school had to be closed in June, and that naturally retarded the progress of the industry. The school re-opened in September, 1899, with a class of fifteen workers. The first work of the girls was sold in October. When the school closed for the holidays on the 1st September, the number of workers had increased to thirty. The increase had been gradual since the school opened, and the October after the holidays the number of workers had increased to 60. The entire sale of lace since the re-opening of the school in September, 1899, amounted to £116 4s 4d. This

as compared with the amount of work done by other schools does not come up to the average which it might easily have reached. There seemed to be great apathy and want of earnestness amongst the workers. It was a greivous state of things, as it showed lack of energy and interest on the part of the girls not only in their work, but self-improvement. From her experience of this and other schools she could state that a girl could easily earn from 6s to 10s per week. In fact some of their young workers had realised on an average 6s per week, and the earnings of some have even reached 10s per week occasionally. She believed but for their own want of energy they might have been receiving payment at this rate almost constantly. The report also stated that the girls should have been more regular in their attendance at school, for those who had been regular in their attendance at work had made remarkable progress, so much so that at present two of them were engaged as teachers in other parts of the country on a salary of £1 per week respectively. It showed that although much fault could be found with many of the workers, many of them had done credit to the district to where they belonged. The teacher, Miss McArdle is an efficient and careful manager and deserves much praise for the way she looks after the pupils. She might mention that she holds a medal from the Belfast Exhibition of 1887 for excellent work.

The Very Rev. Chairman read the letter from the Most Rev. Dr. Clancy which was before the Roscommon Co. Council on Tuesday, with reference to the Technical Education in the Co. Roscommon, and explained how it

also would affect Sligo.

Mr. Shaw also addressed the meeting, and advocated the introduction and advancement of Technical instruction, and referred to its claims in Ballymote for financial aid from the Committee of Technical Education. He also referred to the necessity for

---

**"a girl could easily earn  
from 6s to 10s per week"**

---

improvement in cottage homes, and suggested the formation of a committee to offer prizes for the various improvements, such as cleanliness, flower beds, the planting of shrubs and trees about the house, removal of dung heaps and cesspools from the immediate vicinity of the houses. He forcibly reminded those present that some homes were difficult of improvement, such as those occupied by bachelors, notwithstanding the presence of Dr. Harte — (laughter) — but if the disease was not chronic it might not yet be considered hopeless. In appealing to the people to join strongly and unitedly to claim their rights under the financial scheme of the Technical and Agricultural Committee he also, appealed as strenuously to the landlords to exercise their duties as keenly as they exercised their rights in assisting the people to ameliorate the condition of their homes, as it was well that with financial improvement they should have domestic amelioration.

Dr. Harte then addressed the meeting, and said he had no intention of taking any part in the proceedings, but could not resist Mr. Shaw's attack on bachelors in gen-

eral, and his implied attack on himself (Dr. Harte) in particular. Bachelorhood was no man's misfortune. The most that could be said of it was man's fault, a fault which all bachelors sooner or later intended to remedy (laughter). He thought it rather unfair of Mr. Shaw to drag bachelors into his remarks, considering, as they all believed, he was a bachelor himself at one time. Bearing in mind Mr. Shaw's deep interest in the question of co-operation, he would suggest that he would apply that principle to the abolition of bachelors (loud laughter). In coming to the serious side of the question, from his experience during the last twelve months from visiting the homes of people throughout the district, he could bear testimony to the great improvement, especially amongst the girls, that has been brought about by the co-operative lace industry. He thought it may be regarded as a blessing for the district, and he was of opinion that all those interested in that improvement owe a deep debt of gratitude to Miss Reynolds for her unselfish efforts to secure the success of the Beechmount Lace Class. In reference to the grant from the Department, his small experience of Governmental Departments had been that they are slowest to those who most need their help, and he would advise them to persevere and be independent, and they would find that the Department would be only too ready to give them the grant. The one great feature in the improvement of the girls was the spirit of independence displayed amongst them. There were a lot of the girls present now and he would again suggest to Mr. Shaw to apply his co-operative principles. He heartily endorsed everything Mr. Shaw said on the subject. (Applause).

Here Very Rev. Canon Loftus retired, and Mr. Henry Shaw took the chair.

Miss Reynolds next spoke, and regretted the apathy displayed by the lace workers here when compared to similar classes in Mayo and urged greater efforts on their

part, when she anticipated greater results would be obtained.

The election of committee, which up to the present, consisted of ladies, was then gone into, and the following were unanimously added to the existing committee — Miss Tighe, Mullagheur Cottage; Very Rev. Canon Loftus, P.P.; Mr. J. Hannon, J.P.; Mr. J. H. Reynolds, and Dr. Harte.

Mrs. Percival, Templehouse, was unanimously re-elected president, and Miss Letty Reynolds, hon. sec.

The retiring lady members of the committee were re-elected unanimously.

Mr. Shaw, the presiding chairman, at this period proposed in very happy terms a cordial vote of thanks to Miss Reynolds on her splendid exertions in connection with the lace industry.

Dr. Harte seconded the vote of thanks, which was passed with acclamation.

Miss Letty Reynolds being moved to the second chair, Mr. J. H. Reynolds proposed and Mrs. Tighe seconded a vote of thanks to Mr. Shaw for presiding.

The Chairman having acknowledged that he always spoke freely among an audience of gentleman, but when it came to addressing or responding to such a large audience of ladies, it brought him forcibly back to his younger days (laughter). He felt young again on being honoured on this occasion by addressing such a large audience principally composed of ladies, and he failed to realise from the happiness which that sex brought him to the domestic circle why so many bachelors were at large, and hoped that the beginning of the century would be an improvement and advancement in the highest sense of co-operation by the introduction of more of the element he saw before him, amongst the homes of those bachelor individuals (applause).

Several beautiful specimens of the lace — the lace of the girls of the Beechmount were on display.

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Prosperous New Year.*



# GOLF HISTORY

by Tom McGettrick

IT'S NOT THE KIND OF HISTORY one finds in school books but recent references to Ballymote in high places sent me down memory lane and I thought I would report back from there. I was given a beautifully produced thirty-six page brochure for The European Club at Brittas Bay, Wicklow, which had a foreword headed "A precious link added to Ireland's golfing ring of Gold" written by Pat Ruddy, the club and links owner and designer. In its glossy pages I found Michael Davey, Paddy Coen, Paddy Mullen and Harry Horan acknowledged by Pat Ruddy for their help in guiding his first steps at Ballymote on the way to his present status in the world of golf.

Then a young lady was enthusing about Sligo's scenery after a recent holiday there that included a game of golf at Ballymote for her husband and herself. She spoke with deep appreciation of Carmel's and Owen's kindness and she knew that the club had recently changed its grounds but she did not remember the names. It was golf at Ballymote and this was their first time there.

History takes over now. The first golf was at Derroon on Captain Gethin's 40 acre farm. That was in the 1920's. Fr. Anthony never kept the congregation long at Mass— a half hour, less if there was golf. He was driving off on the first tee and there were others waiting. He had a "fresh air" that's when one hits nothing, a complete miss. To add to his embarrassment Joe H— who liked taking a rise out of him remarked "You didn't even hit Ireland, Father". There were other stories, just fun. It fixes the Derroon era. He was in Ballymote from 1922 to 1933. No more welcome or consoling priest could come to a house when illness or other trials asked for his ministrations. But golf has even produced widows.

In the 1930's golf had moved to the share-farm in Carrigans Upper. The first tee drove up by the "flash" Michael T— was an engineer trained in straight lines but his ball mostly went in a kind of semi-circle and into the water. In a thousand years time when golf has given way to some other game probably up in the sky, golf-balls will be dug up there — not all Michael's of course — and zoologists who by that time will know everything will explain them as a pre-natal stage in the development of dinosaurs of the frog genius, eggs that didn't hatch out. But history is about what happened, not what is in prospect.

For a brief period golf moved to Kilbrattan, a lovely setting at Templehouse Lake, it moved to Patterson's farm at Carrigans and then after a period with no home to go to, the club came back to the share-farm, and there followed many years of pleas-

ant association with the shareholders and highly successful ones for the club. Ballinascarrow takes over from here.

Pat Ruddy's boyhood heroes weren't pioneers (beer and spirits included) but they brought the club through many trials. Only for them and Pat and Mickey and a few others it would have died and Ballymote would have lost a social asset of great value.

I, who have a picture of the 9th green with the big rock nearby, on my wall to keep memory fresh join in a farewell to the share-farm. In those years the shareholders were guests at an annual dinner in the local hotel and as they took their seats on one such occasion these lines were scribbled. Some are now shareholders from where they can look down on all golfers, others like Matt and Paddy and Owen may remember:-

*You may talk of Killarney and of Lough Gill so fair,  
Travel all Ireland, go here and go here,  
But where will you find such fresh air and such  
charm,*

*As beside Ballymote on the Carrigans share farm.*

*And to match this fine scene there are people so grand,  
Who gave to the golf club a lease of the land,  
And now here tonight we are all joined in one  
To eat and to chat and to dance and have fun.*

*There's the Scanlons, Pat, Paddy, Mattie and Owen,  
And Batty Joe Cawley who lives on his own,  
Jimmy Lavin, Mick Hunt, Berchmans Scully also  
And Willie Killoran sitting down there below.*

*In the words of the poet  
Men may come, men may go,  
Life's like that, we pass on, you all know 'tis so,  
May the ties that unite us tonight never sever,  
But remain like the brook that keeps going forever.*

*And now in the evening when the sun's going low,  
And you've worked hard all day and you've nowhere  
to go,*

*Take your clubs in the car, there's no cause for alarm,  
And play the nine holes on the Carrigans share-farm.*

*Sic transit ...*

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Happy Christmas  
and a  
Prosperous New Year*

## Our Furry and Feathered Friends



Diane Keevans



EVERY CHRISTMAS many children get pets as presents. But is this a good idea? The I.S.P.C.A. argues that pets shouldn't be given as Christmas presents, as after a while the novelty wears off and the pets are neglected. Puppies and kittens are often the innocent victims.

In early Spring, many young animals are found in dumps or straying around towns. Donkeys and horses are also very cruelly treated, but we can prevent this happening by following some simple rules. Before parents give animals as presents, they should check out the real interest and commitment of young children to their pets.

Dogs and cats and all other types of pets must be fed well, kept warm, exercised regularly and given their worm doses and vaccinations. They thrive on love and care. Donkeys and ponies like to be fed well with nuts, hay and oats, exercised and given a field in which to gallop. They must be wormed at least four times a year and given their

injections. They must have shelter from the flies in summers and the cold in winter. Their hooves must be trimmed regularly and they must be loved.

What about our birds? Those who bring us so much happiness in their cheery songs. Our small little feathered friends are vulnerable especially during the harsh winter months. In the cold months I think that everyone, especially young people, should put out some crumbs to make the birds happy. When I sit known to my Christmas dinner and fill myself with all the goodies I feel sorry for the poor turkey who lost his life!!

So finally, let's all show kindness and love to our animal friends who cannot voice their need for our care. We will be rewarded by faithful, caring, companions called animals. Animals can and will be man's best friends.

By Diane Keevans  
6th class  
Age 12

Scoil Mhuire gan Smál

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