

The Corran Herald

Annual publication of Ballymote Heritage Group

Compiled and Published by Ballymote Heritage Group

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

20th Annual Ballymote Heritage Weekend

ORGANISED BY BALLYMOTE HERITAGE GROUP
PROMOTING OUR HERITAGE FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS

Friday 31st July to Monday 3rd August 2009
In Coach House Hotel, Ballymote, Co. Sligo.

FRIDAY 31st July

8.30 p.m. OFFICIAL OPENING
Dr Kieran O'Connor, Department
of Archaeology, NUI Galway

LECTURE
The Rock of Lough Key
Dr Kieran O'Connor

SUNDAY 2nd AUGUST

2.00 p.m. OUTING
**Drumcliffe Wedge Tomb,
Ballinfull Portal Tomb,
Knocklane Promontory Fort**
Guide: Leo Leydon

8.30 p.m. LECTURE
**Protestant Missions in Connemara
1848-1937**
Dr. Miriam Moffitt, Postdoctoral
Research Fellow at NUI Maynooth

SATURDAY 1st AUGUST

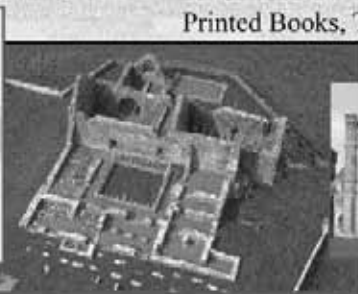
9.00 a.m. OUTING
**East Fermanagh, including Castle
Archdale Church, Lisnarick Village,
Necarne Castle, Ballinamallard,
Lisnaskea.**
Guide: Jack Johnston, Ulster Local
Historian

8.30 p.m. LECTURE
Michael Davitt - The Man
Michael Comer

MONDAY 3rd AUGUST

9.00 a.m. OUTING
**Ballinasloe Catholic Church,
Clontuskert Abbey,
Clonfert Cathedral**
Guide: Frank Tivnan, MA,
Historian

8.30 p.m. LECTURE
**Books and Reading in Sligo in the
Early 19th Century**
Dr Charles Benson, Keeper of Early
Printed Books, TCD



Supported by
Sligo Co Council Community Heritage Grant Scheme 2009

Lectures €10.00

Transport available
for outings

Further information from,
071-9189275 or 071 9183380

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25 Years on...

The Corran Herald

The end of the first quarter-century of its existence is an apt time for *The Corran Herald* to take stock of itself and in looking at its achievements one can do no better than repeat what was written in its 10th anniversary edition in 1995:

In its writings and photographs the Corran Herald has jogged our memories, tugged at our heartstrings, educated and informed us. It has focussed our attention on subjects we may have long forgotten and it has helped us look with a more informed and appreciative approach at the things that surround us.

Because it reflects the aims and ideals of the Heritage Group, it is naturally most concerned with matters of local history, archaeology, culture, folklore and all the many things that together make up the unique character of any given area. And so it has become a conduit through which has flowed a vast amount of information on all these topics into the ever-increasing reservoir of the pages of its issues, and hopefully will continue to flow.

That hope has certainly been realised. The “reservoir” has expanded to the point where there are over one thousand three hundred pages. Contributions of articles and photos have continued unceasingly. Early authors have remained extraordinarily faithful and generous, and many more recent writers have provided outstanding material for its pages. The Corran Herald expresses its immense gratitude to all of them; without them it simply would not exist, while with them it has amassed a treasure to be passed to future generations.

Gratitude is expressed too to the newsagents and others in Ballymote and throughout Co Sligo who have faithfully sold the Issues over the years, and to those who at various times have been involved in its layout and design, its typesetting and its printing: Fastprint, Ballymote, Drumlin Publications Ltd, Manorhamilton, The Sligo Champion, and Orbicon Print Ltd, Collooney. Thanks also to all those business people who supported it by advertising in its pages in the early years.

It is available in the Libraries in Ballymote and Sligo and in the National Library of Ireland in Dublin.

The Corran Herald looks forward with confidence to continuing its work into the years ahead.

Thank you, James

This year marks the 25th year of existence of *The Corran Herald*, the annual publication of Ballymote Heritage Group. The editor for all of that time was, and still is, James Flanagan. Working quietly and efficiently in the background, not alone was he editor, he was collector, compiler, copy-reader and everything else that goes with publishing a journal. James did it all.

Over the years his workload increased due to the success of the *Herald*. When it first appeared in October 1985 there were fifteen articles and twelve pages. In 2008 there were forty six articles and eighty pages, and this year in celebration there will be another bumper edition.

Voluntary organisations all over Ireland are crying out for new volunteers. What better role-model could any young, or indeed not so young, person have than James who has given years of voluntary work in the true spirit of volunteerism – freely, quietly and without fuss?

James is one of the longest-serving members of Ballymote Heritage Group. Apart from editing *The Corran Herald* he is active within the Group, especially during the Heritage Weekends when he acts as master of ceremonies. His summing up of each night’s lecture is always discerning and to the point and occasionally laced with gentle witticisms.

Ballymote Heritage Group would like to thank James most sincerely for his work over the years and wish him and his wife Anne many years of health and happiness.

Go raibh mile maith agat, a Shéamuis, as ucht do shan-oibre thar na mblianta. Beir bua agus beannacht agus gach dea-ghuí ort féin agus ar Áine.

Members and Committee of Ballymote Heritage Group.



Ballymote Heritage Group

On the evening of May 30th, 1984, at 8.30 pm a group of 20 people assembled in the then Castle Hotel, Ballymote, with the express purpose of setting up a society devoted to promoting knowledge of and interest in all aspects of Heritage in the local area. Out of that meeting there emerged the organisation that at first called itself "Our Heritage" but later became "Ballymote Heritage Group". Its first President was Tom Tighe, Chair Tom McGettrick, Secretary Eileen Tighe, Treasurer Michael McDonnell, PRO Una Preston.

The Group at once set about organising lectures and outings dealing with topics and places of Heritage interest, but its first bigger project at that time was the launch in 1985 of *The Corran Herald*. This was originally intended to be a local newspaper and had been first proposed to the Community Council by Una Preston. Some news items were indeed carried in the first few Issues, but it rapidly became focussed on Heritage matters.

The next major undertaking was the establishment in 1990 of a Heritage Weekend at the August Bank Holiday. While it was undertaken with some trepidation, this turned out to be a very successful venture and has been repeated every year since then. That first Weekend was officially opened by Eamon Barnes, then Director of Public Prosecutions, and the opening illustrated lecture "The Road to Compostela" was given by Frank Tivnan.

Since then, the Weekend has been attended by people from all over Ireland, from Britain, from the USA, Australia, South Africa, and they have heard some of Ireland's top experts in many fields share their experience and knowledge with their audiences.

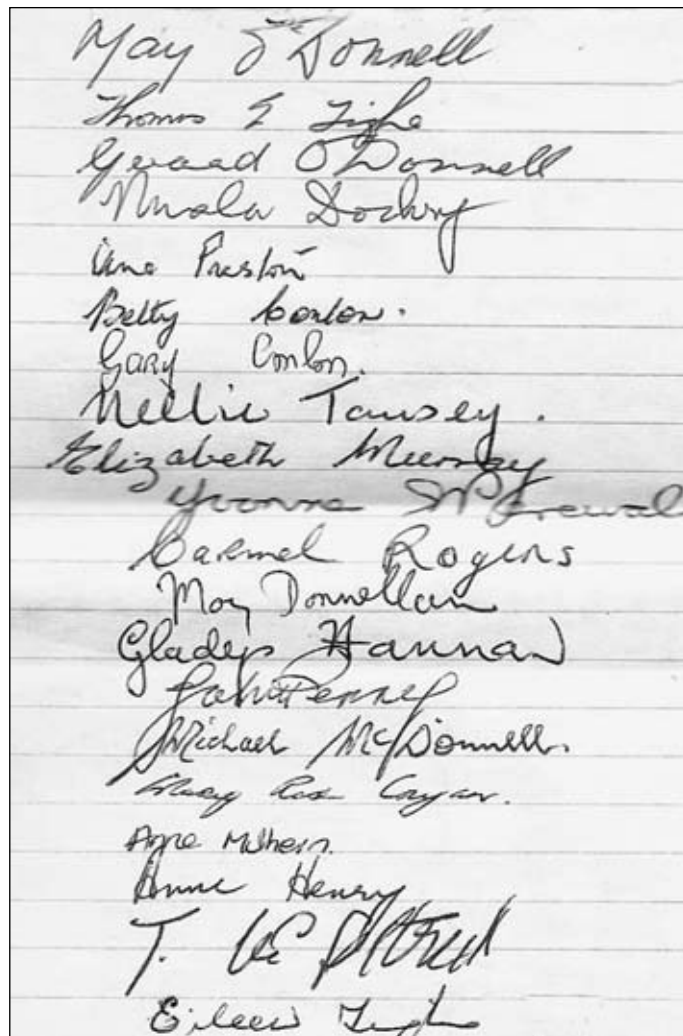
This year sees the 20th Heritage Weekend and the Group looks forward to many more.

Sadly, over the course of the 25 years many of the original members have passed on. Their names are listed here:

Una Preston	Rosaleen Duffy
Gerry O'Donnell	Tom McGettrick
Nellie Tansey	Stan Casey
Paddy Brady	Yvonne Perceval
Paddy Duffy	Maisie McGovern
Vincent Jordan	Maureen Egan
Padraig Dockry	

May they all rest in eternal peace.

New members are welcome – the work goes on!



Shown here are the signatures of all those who attended the inaugural meeting of Ballymote Heritage Group on May 30th, 1984.

Apologies were received from Dr and Mrs Stan Casey and from Mr Tom McGettrick.

The Age of the Pedlar

PJ Duffy

In his day the pedlar was a unique type of salesman who travelled the country on foot, selling his small-sized wares to customers who usually lived in rural areas. The goods he had on offer were usually contained inside a sizeable pack he carried about on his back.

On his arrival into an area he would meticulously seek out every breen and pathway in order to make contact with every householder resident within that area. In order to get on comfortably with his job, a pedlar usually wore a good durable pair of boots. He also had an eloquent "gift of the gab" and would spare no rhetoric when praising the goods he was offering for sale.

Although peddling had largely died out by the end of the 1800s, there were still a couple of tough hardened foot salesmen around during the period of the 1930s. At least one of those was an ex-British soldier who at war's end received a gratuity to get himself started on a small business of his own choosing, and he chose to become a pedlar.

The majority of country people were firmly of the opinion that peddling was the occupation of down-and-outs, but those people with a knowledge of dealing in small goods would say that the job could be very remunerative and rewarding. At the end of a good day's trading the pedlar might be likely to earn more from his day than a gentleman employed labouring on the public works.

One pedlar who was still doing his rounds during the 1930s seemed to be a secretive old gent who would now and then arrive into an area. If you enquired where he came from you were likely to get an answer something like this "Oh, from the Tireragh direction", and on parting if you enquired where he was heading for he would reply "Oh, down south, down south". Most people believed he was of no fixed abode although he was not seen to be sleeping rough. He was fond of a jar and after a day's trading might be seen heading for the local town where at that time he could receive lodgings for a shilling a night.

There was a story told about the same pedlar and an incident that took place in these parts. After a day's trading the evening turned out to be very wet with heavy downpours of rain, and the pedlar sought shelter in a country dwellinghouse. As the deluge continued he asked the owner if he might be able to put him up for the night. The man of the house agreed and when bedtime came he obtained a short ladder and ushered the pedlar and his pack up onto a tiny loft that was located at the end of the kitchen. This was a facility that was usually found off every old-fashioned kitchen at the time.



Pedlar on the move

Up there on that loft were placed different kinds of farm tools, as well as donkey harness and a couple of spare buckets and tin cans. The pedlar who by now was worn out tired had some difficulty bunking down in the midst of this assortment but he soon went off to sleep while the man of the house retired to his bed which was situated directly underneath the loft.

Despite being worn out it seems the pedlar grew restless from lying down in one position, so he proceeded to turn around and as he did so his metallic surroundings created a good deal of noise. Your man sleeping down below was wakened by this din and roared at the pedlar to be quiet or else get to hell out of the house.

Come next morning, all was forgiven and the householder gave him a breakfast and set him off on the road again.

As a very young boy back in the late 1930s I clearly remember arriving home from Killavil school one evening to find a pedlar standing on our kitchen floor and he doing his best to persuade my late parents to buy some of his goods. Looking back now, he seems to have been a well-seasoned gentleman, just a bit past middle age. He was dressed in a faded shower-proof mac that seemed

to be well worn and a long time under the weather.

When my mother asked for some small item, he went to his pack and failing to find it he proceeded to empty the entire contents out onto the kitchen floor. My goodness, what a collection of items this gentleman had got! They were contained in what seemed to be an old jute bag that was glazed and treated with some kind of substance to make it waterproof. He now began to rummage through this large heap of useful household essentials in search of the item he was asked for.

In the heap there were penknives, scissors, cards of safety pins, studs for footwear, hair pins, hat pins, knitting needles, sewing needles, gramophone needles, collar studs, cuff links, hair combs, pencils, writing pens, notepaper, envelopes, jotters, brooches, medals, rosary beads, hemp, wax, squares of sole leather for repairing shoes, brads, blue tacks, tins of polish, a pair of gleaming Ingersoll pocket watches, and, since it was nearing the end of the year, a pile of Old Moore's Almanacs.

When asked about the price of the almanacs, he said they sold at seven pence each. When offered sixpence, he stated that no way could he sell them at that price. "To do so", he said, "would mean I'd be walking through the country for nothing".

He was loud in his praise of a pair of scissors he was offering for sale, stating that people around the country had never seen the like of them before. He went on to state that what people were accustomed to seeing were scissors made of stainless steel. His were of surgical steel, the type used in hospitals and dispensaries. No doubt he was a past master of his art!

As he packed the items back inside the old sack, I noted what a neat tidy pair of hands he had, as washed and manicured as those of any businessman.

After purchasing some goods which included a copy of Old Moore's Almanac, my mother made him a cup of tea and he set off once more on his rounds. Later that evening he sold one of the watches to a neighbouring man who had it for years afterwards and who always reckoned that it was a very reliable timepiece.

The pedlar was certainly a man of his time. We were often told the story that Charles Bianconi, the great transport tycoon of the 1800s, had started out as a pedlar.

With the coming of motorised transport the days of the foot salesman were numbered. Those goods that he was accustomed to selling were now being offered for sale on stalls at fairs and markets around the countryside.

Lady Arabella Denny, an obelisk on a hill near the town, the Fitzmaurice family and the linen industry in Ballymote (1743-1833)

John Coleman

This article was inspired by two things. I had been aware for some time of a reference in Lewis' *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* of 1837 to "an obelisk on a small hill near the town erected by Lady Arabella Denny".ⁱ I had been curious as to who Arabella Denny was and why she erected an obelisk in Ballymote. However, other commitments meant that I had never pursued the matter further. Then I visited an exhibition at the National Gallery in Dublin of the work of the portrait painter Hugh Douglas Hamilton (1740-1808) and there to my delight was a portrait of the lady herself. The small oval portrait (24 x 19.5 cm) in pastels and graphite depicts a Lady in profile and was painted in 1762 when she was aged 55.ⁱⁱ This new information proved too much of a temptation and I felt that I had to find time to pursue the subject further.



Lady Arabella Denny. Hugh Douglas Hamilton. (Reproduced by kind permission of the Representative Church Body)

I had been aware of the fact that Ballymote in the eighteenth century was owned by members of the Fitzmaurice family and had suspected that they might be related to the family whose titles included Earl of Kerry & Shelburne and Marquis of Lansdowne.ⁱⁱⁱ The short biography in the exhibition catalogue revealed that Lady Arabella (1707- 92) was

the second daughter of the 21st Baron and 1st Earl of Kerry (1688-1741). Further research revealed that she was the sister of John Petty Fitzmaurice, 1st Earl of Shelburne (1706-61) and consequently aunt of the William 1st Marquis of Lansdowne (1737-1805).^{iv} I went on to discover that it was her brother, the 1st Earl of Shelburne who purchased the Ballymote Estate for the family.^v This Anglo-Norman family had settled in Ireland in the late 12th or early 13th century and been granted vast estates in Kerry, comprising some 100,000 acres.^{vi} While her grandfather had been a Jacobite, he had submitted to William III after the end of the wars and her father had married Anne (d.1737) daughter and heir of Sir William Petty (1623-87), Physician General of the Army. Petty had been an extraordinary man by any standards. He was a significant economist, founder of the discipline of statistics, Professor of Anatomy at Oxford and undertook the famous Down Survey of confiscated land in Ireland.^{vii} He had been granted 50,000 acres in Kerry. The marriage was a significant union between the Fitzmaurices, an ancient family in Ireland for 600 years and the newly arrived Pettys.



William Petty, 1st Marquis of Lansdowne, 1st Lord of the Treasury (Prime Minister) 1782-3, eldest son of the 1st Earl of Shelburne and brother of Hon. Thomas Fitzmaurice. (engraving by Bertolozzi after an oil by Thomas Gainsborough)

Lady Arabella Denny

Lady Arabella grew up at Lixnaw in Kerry, the vast and splendid late seventeenth century seat of the Fitzmaurice family, alas now merely a ruin.^{viii} She married Sir Arthur Denny MP of Tralee Castle (1704-42) in 1727. He had 6,000 acres in Kerry and after his death she had an income from the estate of £1,000 per year for life. In 1748, she rented a house called Peacliff Hill Blackrock, County Dublin, which is still standing today, and it was there she resided for the rest of her life.^{ix} She was a woman of substance and numbered among her friends Dean Swift and the leading literary and intellectual circle in Dublin of the day. She was friendly with Mrs Delany of Delville in Glasnevin and would have seen her "shell house" there which was built as a "folly" or ornamental building in the same vein as the obelisk she commissioned in Ballymote. It is thus fitting that Hamilton chose to portray her with a pen in hand, perhaps writing a letter to one of her distinguished friends. Lady Arabella had no children and she was not one to sit about merely enjoying the luxury that her high position in society and extensive wealth would allow her. Dublin at the time was a city where great wealth sat side by side with great poverty and distress. Bartholemew Moss had founded the Rotunda Hospital to provide safe conditions in which poor mothers could safely give birth to their children. A similar concern for the welfare of the poor had led to the establishment of the Foundling Hospital to take in and care for children whose mothers were unable to do so. Lady Arabella became active in the work of the Foundling Hospital and was a member of its board and of the Ladies Committee of the Rotunda. She took a keen and active interest in the details of the work of the Foundling Hospital and donated £4,000 towards its extension.^x

While doing this work she became concerned about the fate of the mothers who deposited their children in the Foundling Hospital and in 1766

she was instrumental in establishing an institution in Leeson Street to care for these women. The women were permitted to remain there for eighteen months and were trained in lace making, a useful commercial skill then, to enable them to earn a living when they left. The building was sold in 1958 and demolished in 1979. The Arabella Denny Trust continues to dispense funding to projects assisting mothers and children.^k She is buried with her husband in Tralee in his family vault. In her life time she had been commended for her work by the Irish House of Commons (the so called 'Grattan's Parliament') and was made a Freeman of the City of Dublin.^{xii}

John Petty Fitzmaurice, 1st Earl of Shelburne, acquires the Ballymote Estate and begins to develop its linen industry

Lady Arabella must have come to Ballymote during the time it was owned by her brother or her nephew Hon. Thomas Fitzmaurice. Her brother John, 1st Earl of Shelburne (1706-1761) bought the Ballymote estate on the dissolution of the Taaffe estate, which was sold on foot of an Act of Parliament (15 George II) in 1743.^{xiii} When the estate was later sold in August 1833 to Sir Robert Gore-Booth, for £130,000, it comprised 16,000 acres, 64 townlands, including parts of the town of Ballymote.^{xiv} Her brother had adopted the name Petty in 1751 when he inherited the Petty estates from his mother's family – frequently it was a requirement of inheriting estates in the female line that the name of the family should be taken on and thus preserved in connection with the estate. The title of Earl of Shelburne, which had belonged to the Petty family, was recreated in his favour in 1753. The Petty estate comprised 50,000 acres in Kerry. He also purchased an English estate, Bowood in Wiltshire which is still the home of his descendants.

It was John Petty Fitzmaurice, Earl of Shelburne, who introduced linen manufacture in Ballymote.^{xv} The linen industry had enormous importance, a fact we could now forget as linen has largely been supplanted by cotton and more recent synthetic alternatives. A Linen Board had been established by act of Parliament in 1711 and operated until 1823 to promote the linen industry in Ireland. From 1717, the Linen Board had given grants to assist the production of coarse linen

by people for their own use. From 1735 the Linen Board gave people flax seed, spinning wheels and reels which were used to manufacture yarn mainly sold to northern buyers. Women worked on spinning the yarn, bringing wealth to the family and paying the rent, while the men worked the fields to feed the family. Unlike wool, linen was not subject to duty on entering Britain. By 1760 the linen industry was booming and in 1776 export of yarn from Sligo port to Liverpool and Manchester was worth £80,000.^{xvi}

The first Linen Hall was established in Sligo in about 1760 in Old Market Street, on a site provided by Owen Wynne of Hazelwood.^{xvii} The Borough Council declared linen cloth and yarn could only be traded in the hall and a levy on all sales was collected. When Arthur Young, the great agricultural economist, visited Ballymote in 1776 he was told by Thomas Fitzmaurice that his father Lord Shelburne had found Ballymote wild and uncultivated and "without an atom of manufacturing, not even spinning". Wishing to improve conditions in the area, in 1756 he had brought in 17 weavers and their families from the north to help establish the linen industry in the town.^{xviii} They had the necessary skills since the industry was already well established in the north by this time. However, Young noted that Lord Shelburne been unfortunate in his choice of business associates and, having spent £5,000 he had only succeeded in establishing seventeen Protestant families and twenty seven looms. Liam Swords (1997) notes that by 1760 he had advanced £3,000 towards establishing a large factory.^{xix} After his death his widow Lady Shelburne, employed Wakefield, described by Young as "the great Irish factor [merchant] in London", and he succeeded in increasing the industry to sixty looms and constructed new buildings, including cottages for the weavers. Wakefield died and the business was neglected for a year after which Lady Shelburne employed another manager who did not enjoy much success.

Hon Thomas Fitzmaurice inherits the estate and devotes himself to the project

When John Petty Fitzmaurice died most of his vast estates in Ireland and England passed to his eldest son William who became 2nd Earl of Shelburne. He was to be a significant



Thomas Fitzmaurice (1742-93) painted in 1772 by Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-93) (reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of the Bowood Collections)

figure in British politics and became 1st Lord of Trade in 1763 and later 1st Lord of the Treasury (Prime Minister) briefly in 1782-3. He was created 1st Marquis of Lansdowne in 1784. He engaged Robert Adam to design Lansdowne House in London and Lancelot "Capability" Brown to lay out his estate at Bowood. It was his younger brother the Honourable Thomas Fitzmaurice (1742-93) who inherited the Ballymote estate when he came of age. There is a very fine portrait of Thomas painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1772, about two years before his first recorded involvement with the Ballymote estate.^{xx}

Thomas set about developing the linen industry in Ballymote with renewed vigour and he told Young that he decided to supervise the project directly, rather than employ a manager. Thus he committed himself to Ballymote, despite the fact that his main residence was Llewenny Hall in Denbigh County, Wales. He set about learning every aspect of the linen business from spinning to bleaching to selling. He told Young that he even learned the art of spinning himself. Thomas' aunt Arabella was interested in the linen industry and in 1766 she had advised the Dublin Society (later Royal Dublin Society (RDS)) concerning patterns for damask manufactured by Irish linen makers.

^{xxi} Developing attractive patterns for damask was crucial to the marketing of linen products in the high fashion sphere where it had to compete with the craze for imported decorative cotton chintz.^{xxii} She took a huge personal interest in the decorative arts and also used her personal influence in high society to promote the silk industry, even experimenting with keeping silk worms in Blackrock.^{xxiii} She was the first woman elected an honorary life member of the Dublin

Society, a clear recognition of her significant achievement by the leading promoters of improvement in art and industry in the Ireland of the time (still today such a distinction is only sparingly conferred by the RDS).

Thomas Fitzmaurice and the great economist Adam Smith

In the tradition of his great grandfather Sir William Petty, Thomas was an enlightened figure with innovative ideas on economic development. This was the age of Enlightenment and one could say that Thomas brought the enlightenment spirit to Ballymote. After being to Eton and before going to Oxford, his father arranged for Thomas to go to Glasgow where he studied under the supervision of Adam Smith, living in his house there from 1759 to 1761.^{xxiv} Smith, author of *The Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776 in London, is arguably the most influential economist of all time.^{xxv} He was an advocate of free trade and held that the operation of the enterprise of the individual in the free market would carry the standard of material well-being to new heights.^{xxvi} However, Smith's theories have been used as justification for unregulated free market which has led to the current economic crisis. What has not been remembered is that Smith started life as a moral philosopher and his first work was *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* published in 1759. He intended each work to be read in the context of the other. Even in *The Wealth of Nations* he warned of the danger inherent in human nature that the excess of the free unregulated market could ultimately damage the fabric of society.

There is an extensive surviving correspondence between Thomas' father, the Earl of Shelburne and Adam Smith on the subject of the education of the young man.^{xxvii} The correspondence is very revealing of the nature of the education he received and on the characters of both father and son. The correspondence reveals that he attended lectures in Greek, Latin, Law, Mathematics, Moral Philosophy and Logic.^{xxviii} Lord Shelburne reveals something of his own values, and his priorities for his son's education, in a letter he wrote from Dublin to Smith on 26 April 1759:

"Obedience; a power of adopting the will of another, will make one Master of one's own. Oeconomy [sic.] seems likewise to have a just place in your

attention; No fortune is able without it, nor can any man be Charitable, Generous or Just who neglects it, it will make a man happy under Slender circumstances, and make him shine if his Income be affluent."

He goes on further to recommend that his son be taught to value honesty, benevolence, generosity and the importance of application to business affairs.

In a letter of 29 Oct. 1759 Smith gives an assessment of the character and development of Thomas:

"Your Lordship expressed in a letter I received from you some time ago, a very laudible anxiety that your son should be held to Oeconomy [sic.] not that he might hoard, but that he might be able to give. I did not at that time take any notice of that part of your Lordship's letter. I can now venture to assure your Lordship that, tho' you might think this account a bad specimen of his management, he is punctual, regular and orderly beyond almost anybody of his age and condition I have ever known, that he is careful of every thing upon which he sets any value, of his books, of his cloaths [sic.], and will I am persuaded be so of his money, whenever he has any money to manage that is worth caring of. His regularity is tempered by a great desire of distinguishing himself by doing actions of éclat that will draw upon him the Attention of the world. He is even animated by this passion to a degree that is a little hazardous and is capable of venturing to expose his talents, which are naturally excellent, before they are perfectly matured. If he lives to be a man, he will, I imagine be firm, steady and resolute in an uncommon degree, and by the time he comes to the meridian of Life, will be a man of severe and even rigid morals."

In a letter of 15 July 1760 Smith noted that Thomas was showing an aptitude towards "mathematical and mechanical" learning—a quality which had already been noticed by his father and an indication of a predisposition towards his future interest in industry. He noted in the same letter that his character was grave and serious.

The influence of Smith must have inspired Thomas' later initiatives to develop industry. Smith taught of the value of industry adding value to agricultural production and thus increasing wealth. Smith had written about the growing of Flax, illustrating that as well as the

growing, there was an income to be made for those employed as flax-dresser, spinner, weaver and bleacher. Smyth saw that the source of wealth was shifting from the land to industry.

Thomas, as a land owner had the potential to be involved in the growing of flax but he was anxious to be involved in the entire process of production, manufacture and even marketing. Smith had argued that profit was to be made at each part of the process and Thomas determined to tap into this—generating much income for all involved. These arguments are familiar to us all today.

Thomas Fitzmaurice constructs in Ballymote the finest bleach mill in the country

Arthur Young described visiting Thomas Fitzmaurice at his residence in Ballymote in 1776 and his anticipation of visiting the manufactory of which he had heard a great deal since arriving in Ireland. Thomas told Young that two years earlier he had constructed a mill in the town, having taken over the management of the enterprise after Wakefield's death. Young described it as the finest bleach mill in the country. Thomas told Young that he had toured the mills of the north to learn from their design and in 1774 he engaged an engineer named Stansfield, well known for designing saw mills, to construct the bleach mill. The mill must have been on the river at the end of what was formerly known as Mill Street (it is officially Grattan Street since the street renaming that took place on the hundredth anniversary of 1798—though even to people of my mother's generation it was still Mill Street.) The river at that point was still known as the mill race when I was a child—its path has been diverted since, presumably to prevent flooding in the area or some such practical consideration. He created a dam and flooded an area of 34 acres of land to provide a lake and a flow of water from which the mill might be driven. The flooded area survives as Ballinascarrow Lake and Des Black has pointed out to me that the observant can still detect the dam walking along the Lavala road leading to the lake.^{xxix} It would make an interesting archaeological adventure to discover the location and remains of this structure.

According to Wood-Martin's *History of Sligo* (1842), not having a bleach green the first year, Thomas

employed only 65 looms and exported the linen "green". In 1776 there were the same number and 120 in 1777. Each weaver from the north received a house which cost £50 and paid a rent of £40 per year. The rent was lowered in proportion to the number of webs woven and premiums given to the best weaver and spinner in the manufactory. Until recently there were cottages along both sides of Mill Street and others in Newtown, at the end of present day O'Connell Street, which must have been part of this development. This enterprise had an enormous effect on the town of Ballymote. In 1775 there were 80 men and 525 women employed in the industry.

According to Christopher MacDonagh, Thomas had increased the number of looms to ninety and during 1775 contributed the bulk of the £80,000 worth of linen exported from the port of Sligo. Economically this made a vast change to the area, which had been previously confined to the subsistence growing of food.

^{xxx} The women were employed in the spinning of yarn for which they received an average of a shilling a day. Most tenants planted from a half rood to half acre to the growing of flax.

According to Young, he had grand plans for the town, including a large market house, a mansion house for himself "in the style of a castle" and to pull down all the old cabins in the town and rebuild them as regular streets of good houses for weavers and mechanics.^{xxxi}

A decade after the commencement of the Ballymote enterprise, Thomas also developed the linen industry on his estate in Wales. He built bleach works there in 1785 for treating linen produced in Ireland. Llewenny bleach mill was designed by the celebrated Architect Thomas Sandby (1721-98) who was a relative. These remarkable buildings have been described as among the grandest industrial buildings of the 18th century.^{xxxii} They are extensively described in 1783 by Thomas Pennant:

"The building, in which the operations are carried on, is in form of a crescent: a beautiful arcade four hundred feet in extent, with a loggio in the centre, graces the front; each end finishes with a pavillion. The drying loft is an hundred and eighty feet long; the brown warehouse and lapping room each ninety feet; and before it are five fountains, a prettiness

very venial, as it ornaments a building of Dutch extraction. But this is without parallel, whether the magnitude, the ingenuity of the machinery, or the size of the bleaching ground is to be considered. The greatest part of the linen [sic.] bleached here is sent from the tenantry of his great estates in Ireland, in payment of rent. Much also is sent by private persons from the neighbouring counties for the mere purpose of whitening.

The vast extent to which Mr. Fitzmaurice carries this business, is most sensibly felt in this neighbourhood. May the utility of his life effectually awaken in our gentry a sense of his merit, and the benefits resulting from his labours, and induce them to promote every design of his, calculated for the public good."

From the engraving by Thomas Malton, (see illustration), it will be seen that the Welsh building did indeed more truly resemble a palace than a mill. One cannot suppose that the Ballymote mill was so grand but it can be seen that Thomas Fitzmaurice had high standard.



Llewenny bleach mills, Wales, designed in 1785 by Thomas Sandby for Thomas Fitzmaurice (engraving by Thomas Malton)

Despite his commitments in Ballymote and Wales he also found time to sit as an MP at Westminster. He had a town house in London between 1781 and 1787 at 105 Pall Mall, one of the grandest addresses in the city. He was a friend of Dr Johnson and of the great actor David Garrick.

Thomas died on 28 October 1793.^{xxxiii} A legal document of 1796, relating to a dispute between his relatives over his will, gives an account of his interests at the time he made his will on 21 June 1793, including Ballymote, and this is worth quoting:

"Thomas Fitzmaurice was seized of the estates agreed by him to be settled subject to the trusts of the said Article and also of diverse other real estates in Gt. Britain and Ireland and he carried on for some years before

his d. a considerable manufactory at Ballimote [sic.], County of Sligo, Ireland and was possessed of large personal estate in Ireland consisting of large debts due to him on Mortgages etc. and for arrears from his tenants to the amount of (including old arrears of rent) of £20000 [sic.] and other personal property in his dwelling at St Stephens Green, Dublin and elsewhere and also before his d. was possessed of diverse leasehold premises of Liverpool, County of Lancs. and in Chester and in Parkgate in Cheshire [a departure point for ferries to Dublin] and for some yrs. before his death was concerned in trade as a linen merchant which he carried out at his bleach works at Llewenny Hall and at Liverpool and London. And also for some yrs. before his d. traded in claret as a wine merchant and had at the time of his d. a large stock on his farm at Llewenny [spelling different to above] of value of £2000 and upwards and also a large stock of linen to the amount of £20000 [sic.] and upwards and his stock of claret and debts owing on that account amounted to £30000 [sic.] and also possessed at his d. of plate [at this period plate referred to sterling silver tableware which would be used or displayed for entertaining on grand occasions], jewels etc at Lewenny Hall and house in Liverpool and other personal property to a very great value."

The document also reveals that much of his property, including some in Kerry, Tipperary, Sligo and Denbigh and Flint in Wales was to be sold to pay his debts and set up an annuity for his wife. However, the document continues:

"He considered the manufactory at Ballymote, Ireland as beneficial to his estate and left it to thie discession of his executors whether to carry on that manufactory at the expense of the estate or not."

The document is evidence of the continued success of the Ballymote enterprise at the time he made his will in the year he died (1793) and of his deep personal commitment to it.

The decline of the linen industry and the sale of the Ballymote estate

Wood-Martin notes that after Thomas' death, since his son was a minor, the houses in Ballymote were let to an agent who employed about

130 looms. By the time of his arrival in Ballymote in 1837, Samuel Lewis remarked that the industry was nearly extinct. This is supported by Wood-Martin, who notes that after 1815 the linen trade in Sligo town had declined rapidly.^{xxxiv} Up to the collapse of the trade linen fairs were held regularly in Ballymote. There was no linen mill listed in Ballymote in an ordinance survey list of 1835-6.^{xxxv} This reflected the national situation of the linen industry which only survived in the hinterland of Belfast after 1830.^{xxxvi} His Welsh mill was probably demolished, together with his house Llewenny Hall, in 1816-18 by the owners who had purchased the estate there.^{xxxvii}

On 21 December 1777 Thomas had married Mary O'Brien (1755-1831), daughter of Murrough O'Brien, 1st Marquis of Thomond.^{xxxviii} She succeeded her mother on 10 May 1791 as Countess of Orkney – a rare case of a peerage which could be inherited in the female line. Their son and heir John Hamilton Fitzmaurice (1778-1820) had an unhappy marriage and died young. He is recorded living at Llewenny Hall in Wales in 1808. Following his death, his mother administered the estates until her death in 1831. Her grandson Thomas John Hamilton Fitzmaurice (1803-77) succeeded as 5th Earl of Orkney on her death. He had been known by the honorary title of Viscount Kirkwall during her life time. The title of Viscount Kirkwall also appears in administrative documentation in relation to the Ballymote estate, including leases. In 1725 and in 1832 he is recorded living at Taplow Court in Buckinghamshire, which his mother had inherited from her father the 1st Marquis of Thomond.^{xxxix} With the sale of the Ballymote Estate to Sir Robert Gore Booth in 1833 the almost century long connection of the Fitzmaurice family and Ballymote came to an end. Archdeacon O'Rorke in his *History of Sligo* claims the sale was agreed over dinner at the table of Mr O'Hara at Annaghmore.^{xl} It appears that the sale of the estate may have been forced due to obligations to make settlements under the terms of his mother's will. The present Earl of Orkney lives in Canada. His brother's descendants remain at Bowood in Wiltshire.

It is unlikely that the name of Earlsfield dates from the very brief period of its ownership by Thomas John Hamilton Fitzmaurice since he only inherited the title of Earl of

Orkney on his mother's death in 1831, two years before the sale of the estate in 1833. He may never have visited Ballymote. It must thus date from the only other period when it was the property of an Earl – his grandfather the 1st Earl of Shelburne who possessed the estate from 1743 to 1761 and was an earl from 1751. The name Earlsfield was applied by Lewis in 1837 to the "property" of Sir Robert Gore-Booth in Ballymote.^{xli} The park at Earlsfield still retains some of its magnificence in the form of old trees judiciously placed in the grounds and the house is still well cared for by the Mercy order.



Earlsfield

Lady Arabella and the obelisk

Finally, to return to Lady Arabella and the obelisk. An obelisk is a tall four sided stone pillar tapering to a pyramidal top. Erecting such monuments in the 18th century was to provide decorative or ornamental feature or "eye-catchers" in the landscape of a grand estate. Obelisks originated in ancient Egypt and became fashionable in Rome.^{xlii} They became popular in Baroque Italy and the first one was erected in England in 1714 designed by Sir John Vanborough. The first in Ireland at Stillorgan Park was designed by his nephew



The Conolly Folly, Castletown, Co. Kildare, (1730) – topped off with an obelisk

Sir Edward Lovatt Pierce. The well known Conolly folly at Castletown, Co. Kildare is topped with an obelisk and was erected in 1737. Could the monument in Ballymote have been the "tower" which existed on a hill in Carronanty until its removal in the first half of the 20th century? This location would certainly have been visible to the Fitzmaurices and their guests standing on the front steps of Earlsfield. It seems too much of a coincidence that there should have existed separately two such similar edifices visible from Earlsfield. The recently disappeared monument was known locally as a round tower and, while memory may suggest that it was round in appearance, it had nothing in common with the ancient round towers of Ireland which were buildings and not solid monuments. I have not been able to locate photographs or fragments from the monument.

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Notes

i Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, London, 1837. Extracts published as *County Sligo in 1837 A Topographical History*, Samuel Lewis, Sligo 2003, p.33.

ii *Lios an Uisce The History of a House and its occupants from 1753 to the Present Day*, Mary Pat O'Malley, Dublin, no date (privately published –copies in

the RDS Library and Irish Architectural Archive). Mary Pat O'Malley read copies of her letters in the collection of the Earl of Shelburne and Sir Arthur Denny. See also account of Lady Arabella in Richard Ryan, *A biographical Dictionary of the Worthies of Ireland*, London, 1821, pp. 74-6.

iii Their Dublin town house was Kerry House on St Stephen's Green, later known as Shelburne House after the family earldom and now forms part of the hotel which retained the name.

iv *Hugh Douglas Hamilton A Life in Pictures 1740-1808*, ed. Anne Hodge, Dublin, 2008, p. 61. G. C. Cockagne, *The Complete Peerage*, London, 1920-30.

v There is a good description of the history of the Ballymote estate in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland as part of an introduction to the contents of the Lissadell papers held there.

vi *The Complete Peerage*, 1920-30.

vii "Petty on Policy, Theory and Method" in *Before Adam Smith: the Emergence of Political Economy 1662-1776*, Terence Hutchinson, Oxford, 1988.

ix There is a pair of photographs of drawings of the ruins in the Irish Architectural Archive. See also Valerie Barry, *Houses of Kerry, Whitegate, Co. Clare*, 1994, p. 174.

ix O'Malley, n/d, ob. cit.

x J.A. Robins, *The lost children : a study of charity children in Ireland 1700-1900*, 1980.

xi Including joint initiatives with the Department of Social & Family Affairs.

xii Christine Casey, *Dublin*, New Haven & London, 2005.

xiii Nicholas Taaffe, 6th Viscount Corran and Baron of Ballymote as a catholic was in dispute with his protestant cousin Robert Sutton (his mother was a Taaffe) on the ownership of the estate and by act of parliament it was sold to Petty Fitzmaurice with 2/3 of the proceeds to Sutton and 1/3 to Taaffe. According to T. O'Rourke, *History of Sligo*, vol II, p 167, the Taaffes entertained a hope of getting the property back if the position on catholics holding land changed. They understood that there was a commitment by the Earl of Shelburne to sell back to them at the same price, of £25,000 which had been paid to Viscount Corran to satisfy his claim. However, after his death in 1761 his widow did not feel herself so bound.

xiv Gerard Moran, *Sir Robert Gore Booth and his landed estate in Sligo, 1814-1876*, Dublin, 2006, p. 18.

xv Liam Swords, *The Diocese of Achonry 1689-1818, A Hidden Church*, Dublin, 1997, pp. 92-96, gives a good account of the linen industry in the area, including Ballymote.

xvi Arthur Young, *A Tour in Ireland 1776-1779, Vol. I* London, 1882, pp. 223-33.

xvii W.G. Wood-Martin, *History of Sligo*, Dublin, 1842, p. 245.

xviii Arthur Young, 1882.

xix Swords, 1997, pp. 93-4.

xx The portrait is recorded in A. Graves and W. V. Cronin, *A History of the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds* as a ½ length 29 x 24 ins. Reynolds' sitter book records sittings in 1772 and a payment of £36 15s by "Mr Fitzmorris" on the 3rd of November that year. Reynolds painted many members of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy and this was the subject of my 1994 M. Litt. thesis at Dublin University, together with articles in *Irish Arts Review* 1995 & 1999 and *The Bulletin of the Irish Georgian Society*.

xxi O'Malley, no date, p. 45, 57.

xxii Maighread Dunleavy, *Dress in Ireland*, London, 1989, p. 127.

xxiii There is an extensive account of Lady Arabella's correspondence on matters of interior decoration with her friend Lady Caldwell of Castle Caldwell in "The artistic and cultural activities of the Caldwells of Castle Caldwell, 1750-1783" by Toby Bernard in *Irish Architectural and Decorative Studies*, vol. X, 2007, pp. 91-111.

xxiv John Raw, *Life of Adam Smith*.

xxv *The Wealth of Nations Books 1-10* Adam Smith, Penguin edition, London, 1999. With an Analytical introduction by Andrew Skinner.

xxvi Smith, 1999, (Skinner) p.8.

xxvii E. C. Mossner and I. S. Ross, ed., *Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, vol. 6 Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987.

xxviii Mossner & Ross, 1987. Letter of 4 April 1759 from Adam Smith to Lord Shelburne.

xxix Christopher McDonagh, *History of Ballymote*, Dublin (1939) says that the mill was 81 ft. long x 28 broad and 17 high. This seems small if it was considered the finest in Ireland. As usual Mr McDonagh does not give a source for this information.

xxx Christopher MacDonagh

(1939).

xxxi Arthur Young, ob. cit.

xxxii Hubbard, 1986, p. 80. The mills were engraved by W. Watts after T. Sandby; also by Thomas Malton. Moses Griffiths depicted it in watercolour. Engraving by Paul Sandby illustrated in, *Buildings and Power*, Thomas A. Markus, 1993, p. 256

xxxiii Bradwell Grove Estate Papers, Oxfordshire Record Office. Copy/ Decree in Chancery. Hey/IV/ii/6 14th July, 1796. This relates to a cause before the Lord Chancellor relating to the estate of the late Thomas Fitzmaurice and involving his widow the Countess of Orkney and her son (The Bradwell Grove Estate had been owned by the family of Mary O'Brien, Countess of Orkney and it is thus that papers relating to the family are in these records – it was sold by Morough O'Brien, Marquis of Thomond in 1804).

xxxiv Wood-Martin, 1842, pp. 242-5.

xxxv John C. McTiernan, *In Sligo Long Ago*, 1998, p. 361. The corn mill was listed.

xxxvi Dunleavy, 1989, p. 116. The linen industry in the north thrived in the nineteenth century, see Cormac O'Grada, "Industry and Communications 1801-45" in *A New History of Ireland*, vol. V, *Ireland under the Union 1801-1870*, pp. 139-142.

xxxvii Markus, 1993, p. 256.

al Branwell Grove Papers, Copy/ Decree in Chancery. Hey/IV/ii/6 14th July, 1796.

xxxix D-GR/1/26 & 1/32, *Grenfell Pps* .- *Estate Pps. of Taplow Court*, Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies. He also owned the adjacent Cliveden Estate, now owned by the National Trust, and once the home of the Astors and later the setting of key episodes in the Profumo Affair in the 1960's.

xl T. O'Rourke, *HISTORY OF Sligo*, Vol. II, Facimile, Sligo 1986, p. 169.

xli Lewis (1837) 2000, p. 33.

xlvi James Howley, *The Follies and Garden Buildings of Ireland*, New Haven and London, 1993, pp. 8-24.

Hazlewood - An uncertain future for a building of national importance

Donough Cahill

Hazlewood, Richard Castle's earliest surviving country house commission, is currently the subject of a planning application proposing the demolition of a highly invasive factory to the rear of the house, the reinstatement of a once great parkland vista and the possible future transfer of Hazlewood house to the Irish Heritage Trust

However, this heritage gain may only occur if permission is granted for the construction of a substantial residential development within the historic parklands comprising 158 detached houses, 54 apartments in 4 blocks, 13 berths and other associated facilities. These works are proposed within lands that are of significant historic interest, that remain unzoned in the County Development Plan and which border an area of ecological interest.

The Irish Georgian Society has issued comments to Sligo County Council noting our concern at the scale of the proposed new development and highlighting the need to prioritise urgent works to the house. Yet for the first time in over half a century, it is possible to think that the future of Hazlewood may be secured through this development process.

Situated on a scenic wooded peninsula jutting out into Lough Gill to the east of Sligo town, Hazlewood was built to the designs of Richard Castle c. 1731 for Owen Wynne, military campaigner, politician and substantial landowner.

Owen Wynne was born in the 1660s in Lurganaboy, Co. Leitrim and studied in Trinity College, Dublin and subsequently for the Bar. In *The Wynnes of Sligo and Leitrim*, Winston Guthrie Jones charts Wynne's military



Historic photograph of Hazlewood

career which saw him serve with the Williamite forces at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, as commander of the 5th Royal Irish Dragoons at Blenheim in 1704 and ultimately promoted to the position of Lieutenant-General and appointed as Commander-in-Chief of

the army in Ireland in 1727.

Guthrie Jones details Wynne's purchase in 1722 of substantial landholdings in Sligo including lands beside Lough Gill and parts of the town of Sligo, together with the town's fairs, markets, tolls and customs. Through these holdings and through astute political manoeuvring, Wynne is said to have taken control of the Corporation of Sligo and also successfully secured county seats for members of his family.

Wynne's appointment of the prestigious architect Richard Castle to design a great country house in Sligo must have reflected ambitions to create a monumental legacy for a lifetime's achievements.

In building the house, Castle adopted a fashionable Palladian style and designed a square, three-bay, three-storey over basement central block linked by arcaded quadrants to three-bay, two-storey kitchen and stable blocks.

The entrance front is clad



Hazlewood now – interior looking through tri-partite door way

in limestone ashlar and features a pedimented tripartite doorcase that is approached by limestone steps flanked by two stone urns. Above the doorcase on first floor level is an Ionic Venetian window with round headed niches replacing side windows and, surmounting this, on second floor level, is a central window with circular niches to either side. At ground floor level the windows have rusticated surrounds whilst a modillion cornice encircles the house.

The south facing garden front is faced in uncoursed rubble with a rusticated tripartite doorcase surmounted by a Venetian window over which is a square window. Regrettably, in the 1870s a three-bay two-storey wing was constructed on the western elevation of the main block significantly marring Castle's symmetrical composition. A twentieth century fire escape further compromises his scheme.

The interior of the house is laid out with six rooms per floor plus a main and service staircases. The entrance hall is floored with white and grey marble whilst the drawing room has a fine coved ceiling. In his thesis on *The Irish Palladians*, the Knight of Glin singles out the saloon as being of particular interest with its ceiling treated as a coffered star vault. This room overlooks the garden terrace to the rear of the house and is placed on axis with the entrance hall.

The main staircase, similar in character to that in the Richard Castle designed Bellinter, Co. Meath, was replaced with a functional concrete flight of stairs in the 1950s or 60s which significantly compromises the character of the stairhall. Sadly the interior was further compromised when many of the chimney pieces were stolen though these were subsequently replaced with replicas.

The cartographic record illustrates the dramatic changes Hazlewood's landscape has experienced since the eighteenth century. An estate map dated 1762



Hazlewood now – exterior

shows a formal Dutch style garden with two octagonal walled gardens and a great vista extending down the peninsula with radiating allees. An 1842 Ordnance Survey map shows a significantly altered landscape which retains the great vista but illustrates a wooded landscape in place of the rigid formality of the previous baroque garden.

In *The History of Sligo Town and County* (1889) Terence O'Rorke describes the gardens at Hazlewood as having "an open lawn and shady groves, in which are provided charming retreats for saunterers, including a cane house, a rock house, a shell house (which had the inside walls covered with sea shells), and a curious chair of state constructed of materials rarely found in these latitudes, the bones of the whale". The remainder of the peninsula he describes as being covered with shrubs and trees, arbutus.

Shortly after independence, the last descendants of Owen Wynne to live at Hazlewood left it for good and in 1937 the house and surviving lands were sold to the Land Commission and the State Forestry Department.

In January 1946 the Irish Times carried a report announcing that "Hazlewood House is to be demolished, and the people of Sligo, with few exceptions, do not care". At that time, the Land Commission advertised its sale by auction with

a stipulation that the purchaser "demolish the building and remove all materials, clear and level the site".

Fortunately for Ireland's architectural and cultural inheritance, Hazlewood survived but ever since the 1940s has experienced a fraught existence. The house was purchased by the Department of Health c. 1947 who adapted it for use as a psychiatric hospital. In the late 1960s it was acquired by an Italian firm called Snia which built a giant factory for the manufacture of nylon yarn on the site of the once great vista. Snia withdrew from Sligo in 1982 and shortly afterwards the house and factory were acquired by a Korean videotape manufacturing firm which closed its operations in 2006.

Today the house stands empty with shuttered windows and considerable damage to its interior from water ingress brought about through years of low level maintenance. For some years the Irish Georgian Society has been lobbying for action to be taken to secure the future of the building and, subject to appropriate planning approval and the whims of the global economy, it is now possible that this may occur.

Donough Cahill is Executive Director of the Irish Georgian Society

Collooney Fair

Aidan Mannion

My first memory of the fair in Collooney was a bright spring morning, with the sun following the Ballygawley road up Nobles Hill. The sound of the small farmers of Tirerrill driving their cattle into Collooney woke me and I sat for hours watching the stream of animals. This flow was only broken by the odd horse or ass cart full of bonaves (young pigs). Kevin Mannion, my uncle, passed and waved up to me in my grandmother's (Jessie O'Grady) top window. In the early sixties as a little boy I knew that all these animals were bound for my father's place of work, he earned his living buying cattle all over Ireland and exporting them to Scotland.

The Mannions of Dunally were all cattle men, my father Gerry, his brothers Kevin, Paddy-Joe and Brendan, their father Bready and his grandfather Patrick. Store and breeding heifers were my father's main exports to the lush grazing farms of east Scotland. He was known as a very good "judge" of cattle and in fact the Irish Export Board asked him to show Blue Springers at the Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh. Blue Springers were blue in-calf heifers from the west of Ireland that were in great demand by Scottish farmers for breeding.

The fairs of county Sligo and in particular Aclare, Tubbercurry, Ballymote, Collooney, Culleens, Farniharpy and Grange were his favourites.

On one special day my grandmother and I followed the cattle across the Markree Hills to the fair. The animals were lined up on both sides of the Barrack road, the whole way from the crossroads to McKims. The excitement hit you immediately with "deals" being struck, the meeting of friends and the sound and smells of the animals. All the men showed my



A view down Main Street, Collooney, showing Heire's pub on the right and Mrs Meehan's "eating house" two doors down. This is a postcard published by Tadhg Kilgannon, Thomas Street, Sligo, in 1910. Aidan Mannion Collection

grandmother great respect by tipping their hats as she passed. Dealmakers would shout at both parties not to "break my word". When a deal was completed the dealer would mark the animals with raddle or with his special scissors. My father's marks were one cut to the pin and one cut of the plate, these marks were very important because they would identify his animals at the ports of Dublin, Derry or Glasgow by his shipping agents (George Mullen at the North Wall, Dublin, Willie Duffy in Derry and George Slavin in Mertlands, Glasgow). The dealer would also give the farmer a ticket from his ticket book and would write the deal details on the stub. An arrangement would be made to meet after the bank had opened and payment to be made in cash. The size, colour and rolls of notes amazed me. It was the custom for the seller to give a "Luck Penny" to the buyer when paid, who would spit on it and put in his pocket.

Some of the dealers I remember from the fair in Collooney were Michael Towey, Denny Cosgrove, Matt Clark, Joe Gorman, Hughie Walsh, Eamon Foley, Vincie Mullan, Michael Tahaney, John McGarry, Tom Joe Walsh, Felix Burke, Eddie Brennan, Hugh Mullen, Roy Buchanan, Mikey Noone, Albert McKenna, Roger Lang, Jack Noone, Brendan Lang, Mickey

Kerins, Paddy Noone, Jimmy Smith, Pat McLoughlin, Jimmy Bonner, Paddy Joe Mannion and Brendan Mannion.

When the deals were completed the dealer would get a drover to collect all his animals and bring them to the lorries, railway stations or sheds. Jimmy Meredith worked with my father and Brendan as a drover. He would round up the cattle and walk them to the sheds in the old Camphill School on the Coolaney road. The lorry-men would have their vehicles on the approach roads and the "doubles" (a lorry and trailer) would be booked by the bigger dealers. The

big A.E.C.s, Leylands and Commers were driven by great characters- Joe Carthy (Caiton and Carew), Tommy Harte, Mathius McLoughlin, Peter Davis, John Tahaney, Sean McQuaid and Paddy Mofitt. The drover would also collect the blue cards (I.D. cards with a tag number for each animal) as they had to accompany the cattle for export.

The square in Collooney was the center of all activity with canteens selling tea and ham sandwiches, stalls selling pots and pans, toys, sweets and clothes. Eating-houses like Mrs. Meehan's opened to serve dinner and Heire's and O'Connor's public houses were full to the door. The street front houses had timber barriers in front to protect their windows and doors. The carts were backed on to footpath at Heire's to show off their bonaves (young pigs). The calf dealers with their converted bread vans also vied for position along the footpath. McKim's, Flynn's and Quigley's shops were very busy and the bills of a year would be cleared with those hard-earned notes.

Very few of the cattle that crossed the Markree Hills in the early morning went home in the evening, reflecting the amount of business done at the fair. These animals were hand reared on smallholdings and were now

bound for fattening or breeding on the lush grass lands of the midlands, England or Scotland. At the three railway stations and cattle sheds around the town the cattle crushes are full and tag numbers are being checked and matched with their blue cards. The dealers are “drawing” their purchases into lorry or wagonloads for their different customers. This is where the real skill of cattle dealing showed as each customer had different requirements. I was amazed to see my father “draw” twenty heifers purchased all over the country from two hundred cattle and match each other perfectly. He could remember where every animal was bought and from whom. If an animal was bought all with others he would match the “comrades” easily.

For a short period the Franz Buitler shipping company shipped cattle direct from Sligo port to Glasgow. Cattle from Collooney would be brought to the Larage on Sligo quay where the shipping agent, Packie Kerins, took them in his charge and they were loaded onto the Livestock Express, the Frisian Express or the Hereford Express, each ship carrying around three hundred animals.

Cattle were the currency of pre-history and in the sixties they were providing the major commercial activity in the west of Ireland. The end of the fairs reflected the fall of cattle as the major economic currency in the west and the pushing of them to the edge of economic activity. My late father’s trade has now almost gone, but it’s interesting to see two of my brothers back in the cattle business today.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Collooney is located at a natural break between the mountains and in a good fording place on the Owenmore River. The old fair of Tubberbride on the southern end of the village is, according to tradition, the oldest gathering place. This gathering moved to Carricknagat on the other side of the town, as a result of landowner objections.

In 1616 local chief Bryan McDonagh was granted a patent to hold a Wednesday market and one fair on the 25th/26th of July. This moved the fairs into the town and allowed the grantee to collect tolls on all animals in the fair. Another two fairs were granted to him in 1622 on the 24th of April



Paddy Mofitt’s old cattle lorry on Mail Coach Road, Sligo, on the day it was taken from his yard to be scrapped. The last cattle lorry in Sligo town. Aidan Mannion Collection

and the 11th of November. Arthur Cooper was granted a patent for fairs at Tubberscanavan in 1686, just outside of Collooney. As a result of Cromwell’s confiscations the Collooney rights passed out of local ownership to Richard Coote in the late 17th century. Joshua Cooper bought the rights to fairs in Collooney in 1727 and combined the Tubberscanavan fairs into Collooney. It should be noted that there was a fair green in Collooney, off the Barrack road and behind the main street, but it was not used in my memory of the early 1960s.

The following is a list of the number fairs per annum in Collooney town:

YEAR	NUMBER OF FAIRS
1800	6 (plus Tubbersanavan 4)
1840	6 (plus Tubbersanavan 4 and Carricknagat 1)
1900	7 (plus Carricknagat 1)
1950	13 (plus Carricknagat 1)

Old Moores Almanack, which was first published in 1699, was always my father’s bible to fair dates. The North-West Cattle Exporters Association was the dealers’ representative organization and it met every Saturday night in the Imperial Hotel, Sligo in the 1970s.

Dedication

To the memory of my late father Gerry Mannion and all the other cattlemen who made Collooney the cattle capital of the west of Ireland.

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About the Author

Aidan Mannion is Vice Chairman of the County Sligo Heritage Forum, a past President of the Sligo Field Club and holds a Diploma in Archaeology from U.C.G.



The Market House on the Square, Collooney, as it was in 1913 on a postcard published by T Hargadon, Old Street, Collooney. McKims shop and post office on the right now occupies the full of this site. From the Aidan Mannion Collection

On St. Kevin's R.C. Church, Keash, Co. Sligo

Martin A. Timoney

INTRODUCTION

Wandering through the Irish countryside one is struck by the number of churches and old graveyards that are off the modern roads. Even more surprising then that so many of the churches in the parish of Keash and Culfadda, formerly Drumrat and Toomour, that are close to the old medieval road from Ballymote to Boyle, a road named on the 20th century Ordnance Survey maps as *Bóthar an Chorainn*, historically believed to have been laid out by Richard de Burgh, The Red Earl who built Ballymote Castle around 1300. This may have been the route taken by O'Donnell, another Red Earl, on the way to the Battle of the Curlews.

EARLY CHURCHES IN KEASH

Knockbrack, formerly Drumrat, was founded by St. Fechin of Billa, west of Collooney; he who died c. 665-668 is more famous as the founder of Ballisodare and Fore. Some Early Christian slabs in Knockbrack graveyard indicate an early foundation but there are only scant remains of a medieval building. The church at Toomour is medieval, it probably had a tower for residence at the west end, but the Altar and its slabs suggest an Early Christian date for its foundation. St. Luidhigh of Cill Easpaig Luidhigh seems to be the Bishop Luid who ordained St. Kevin of Glendalough in the mid or late 6th century and the same Lughaidh, Bishop of *Tuaim-fobhair* or Toomour. From this association with a very important ecclesiastical site the church has been named St. Kevin's Church. Teampull Ultan in Greenan still stands but is architecturally uninformative; an early pillar again suggests an early date for the site. Templevanny too was a circular Early Christian foundation; quern fragments and metal slag have been found there, but there is no trace of the medieval building; it may have



Keash AD 1809 Stone

had links to the Cistercian abbey in Boyle. The church in Battlefield, a long way off the medieval road, is filled with stones collected from the surroundings; a bullaun from there is at Ballymote R.C. church. Just south of Ballymote is Emlaghfad, *Imblech-foda*; St. Colmcille placed St. Eanna there.

It would be wonderful to know which of these sites was the earliest but Toomour was the important site chosen to give its saint's name, St. Kevin, to the Keash church.

LATE USE OF MEDIEVAL CHURCHES

The difficulty with finding foundation dates for church sites is surpassed by the difficulties of finding when sites ceased as places of worship. The Reformation and the Suppression of Monasteries are cited as the death knell and that thereafter mass rocks in out of the way places were regarded

as being the norm. A band of Scottish mercenaries, camped near Fenagh Lake, destroyed several buildings, including churches, in 1581.

However when we look at the evidence mass was being said in buildings, often called mass houses. Some churches from earlier times still had roofs; the drawing of Court Abbey suggests that the south transept was not long out of use in 1779. Prof. Stalley argues for a late use of Ballindoon on Lough Arrow, and Creevalea at Dromahaire; the Dominican order has had an almost continual presence in Sligo from 1252 with a church behind Burton St. from 1763. So churches were being used and being built during the eighteenth century.

CONFIRMING THE 1809 DATE

Turning to Keash church in Fallougher confirming the date of its erection by independent lines of proof has been a challenging exercise. "A:D 1809" is cut in a window sill. The inscription in glass in the west porch window reads "Pray for those who built this church in 1809 and those who restored it in 1979". What



St Kevin's Church, Keash

more would one want? Combined these may have given a complacency that the date was in fact 1809. In 2001 the date of 1809 was not researched in depth for the parish history and documents were not discovered. This author, an arrival to the parish in 1985, on the other hand, is looking for better proof, proof independently derived from different sources. Also the fact that the date is cut on a window sill, as opposed to over a doorway or on a plaque giving more information in a gable wall, is strange. It is positioned opposite what was until recently the only gate to the church for all entering to see.

If there are no contemporary sources, *i.e.*, none from 1809, where does one turn to? We have frequently advised the young inexperienced, and often over enthusiastic student, that they are not the first to go down any particular research road, and what they write will not be the last. Following up on the first point it took some weeks and a flash of inspiration in The National Library of Ireland to bring me to realise that someone subsequent to 1809 might have written down something of use. All normal sources seem to have nothing so what of newspapers but that gave two hundred years of potential sources and an awful lot of searching. But then there is never enough time! It has been said that all problems can be reduced to mathematical equations. In this case the relevant equation seems to be Year to Search = 1809 + 50N where $0 \leq N < 4$, or perhaps Year to Search = 1829 or 1979, though the latter has proved fruitless; simply the multiples of 50 years, The Year of Emancipation or the Year of Renovation.

Fr. Richard FitzMaurice was P.P. here from 1796 to 1831; he was a native of Cloonagh and this agrees with the ownership of the lands as marked on the Palmerston NLI Ms 16F17 map of 1813-1814. He is credited with building the church.

THE PRE-1809 CHURCH

There have been arguments for two different locations for the pre-1809 church, one in Fallougher and the other in Cross. A few pieces of information have come to light in mid-2009 that help with the late 18th / early 19th century churches in Keash.

The words 'Grave Yard' are written beside Keash church on the 1837 OS map. These words have been taken by some to imply that there was a pre-1809 church here around which a graveyard had developed. This may refer to burials within the church but if so it is most unusual on the maps for Co. Sligo that such words be written at a church on the map. At the time of the Griffith Valuation published in 1856 'R.C. Chapel and yard' and 'National school-house' are listed but there is no mention of a graveyard; the immediate lessor for the lands surrounding the church was William Pibbs, presumably of Corraddoo between Carrowcroy and Ballinafad. The words 'Grave Yard' on the map must refer to burials at or within the church, not in the adjacent field. Bones have never been found in the field.

Most satisfying is the handwritten note by Michael Francis Regan of Carrownacreevy which clearly reads "Keash Catholic Church was built in Martin Keaveney's garden until 1808. Lord Palmerstown." (= Palmerston). The other items on the pages relate to emigration and deaths, dating to 1930 and 1934. This pushed confirmation of the date back to 1934 at least. The wording of the note is good confirmation that as far back as the early 1930s the date for Keash church was held to be 1809. It also establishes that the pre-Fallougher church was in Cross townland. A piece dated 1802 relates to this church.

James Taheny, whose family owned this land, confirmed a tradition of a church in Keaveney's Garden in Cross. This was the last field on the north side of the road that leads into Pdraig Drury's in Knocknacroy. His recollection is of a four-part building, a three roomed house with a barn to the mountain end. One wonders if that building incorporated parts of the church. There was a Pound on the south side of the road in 1837 and there may have been a horizontal mill on the stream in Knocknacroy.

ESTATE MAPS

At 1808 the chances of a church being mapped would be very slim as local maps are rare. Cross was part of the Palmerston Estate. The National Library of Ireland map of 1813-1814,

16F17, does not show a church and the additional handwritten pencilled words have not been deciphered. The map does show a long building. Cross was still Palmerston land in 1862 and the estate map, 16F21, shows James Keaveney as having 11A 2R 30P Irish, including a house. The building at the townland boundary equates with that on the 1813-1814 map. On neither map is the building named as having been a church. On both maps lines of trees surround the house, reflecting the name Keaveney's Garden.

18th and 19th CENTURY CHURCHES

Bishop Patrick McNicholas, Bishop March 1818 to February 1852, reported to Rome in 1822 that there were twenty-three parish chapels in the diocese, five of which had been built since he had become bishop in 1818; unfortunately he does not list the churches. Keash, then, would be one of the seventeen pre-1818 chapels in the diocese and was twenty years before Catholic Emancipation. This record by Bishop McNicholas, that there were twenty-three parish chapels in the diocese, would suggest that there was at least one church in each parish in 1822; one would expect the larger parishes to have had a second church. Corhownagh church to the west of Ballisodare is an early church in the diocese that is still in use. Barratogher church, to the west of Toorlestraun, dates to 1753 and it is reputed to have held 700 people; it was replaced in 1814 and that was replaced in 1844 by the present Toorlestraun church. A chapel was built in Ballymote in 1725. The Loftus Hall was built in the 1810s; by 1816 Emlaghfad Vestry had given £90 and £50 towards its construction.

The one detailed pre-Ordnance Survey map of Sligo is that done for the Grand Jury by William Larkin. There is mention of survey work being done in 1802 but the map was not engraved until 1819, so what is the date of its contents?, was it updated? It shows, by a standard symbol, a cross, as opposed to a detailed survey, that there was a church at Fallougher in Keash. This is independent evidence that there was a church at Keash by 1819, if not for a decade before that.

The Established Church in the Parish of Emlaghfad gave £40 before

1816 towards Keash chapel. This is confirmed by a discussion which took place among the Vestry in 1821 asking why the pre-1816 payment had not been publicised. This is independent evidence that there was a church at Keash by 1816 and pushes the evidence back even closer to 1809.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

Tradition has it that Keash was originally a single part church, The Men's House along the road facing directly to the altar. The Women's House was a later addition but built before 1838 as the First Ordnance Survey map clearly shows both wings. The depiction of the church is small but detailed; one wonders if the Men's House has since been lengthened.

Local tradition emphasises that the church originally had a sod roof and that later it was thatched. This sounds more than the normal use of rolls of scraw sod being laid grass side down before thatch was pegged to it. I can find no record of when the church was slated.

There is mention that Patrick Rogers was teaching in the church in 1826.

The roof, with a ceiling carved by Pat Horan of Derrygola, was supported by a timber pole. Again, tradition records that Bartley Mór Langton, a blacksmith by trade, told the Horan brothers how to support the roof using this pole. The sacristy was added sometime between 1838 and 1888. The two porches were added to the church during the ministry here of Fr. P.J. O'Grady, 1912-1920; he also had the road from the church to the parochial house repaired. The belfry was erected in 1908.

The Parochial House was built by Fr. Patrick Scully in 1885 with a grant of £400 from the Board of Works. It was extended to the back in 1915 by Fr. P.J. O'Grady for £600; a porch was added at that time. The Curate's House, opposite McDonagh's Shop, now Ward's, was built in the time of Fr. Patrick Conlon, here 1888-1891, with a grant of £200. A new Curate's House was built near Culfada by 1981.

REPAIRS IN 1977

Canon John Alexander McGarry was P.P. here from 1973 to

1985. Renovations began in 1977 but it was discovered that the church was in much worse condition than expected. Des Rushe, "Lough Key Country", *Irish Independent*, 23 March 1979, detailed the scale of the problem. The renovation project was expected to cost less than £25,000 but escalated to more than £60,000 because of the dry rot: roof, floor, seats, altar, and confessionals of the 170-year old building were affected and practically everything in and around the church had to be renewed or repaired. The church was almost reduced to a shell. He says it was built in 1809 by Fr. FitzMaurice who hid up the chimney in the Irish College in Paris during the Revolution. The final cost was about £86,000. These details are taken from Rushe's article.

The church was officially reopened in April 1980; during the works mass was said in the adjacent White Hall. The total removal of all possible sources of dry rot has meant that early wooden fittings which might help date the structure were removed and destroyed; a few mementos have survived.

There was considerable fund-raising both at home and among parish emigrants abroad including Gaelic Park in New York in September 1980.

New furniture for the sanctuary was presented in 1985 in memory of Fr. Kevin Brehony and the Drury family.

A car park was made around 1950 opposite the then National School. That was improved in late 1970 and extended in 1991. A car park by the side of the church was laid in 1991 with a new side access to the church grounds.

CONCLUSION

None of the independent lines of information absolutely confirm 1809 as the date of the church but collectively they lead to one conclusion, the church in Keash was built in 1809. The bi-centenary celebration is set for August 3rd., 2009, when Bishop Brendan Kelly is the principal celebrant with Rev. James Canon Finan as Master of Ceremonies.

Further details on the parish are to be

found in *Keash and Culfadda, A Local History* edited by John Higgins, Mary B. Timoney, Br. Thomas Connolly and John Kieilty, and published in 2001. The article for the August 2009 bi-centenary celebrations in Keash church has been derived from this article.

Acknowledgements

I thank Rev. James Canon Finan, Dr. Arnold Horner, Aideen Ireland, Mary B. Timoney, Patrick E. O'Brien, May Carty, John McTernan, Imeda and Jim Killoran, Padraig Drury, James and Elizabeth Taheny and James McGill for help in compiling this article. The published works of Fr. Liam Swords have been helpful. Many archaeological and historian colleagues advised me as to possible sources but none proved fruitful. Fr. Tomás Surlis, Pontificio Collegio Irlandese, and Martin Fagan, Archivist, Irish College Rome, provided copy of the McNicholas letter.

Parish Priests

1683	Miler McDonogh
1704	John McDonogh - Drumrat
1704	James Mulrunifin - Toomour
1731	James Tymon
1738	James McDonogh
1776	John Duffy
1780s	? O'Connor
1786-1796	Owen Banaghan
1796-1831	Richard FitzMaurice
1831-1851	James O'Hara
1851-1870	Constantine Cosgrove
1870-1881	Mark Cook, Adm.
1881-1901	Patrick Scully
1901-1912	Dominick O'Grady
1912-1920	P.J. O'Grady
1920-1925	William Flynn
1925-1928	Edward Henry
1928-1931	James Hyland, Adm.
1931-1944	Michael Connolly
1944-1955	Anthony Durcan
1955-1958	Peter Harte
1958-1973	Edward Gallagher
1973-1985	John Alexander McGarry
1985-1990	Christopher McLoughlin
1990-	James Finan

A Turbulent Sligo Genius

Stephen Flanagan

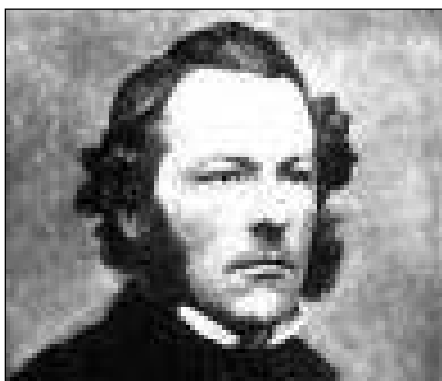
If you've ever stood at a bridge and found yourself gazing at the hypnotic flow of water passing underneath, you're following in the footsteps of one of the greatest minds ever to come from Sligo. And you may even be in with a shot at a million dollars.

George Gabriel Stokes was born in Skreen, Co. Sligo, on 12 August 1819. Over the course of his life, Stokes' mathematical research laid the foundations for the study of the way fluids and gases move, applying to everything from the way water flows through a pipe to how air flows over an airplane wing to how stars move in a galaxy. Generations of engineering and mathematics students ever since have struggled to come to grips with his ideas in the form of the Navier-Stokes equations, Stokes' law, Stokes' theorem, the Stokes shift and his other works across mathematics, engineering, optics and even medicine.

His father was John Stokes, Rector of Skreen, and his mother Elizabeth was the daughter of John Haughton, Rector of Kilrea. Their first child died in infancy, but seven followed, of which George Gabriel was the last. Four of his brothers became clergymen; his eldest brother went on to become Archdeacon of Armagh, and it's no surprise that Stokes himself was very religious throughout his life. It was by all accounts a very happy childhood; J Larmor, in his two-volume *Memoir and scientific correspondence of the late Sir George Gabriel Stokes*, noted that '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.'

Stokes returned regularly to the west of Ireland for summer holidays in the years that followed. And in one of his mathematical papers, when describing a wave, he writes of it being like 'the surf which breaks upon the western coasts as the result of storms out in the Atlantic.' So the region certainly had a hold on his imagination.

His earliest education was from the clerk of the parish in Skreen. When he was 13, he went to the Rev R H Wall's school in Hume Street, Dublin, where his mathematical abilities began to make themselves apparent. When he was 16, he moved to England to attend Bristol College, where he stayed for two years, before finding what would turn out to be his home for the rest



George Stokes

of his life: Cambridge University.

While there, he met William Hopkins, a well-known figure of the time who, in Stokes' own words, 'was celebrated for the very large number of his pupils gaining high places in the University examinations for mathematical honours.' He encouraged Stokes to think not only of pure mathematics, but to look also at fields like astronomy and optics. Given that Stokes later went on to be influential in several fields, he must have taken the advice to heart.

Throughout his career, Stokes earned almost all of the highest honours that a man of science of his era could hope to attain. He graduated top of his class as an undergraduate at Cambridge and was offered a fellowship at Pembroke College. On completing that, he was awarded the Lucasian Chair of Mathematics at Cambridge in 1849, a post previously held by Isaac Newton, and much later by Stephen Hawking. In 1851 he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society, and later he became that organisation's president. Later in life, in 1899, he was made a Baronet by Queen Victoria, and he was awarded the Copley Medal of the Royal Society in 1893, an award given for 'outstanding achievements in research'.

He was even a Member of Parliament for Cambridge University, elected for one term in 1887. Parliamentary records show he spoke a grand total of three times. He didn't like the hours, and didn't run for re-election. He was a vigorous letter-writer, and kept up a long correspondence with the famous Lord Kelvin, among many other people.

He was married in 1859 to Mary Susanna Robinson, daughter of Dr Thomas Romney Robinson, the chief astronomer at the observatory in Armagh. His family life was marked by tragedy, alas. Their first two

daughters died in early childhood, and his second son died of an accidental morphine overdose while training to be a doctor. His youngest daughter and eldest son survived to adulthood.

Possibly Stokes' best-known legacy are the Navier-Stokes equations, which deal with one of the most difficult problems in fluid dynamics: turbulence. Stokes worked them out independently as a consequence of Newton's laws of motion. It later turned out that Claude-Louis Navier had also completed the work around the same time, and the equations were named after both men.

You can see what they were thinking about at your kitchen sink. If you turn on a tap just a little so that you get a narrow, smooth flow of water, what you're looking at is called a laminar flow. But then, if you open the tap all of the way so that you get a gush of water, what you're looking at is a turbulent flow. The equations that Stokes developed can model that turbulent flow. To this day, however, mathematicians cannot prove that the equations are absolutely correct, even though they seem to match up with what we can observe and test in real life.

In the year 2000, the non-profit Clay Mathematics Institute in the United States named seven Millennium Prize Problems, unsolved problems in mathematics that it deemed particularly important. One of the problems is to mathematically prove that the Navier-Stokes equations are correct. The prize for each is one million dollars. So far, none have been claimed.

Stokes was a giant of science. He died in 1903, and was commemorated at his birthplace in Skreen in 1995. His obituary in *The Times* reflected his stature both as a man and a mathematician. 'By his death the country has lost its most eminent living mathematician and one of its most distinguished men of science,' it said. 'In private life his simplicity and modesty were as conspicuous as his great attainments.'

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The following essays were very helpful in the creation of this article:

<http://www.gap-system.org/~history/Biographies/Stokes.html>

<http://www.cmde.dcu.ie/Stokes/GGStokes.html>

Capt. McManus and his Two Wills

John C. McTernan

The McManuses of Corray and Tourlestrane and the Mullarkeys of Drummartin were two of the most prominent families in the parish of Kilmactigue in the early to mid 19th century. They were related through marriage, were of the well-to-do farming class and were in a position to have their sons well educated. Roger McManus qualified as a medical doctor and lived at Tourlestrane while his brother, Thomas embarked on a military career in England, attained the rank of Captain and in 1840 was residing in Baker St., London, with David McManus, possibly a brother.

Back at home their cousin and close neighbour, Dr. Joseph Mullarkey, more commonly known as Dr. Joe, was the first Medical Officer at Aclare, an enthusiastic follower of the 'sport of kings' and the owner of successful race horses that netted him a small fortune. His most famous racer was named "The Pride of Ballyara", whose prowess on the racetrack is recorded on a headstone over the family grave in the old cemetery at Ballyara.

In 1846 the McManus brothers, Dr Roger and Captain Thomas, purchased a large holding, in the region of a few hundred acres, at Ballisodare, part of the lands of Streamstown and Abbeytown, in the Landed Estates Court for £12,800 and towards the cost of which they borrowed £3,500. Thomas returned from London shortly afterwards and the brothers took up residence at Streamstown in a rather primitive two-roomed cottage. Once in possession they increased the rents of the sitting tenants, as a result of which most of them moved elsewhere allowing the new owners to turn the broad acres into a large stock farm. The local Parish Priest, Terence O'Rorke, D.D., when writing his parish history, was less than flattering in his remarks on the conditions under which the newly arrived landlords lived:

"The McManuses resided in a converted cow house, a squalid den which they shared freely with pigs and fowl. Their bedroom, which also served as a parlour, living room and rent office, had an earthen floor and for furniture contained two or three old chairs, a coarse deal table and a rustic bedstead. It was in this wretched



Dr. Joe Mullarkey

Archdeacon O'Rorke

style that the landlords of Streamstown and Abbey town passed their days and nights, evading their fellow man and being avoided by them, and were strangers to the normal comforts and decencies of life".

Dr McManus died in the mid 1850s leaving his brother, the Captain, the sole proprietor of the extensive landed estate. In 1859 he made a Will which was later destroyed and was replaced by a second, substantially the same, which he allegedly made on his deathbed in April 1865. Shortly after his death rival claimants to the estate had recourse to the law to determine which, if any, of the Wills would be upheld. The case came before the Court of Probate in 1867. No fewer than thirty witnesses were examined and their evidence, for the most part, was of a conflicting character. In the course of the hearing it was revealed that the Captain was a person of "eccentric and penurious habits" who had been in delicate health for many years and whose sole physician, since the death of his brother, had been his cousin, Dr. Joe Mullarkey. The estate in dispute amounted to £2000 in personal property and the lands yielded an annual income of £650 a year. While the greater number of his relations were Catholics, one branch were Protestant and this difference of creed infused a religious element into the case.

The Plaintiff was Michael Mullarkey, the sole next of kin of Dr. Joe Mullarkey, his brother-in-law, who had died the previous February and in whose favour both Wills were drawn. He was also the guardian of the heir-at-law to the Captain's nephew, Austin McManus who lived in Australia but returned home to give evidence. The

Defendant was John Mathews, the representative of the Protestant branch of the McManus family who claimed that both Wills were impeached, the first on the grounds that it was a forgery and the second because of undue execution and undue influence.

As time moved on and McManus's health deteriorated further, he appears to have abandoned his cordial regards for Dr. Mullarkey while at the same time expressing offensive feelings to the Mathew family, his Protestant relations.

Notwithstanding this change in attitude Dr. Mullarkey pressed him into making a second Will to replace the one that the testator had destroyed. On Easter Sunday in April 1865, a few days before the Captain's death, Dr. Mullarkey induced the Parish Priest, Terence O'Rorke, to join his solicitations for another Will but the deceased steadfastly and repeatedly refused to make it. On the following night he changed his mind and, propped up in bed, he dictated a second Will to Michael Mullarkey, the plaintiff, and then sent for Joseph Clarence of Ballisodare to witness it. Half an hour later Clarence reached the McManus abode only to find that the Will had already been witnessed by Tom McLoughlin, the Captain's steward and also by Michael Mullarkey. When the document was duly witnessed and signed, the testator charged those present to keep the matter a secret for twelve days after his death and instructed Mullarkey to then bring it to John Brett of Tubbercurry, a well known land agent, who was to pass it on to Dr. Mullarkey. It was stated in the court that these directions were followed. The Captain died on April 21st four days after making his Will for a second time.

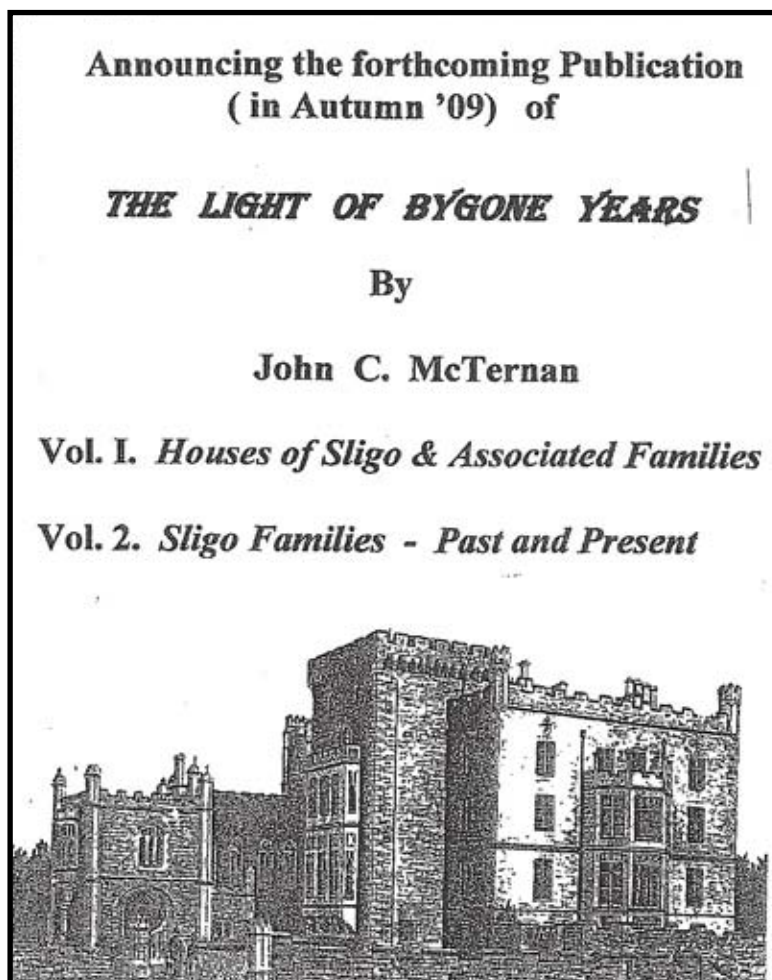
The case was before the Probate Court for a week and on Saturday Judge Keating charged the jury, who after an hour's absence stated that there was no possibility of their being able to agree and with the consent of Counsel on both sides, were discharged.

There, for the time being, the doubts raised as to the legality or otherwise of the Captain's last Will and testament remained unresolved!

**Details of the Estate of Capt Thomas McManus of Streamstown and
Abbeytown in mid 1850s**

Names		Description of Tenement	Area
Townlands and Occupiers	Immediate Lessors		
Streamstown			
(Ord. S. 20)			
Thomas McManus	In fee	Land	288 1 17
			9 1 0
Michael Davy	Thomas McManus	Land and house	6 0 15
Patrick Curreen	Same	Land, house, office	10 2 20
			8 2 1
Martin Rooneen	Same	Garden and house	0 0 20
		Garden, house,	
Michael McLoughlin	Same	office	0 0 30
		Land,	
Patrick Johnston	Same	house,offices	17 0 31
Martin Rooneen	Same	Land	3 2 0
Martin Rooneen	Same	Land	6 3 30
Michael Savage	Same	Land and house	
Michael McLoughlin	Same	Land	7 0 0
Abraham Allen	Same	Land	11 3 0
			369 2
		Total	4
Abbeytown			
(Ord. S. 20)			
Thomas McManus	In fee	Land and offices	350 1
Unoccupied	Thomas McManus	Herd's House	15
Charles Connolly	Same	Herd's House	-----

			350 1
		Total	15



Balliecottle and Castletown House

Martin Wilson

Baile Ui Coitil was occupied by the O'Coitil family, under the O'Dowda lordship, until they were dispossessed by the Anglo-Normans in the early thirteenth century. By the end of the fourteenth century, the joint forces of the O'Dowdas and O'Connors had in turn dispossessed the Anglo-Normans. The chief of the O'Dowdas, Donnell (Domhnall O'Dubda), built the castle at Balliecottle somewhere around 1447. Donnell died of the plague at Inniscrone castle in 1498.

In 1642, the castle was occupied by Captain Charles O'Dowda, and then by his son Patrick. O'Dowda occupation lasted until the Cromwellian era.

The castle itself can best be described as a fortified house exhibiting particular features of some tower houses such as subsidiary turrets; the dimensions of the house are 2:1 length to width ratio. The current outside measurements are approximately 19.6m in length and

9.8m in width, with one end being slightly narrower at 9.25m. The thickness of the walls varies between 1.65m and 2.13m, with the end walls being considerably narrower than the sidewalls. Internally, the castle measures c15.4m in length and 6m in width at one end, 6.5m at the other, giving an overall interior area of approximately 96 square metres.

The castle is of three stories, none of which shows any trace of a previously existing stone division, although it is possible that wooden divisions may have existed.

Two of the main features of the castle are the subsidiary turrets that are situated on diagonally opposed corners.

The castle has been extensively renovated over the years, including the addition of two chimneys in either the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Several archer slits have been filled

in, and some may have been replaced by windows. Most of the windows are just over 2m high. A number of the windows had wooden shutters added, some of which still exist.

After the eviction of the O'Dowdas during the Cromwellian Plantation of the 1650s, the castle and lands of Balliecottle were given to Robert Morgan, an officer in the Cromwellian army, attached to Col. Richard Coote's regiment of horse, who received the property in 1653. The grant was confirmed in the *Act of Settlement* c1662/6, part of the restoration land settlement brought about by the restoration of Charles II to the English Crown. Robert Morgan died in 1684.

Cottletown became a useful military site for the Williamite army during the war between the Catholic King James and the Protestant William of Orange. Captain Hugh Morgan, Captain of Dragoons, of Cottletown, Co. Sligo, is named in a list of Lord Kingston's officers in 1688. Captain Morgan commanded Cottletown garrison and escorted refugees and troops from Mayo to Sligo via the garrisons at Lecan and Ardnaglass for the army of William of Orange. These three garrisons protected the road skirting the seashore which, at the period, was the only highway to Mayo through the barony of Tireragh. The Cottletown post was useful for the Williamite army in many ways, especially as a rallying point for the scattered Protestants of the Foxford area of Co. Mayo. These Protestants had fled from Mayo after the Catholic leader of Tyrconnell had issued orders for disarming all of the Reformed faith. One of the main duties of Morgan's detachment was to escort distressed and plundered Protestant settlers to Sligo, where they could recover their health and strength before being enrolled into military service.



Balliecottle Castle

Photo by Martin Wilson

The Morgans probably built Castletown House, but it was extensively rebuilt during the eighteenth century. The O'Dowda castle at Balliecottle was probably vacated when the Morgans originally built Castletown House.

The next family to acquire Castletown House were the Kirkwoods. The exact date of their acquisition is unknown. What is known is that Samuel Kirkwood (1701-1778) held the house and he was succeeded by his son Andrew (1730-1797) who married Hester Mulloy of County Roscommon. His sons, James and Samuel, both of whom died childless, succeeded Andrew in turn. The property then passed to the eldest surviving son, Colonel Tobias Kirkwood (1779-1859). Tobias lived in Bath in England, and somewhere around 1860 he sold the house to the Jones family.

It was around this time that the name Castletown came into existence; (the Down Survey Map c1654/7 shows the area and building as being called Carrowreagh, meaning flattish stone free quarter or striped quarter). Thomas Jones died in 1858 and in 1860 the estate, comprising the house and 600 acres, came up for sale and was bought by Charles Boyd. Charles died in 1862 and his son, John Boyd, became the new owner. John's son Charles succeeded him. The census of 1901 showed that Charles Boyd was still in possession of the property at the turn of the century, living there with his wife Agnes and their five children.

One of the main historic features of the parish is the stone wall that surrounds the old demesne of Castletown. Measuring up to 8 feet high in places the wall is approximately 3 ½ miles long. Although nobody is quite sure when the wall was built, local myth suggests that it was a famine wall, built somewhere between the mid 1840s and 1850s. These types of improvement schemes were enacted throughout the country, as a result of government grants being made available through



Castletown House Photo by Martin Wilson

the Land Improvement Act introduced in 1846. The chance of it being a famine wall is given strength by figures taken from the census of both 1841 and 1851. Whereas the whole of the parish experienced a dramatic decline in population of 41% between these years, Castletown had an increase of 59%, from 30 persons in 1841 to 89 persons in 1851. In the following decade, most of this extra population appears to have disappeared, with the population for Castletown being recorded as 38 in 1861.

The Castletown estate was sold to the Congested District Board in 1909. The distribution of the 609 acres was to have a significant influence on life in the parish as many families gave up small holdings and received a full farm and dwelling house. Such was the size of the estate that families from surrounding areas were also allocated lands.

The authorities at the time ensured that all land was distributed in an equal fashion, which in turn guaranteed that both good and marginal land was distributed equally and that all farms

had access to water. There were 16 complete farms created, each one 21 acres along with 209 additions to farms in the surrounding locality. There was 52 acres left with the big house which was first occupied by Alderman Boyle of Manchester but changed hands many times over the years.

The Ordnance Survey map of today displays an intricate patchwork of fields and homesteads, a topography far removed from the first Ordnance Survey of Castleconnor published in 1837, which shows a landscape dominated almost entirely by the great landed estates which had been established in previous centuries. This is the story of just one of these estates, part of the history and heritage of Castleconnor Parish, in west Sligo.

Sources:

'Castleconnor Parish – A Historical Perspective pre 1900'. Published 2000

'A Century of Change – Castleconnor post 1900'. Published 2007

Births, baptisms and deaths in the exiled O’Gara family after the Jacobite defeat

Maura O’Gara-O’Riordan

Introduction

The principal source for the information in this article is C .E. Lart’s *The Parochial Registers of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, Jacobite Extracts*, published in London in two volumes in 1910 and 1912. The original registers are conserved at the Archives Municipales de la Ville de Saint-Germain-en-Laye. However, the entries in Lart’s work have to be examined with caution. There appear to be a number of errors in the transcription and many variations in the spelling of the surnames. It was common practice for the record keeper to write down the maiden name of a married female sponsor, followed by her husband’s name, occupation and title if applicable, but the lady in question almost always used her married name only when signing the register. However, when the registers are combined with the modern research of Edward Corp,ⁱ professor of British history at the University of Toulouse, there is further enlightenment regarding many of the personnel in the registers.

Following the signing of the Treaty of Limerick, more than nineteen thousand Irish officers and soldiers sailed to France between November 1691 and January 1692.ⁱⁱ Their wives and children accompanied some of the men, especially relatives of the officers. The ports in France, where the travellers were permitted to disembark under article 9 of the Civil Articles of Limerick, were ‘at Brest or Nantes, upon the coast of Brittany, or any other port of France they can make’.ⁱⁱⁱ

Conditions were very severe in the winter months for the new arrivals as shelter and supplies in Brittany were insufficient. A temporary decision to billet the Irish on villagers was not

welcomed by the locals. Following the defeat by English and Dutch fleets of King James II’s attempt in 1692 to invade England with the assistance of the French fleet, the army of James was disbanded. The Irish were assigned to the French army but were grouped together in their own regiments. The Irish regiments, accompanied by their officers, many with reduced ranks, were sent to different areas of conflict on the eastern borders of France, in particular Flanders.^{iv} The French were now the paymasters, and the Irish had no choice but to settle into their new impoverished conditions and surroundings.

Irish military men whose family members had accompanied them to France were compelled to seek living quarters for their wives, children and relatives. Many officers and their families opted to settle in the St Germain-en-Laye region, situated about ten miles to the west of Paris. It was at St Germain that King Louis XIV had made the Chateau-Vieux available for the exiled King James II, his wife, Mary of Modena, and their family, and members of their court in January 1689, following their arrival in France. Some members of the royal household were Irish, a number of whom were accommodated at the Chateau.

Colonel Oliver O’Gara and his wife Lady Maria (Mary) Fleming were allegedly among the last group of Irish Jacobites to travel to France. Mary’s half-brother, Christopher Fleming, Lord Slane and colonel of his own regiment, also opted for France. He was included in the list of the Jacobite aristocracy who were taken prisoner at the battle of Aughrim in July 1691.^v Oliver, like many other officers, was demoted following the disbanding of James’s army after their

defeat in 1692. He was fortunate to obtain the rank of lieutenant-colonel in King James’s regiment of Irish Foot Guards in the French army, a fact that is recorded in the register at the baptism of one of his children in 1694.^{vi} His service must have been satisfactory, as by 1697, his former rank of colonel had been restored. His regiment had also changed: he was noted in that year as ‘colonel of the Queen’s Regiment of Dragoons in France’, a position he held for a number of years.^{vii} The queen in question was Mary of Modena, wife of the exiled James II.

The Parish Registers of St Germain-en-Laye

For the majority of Catholics connected with the Jacobite cause who settled close to St Germain-en-Laye, ceremonies on the occasion of baptisms, marriages and deaths were held at the Royal chapel of St Germain. Records of events that occurred between 1690 and 1720 were transcribed, edited and published in two volumes by the genealogist, C. E. Lart, in 1912 under the title *Jacobite Extracts, Registers of St Germain-en-Laye*. Some Gaelic names appeared among the numerous entries, together with many Anglo-Irish, British, Scottish and other foreign names. Apart from the name of the baby being baptised, the names and occupations or titles of the parents and sponsors were also written down.

Eleven baptisms and four deaths were recorded for children born to Oliver and Mary (Fleming) O’Gara between 1692 and 1709. Mary did not attend the baptisms of her children and, if the transcriptions from the registers in the *Jacobite Extracts* are accurate, it would appear that Oliver

was present for three christenings only: in 1700, 1701 and 1704. His rank or status was recorded at each event. For each baptism, the register lists Oliver O’Gara and Mary Fleming as the parents. As Oliver and Mary attended as sponsors or witnesses at a number of other baptisms and ceremonies associated with relatives and friends, their names appeared in the registers in addition to their own family recordings. As will be seen, many of the sponsors had family connections to both Oliver O’Gara and his wife, Mary Fleming.

Baptism records of the O’Gara children

Two sons and a daughter

In the *Jacobite Extracts*, Patrick was the only name recorded for Oliver and Mary’s first-born son who was baptised on 25 October 1692.^{viii} However, the baby is named John Patrick O’Gara on a baptismal certificate which was produced on the occasion of an award he received in 1722.^{ix} The exclusion of the first name, John, appears to be the only difference between the transcription in the *Jacobite Extracts* and the copy of the official certificate of 1722, apart from an occasional typing error. In all later documents, this first-born O’Gara son was referred to as John only. The baby was probably named John after his paternal grandfather, Captain John O’Gara, as was the custom. The second name, Patrick, was likely to have been in honour of one of his sponsors, the Jacobite military commander in Ireland, Patrick Sarsfield, a very close personal friend to Oliver, and described as ‘Count of Lucan’. The second sponsor was Madame Victoria de Montecuculli d’Avia, the Countess Darmont [Almond].

Oliver and Mary’s second child, James Oliver, was baptised on 15 December 1694. The sponsors were recorded as ‘the noble and powerful Prince, the Duke of Berwick and Madame the Duchess of Tyrconnell’.

^x In later documents this son is named Oliver only. Oliver senior is listed as ‘Lieutenant-colonel of the Guards of the King of England’ and his wife is given as Marie Flemyng. The baptism of their first daughter, Marie, appears on 24 October 1696. The sponsors

were Francis Plowden, under-governor to the Prince of Wales, and Bridget Barnewall, daughter of Count Barnewall and Margaret Dongan.^{xi}

King James II as sponsor

Their fourth child was named Charles, baptised on 6 July 1699. There was only one sponsor at his christening, described as ‘the very noble and powerful Prince, James II, King’, who signed himself, ‘*Jacques Roi*’. Two other names appeared after the king’s signature ‘P. Ronchi’ and ‘S. Bulkeley’.^{xii} Ronchi was Fr Peregrine Ronchi, junior almoner to the queen. He resided at the Chateau-Vieux.^{xiii} One may suggest that Fr Ronchi was a witness to the signatures of the king. The other signatory, ‘S. Bulkeley’, was Lady Sophie Bulkeley, widow of Lord Henry Bulkeley, former master of the household of the king.

More royal sponsors

Assuming that the detail in *Jacobite Extracts* has been accurately transcribed from the registers, it would appear that Oliver attended the baptism of one of his children for the first time on 12 June 1700, when his fourth son, Francis Edward, was named. The sponsors were ‘the noble and powerful Prince of Wales’ and ‘Madame de Liez, lady of honour of her royal highness, Madame the Princess of Wales’. The register was signed by Jacques P., Rose Macgenis Lee and Oliver O’Gara. Oliver, on this occasion, is listed as colonel of the Queen’s dragoons.^{xiv}

Another daughter, Marie Magdelaine, was baptised on 22 July 1701. Once again, only one sponsor attended, ‘Her Highness, the excellent and virtuous Princess Marie d’Este, Princess of Modena, Queen’, wife of James II. She signed the document ‘Maria R.’ and the signatures of ‘P. Ronchi’ and ‘Ogara’ followed.^o As was the case when King James was the sponsor in 1699, only one sponsor was present. However, the signature of P. Ronchi is written after that of the queen. The baby’s father was also present on this occasion.

Third daughter and fourth son baptised

Oliver and Mary’s third daughter,

Jeanne Agnes, was baptised on 21 January 1703, with John Bagot and Jeane MacDevinckt signing as sponsors.^{xvi} Fourteen months later, on 1 March 1704, another son, Eugene Terence, was baptised, with Marie Hamilton, wife of Gerard Dillon, and Terence MacDermott as sponsors.^{xvii} On this occasion also, the baby’s second name was that of one of the godparents.

Youngest children

Marie Louise O’Gara was baptised on 4 June 1705.^{xviii} ‘Louise Marie, Princess of England’ and Lord Talbot acted as godparents. The princess’s names were given to the baby but in reverse order. Less than two years later, on 7 April 1707, the baptism of the couple’s youngest daughter, Anne Marie Eléonore, was celebrated, with Anne Nugent, ‘lady of the house of the Princess of England, daughter of Marie Nagle wife of My Lord Brittas’ and ‘Walter Bourke, Irish colonel’ as sponsors.^{xix} Joseph Arthur, sixth son of Oliver and Mary, was baptised on 5 July 1708. ‘Gerard Dillon, Colonel’ and ‘Marie Butler, wife of James Tobyn’, Irish, acted as sponsors on this occasion.^{xx}

The christian name, Arthur, was a Dillon name.

Deaths of the children

The registers transcribed in *Jacobite Extracts* list the deaths of four of Oliver and Mary O’Gara’s eleven children. The first death was recorded in July 1697 when baby Marie, first-born daughter, aged eight months, died.^{xxi} Seven years later, on 6 April 1704, Eugene died, aged five weeks.^{xxii} The following year, on 17 May 1705,

Oliver and Mary lost their fourth-born son, Francis Edward, who had almost reached his fifth birthday.^w A few years later on 14 January 1709, the couple lost their youngest daughter, Anne Marie, who was under two years of age.^{xxiv}

Choice of names

Several of the children of Oliver and Mary O’Gara had members of the English Stuart royal family, or their

close associates, as sponsors at their baptisms. As has been shown, James II and his wife, Mary of Modena, each sponsored a child. James Fitzjames, Duke of Berwick, natural son of King James II, acted as sponsor in 1694, signing the register as 'Berwick'. The baby was named James Oliver but was later referred to as Oliver only; the first name, James, may have been given out of respect for the duke.

The choice of the name Charles for the O'Gara son born in 1699 may have been influenced by a number of factors. James II was sponsor, so it is possible to suggest that the baby was named in honour either of the king's father, Charles I, who was beheaded in 1649, or the king's brother, Charles II. However, records show that Charles was a traditional name in the O'Gara family from as early as the fifteenth century. A Fr Charles O'Gara appears in records as canon of Elphin in 1423^{xxv} and in 1428.^{xxvi} The child's father, Oliver, had an uncle or cousin named Charles O'Gara, father of two archbishops of Tuam in the late seventeenth century. One O'Gara family of Co. Sligo have records of eight boys being named Charles, or the Irish version, Cathal, from the 1820s to the present day. Alternatively, Oliver may have decided on the name Charles in memory of his maternal grandfather, Cathal óg (Charles) O'Connor, of Belanagare, Co. Roscommon.

Francis Edward, the couple's third son, was almost certainly named after his godfather, James Francis Edward Stuart, Prince of Wales, who signed the record 'James P.' in June 1700. When the prince attended the baptism he was close to his twelfth birthday. 'L. Mes' is given as the name of the person who witnessed the young prince's signature in *Jacobite Extracts*. This is likely to be a misreading of 'L. Innes' who can be identified as Fr Lewis Innes, junior almoner to the queen.^{xxvii} Marie Louise O'Gara was baptised on 4 June 1705 and given the names, in reverse order of her sponsor, Princess Louise Marie, aged thirteen, only daughter of James II and Mary of Modena.

Other male sponsors at the O'Gara baptisms

All the other seven male sponsors at the baptisms of the O'Gara children were members of James II's Irish parliament, established in Dublin in May 1689. Some detail of their connection to the O'Gara family and of their lives in exile is given here.

Patrick Sarsfield, sponsor of first-born O'Gara

Three of the officers, including Patrick Sarsfield, also served as members of the 1689 Irish parliament. Oliver chose his long-time friend and fellow officer, Patrick Sarsfield as godfather for his first-born child, John Patrick. Sarsfield was to die a few months later in Flanders from wounds he had received in battle. Patrick's widow, Honora Bourke, daughter of the Earl of Clanrickard, married secondly, in 1695, James Fitzjames, duke of Berwick, who had been a sponsor at the baptism of the second O'Gara son, James Oliver, the previous year.

Plowden and Talbot as sponsors

Francis Plowden, an Englishman and Jacobite civilian, one of the three lord justices appointed by James II to the government of Ireland in 1691,^{xxviii} was a sponsor for Oliver and Mary's third child, Marie. At the time, Francis was employed at the royal court in St. Germain, and from 1695 he was listed among the senior servants at the palace holding the position of comptroller of the household from 1700 until his death in 1712.^{xxix}

Lord Talbot, who acted as sponsor for Marie Louise, was identified in a number of St Germain church entries as 'Lord Richard Talbot, son of William Talbot count Tyrconnell'.^{xxx}

Walter Bourke and John Bagot

Colonel Walter Bourke, Anne Marie Eléonore's sponsor, was a native of Turlough, Co. Mayo and was very active in the Jacobite war in Ireland. He continued his military career in France, forming the regiment of Bourke. Walter issued a certificate in favour of Oliver and Mary's eldest son, John in 1710.^{xxxi} Many years

earlier, in 1641, Oliver's grandfather, Fearghal O'Gara, had been involved in a land deal with another Walter Bourke with an address at Ardagh, Co. Mayo.^{xxxii} The two Walters were likely to have been related.

When John Bagot sponsored Jeanne Agnes O'Gara in 1703 he was employed as a senior servant in the royal household, where he remained to 1716.^{xxxiii} In the 1689 Dublin parliament of James II there had been two members of the Bagot family of Bagotstown Co. Limerick. John Bagot senior and John Bagot junior represented two adjoining areas on the Limerick-Cork border, close to Bagotstown castle ruin.^{xxxiv} One may suggest that John, the sponsor, was the junior Bagot.

Identifying Terence MacDermot

Terence MacDermot (sometimes written McDermott), described as an 'Irish gentleman', the sponsor of Eugene Terence O'Gara, is somewhat difficult to identify with certainty as there were two men of that name listed in the parliament of 1689. One Alderman Terence McDermot represented the city of Dublin and the other represented the borough of Boyle, Co. Roscommon.^{ai} Arguing in favour of the sponsor being Terence of Dublin, it is known that he went to live in St Germain, and as a former lord mayor of Dublin, received correspondence at his French address. He also owned land in Ballintober Co. Roscommon.^{xxxv} Apart from the baptismal record, there is one other entry in the register: the burial record for a Terence MacDermot, Irish gentleman, aged 60 years in 1705. This was very probably the Terence that sponsored the O'Gara child. There are no further entries in the register after this date for a Terence MacDermott. Alternatively, it could be argued that Terence McDermot of Boyle was the sponsor as Oliver O'Gara as he had a known relationship with the MacDermots, formerly of Moylurg in Roscommon.

Gerard Dillon and the O'Gara connection

Gerard Dillon, sponsor of the youngest O'Gara baby in 1708, was recorded in various documents as Gerald and

Garrett.^{xxxvii} Gerald's parent's home was in Feamore, near Ballyhaunis Co. Mayo, where his grandfather had settled after the Dillons of Westmeath had acquired a considerable estate in Co. Mayo. Gerard studied law and was noted as 'Garret, Prime-Sergeant-at-Law for the Borough and Manor of Mullingar' in the 1689 Parliament.^{xxxviii} From papers in the Westport House archives it is almost certain that a Captain Gerald Dillon in Lord Abercorn's regiment was the same person as Gerald of Feamore.^{xxxix} Oliver's grandfather Fearghal O'Gara, a minor when he became an heir to the O'Gara title and lands in Co. Sligo in 1614, was a ward of court of Sir Theobald Dillon, great-granduncle to Gerard.

Female sponsors at the O'Gara baptisms

All but one of the female sponsors at the O'Gara baptisms had a spouse or close family member who had been involved in the Dublin Jacobite parliament of 1689, or who had served in James II's army in Ireland. Five of the sponsors were named among the most senior household servants at the royal residence. Two of the four named ladies were attached to the bedchamber of the queen and had accommodation in the Chateau.^{xl} Both were wives or widows of peers: the duchess of Tyrconnell (née Frances Jennings) and the countess of Almond (née Montecuculli)^{xli} The remaining three, Rose, Lady Lee (née McGennis), Mrs. Bridget Nugent (née Barnewall) and Mrs. Anne Nugent (née Nagle) were bedchamber women to the young English princess, Louise Marie Stuart.^{xlii}

Duchess and Countess

Madame, the duchess of Tyrconnell, sponsor of the second O'Gara child, James Oliver in 1694, was the widow of Richard Talbot, duke of Tyrconnell. Talbot was commander of the forces in Ireland from 1685 and lord deputy from 1687 to 1688. He died in August 1691, towards the end of the war. While Talbot led the troops in Ireland, his wife, the duchess, was living in Saint Germain. Her name appears in the chateau's list of senior servants from 1690 to 1702, after which she

returned to England.^{xliii} Some time after her departure from France, Lady Tyrconnell succeeded in having part of her late husband's Irish estates restored to her, and at some unknown date took up residence in Ireland. She was a generous benefactress of a Benedictine convent in Channel Row, Dublin after it was destroyed by the Williamite forces. It had been built 'by the direction of James II who was present at the dedication of the chapel in 1689'.^{xliv}

When the first O'Gara child, John Patrick, was baptised in 1692, his sponsor was Madame Victoria de Montecuculli d'Avia, countess of Almonde, a personal friend of the queen. She had assisted the royal family in their flight from England to Paris in December 1688.

Barnewall and Macgennis sponsors

Bridget Nugent (née Barnewall) daughter of Robert Barnewall, ninth baron of Trimlestown, who sponsored baby Marie, married her first cousin, Colonel Christopher Nugent of Dardinstown, Co. Westmeath. Bridget, who was related to the baby's mother, was employed at the Chateau.^{xlv} She was also co-sponsor in 1699 when Oliver and Mary's eldest son John, who had not reached his seventh birthday, was sponsor at a baptism.

Madame de Liez signed the register as Rose Macgennis Lee when she sponsored the third O'Gara son, Francis Edward, in 1700. She can be identified as Rose, Lady Lee. She was the wife of Sir Andrew Lee, an Irish officer.^{xlvi} Her maiden name suggests that she was very likely a member of the Magennis of Iveagh family. When Roger (Magennis) Lord Iveagh married in Saint Germain in 1701 his parents were named as Hugh Magennis and Rose O'Neill. Lord Iveagh's regiment fought in the Jacobite war in Ireland and members of the family were involved in the Dublin government of 1689.

Family connections as sponsors

Anne Marie Eléonore, youngest daughter of Oliver and Mary O'Gara, was sponsored in 1707 by Anne Nugent (née Nagle). She was wife of Sir Richard Nugent, lieutenant colonel in the regiment of D'Albemarle.

Many of the Nugent families were related to Mary O'Gara through the Barnewall and Fleming connections. Jeanne Mac Devinckt (indexed Mac Dermott), sponsor for Jeanne Agnes O'Gara in 1703, was probably Jeanne Mac Dermott, daughter of Chevalier MacDermott. She also sponsored a Gorman baby in the same year. Is it a coincidence or a matter of family connections that the male sponsor of this Gorman baby was Gerard Dillon, sponsor of one of the O'Gara babies? A strong argument could be offered suggesting that Jeanne's father, Chevalier MacDermott and Terence Mac Dermott, 'Irish gentleman' the sponsor of Eugene Terence O'Gara in 1704, and the Terence McDermott who died in 1705, were one and the same person. Gerard Dillon's wife, Mary Hamilton, was the other sponsor of Eugene Terence in 1704. Mary, a sister of Claude Hamilton, fourth Earl of Abercorn, was Gerard's second wife. Claude was colonel of Lord Abercorn's regiment in which her husband Gerard served. Mary was also sponsor together with Oliver O'Gara at the Butler-Fitzpatrick baptism in 1701.

Last of the sponsors

No firm information has been discovered on the sponsor of the last of the eleven O'Gara children, Joseph Arthur O'Gara, in 1708: Marie Butler, wife of James Tobyn. There are a number of other entries around the same years for a James Tobin whose wife was named as Anabelle Butler but it is impossible to know whether there was an error in writing down the first name of the O'Gara sponsor. There were two men named James Tobyn in the Irish Jacobite army and one James Tobyn in the Jacobite parliament. Marie Butler's co-sponsor was Gerald Dillon.

Later years

Four of Oliver and Mary O'Gara's sons survived to adulthood, three of whom served in the Irish Brigades in France and Spain and one in the service of the household of the duke of Lorraine. Three of their daughters may also have survived but there are no other records apart from their baptisms. Both Oliver and Mary

obtained pensions from the Stuart establishment. Oliver received a pension for his military duty as colonel in the Queen's Regiment of Dragoons in France. Mary was awarded a pension of 25 *livres* per month from the queen, Mary of Modena.^{xlvii}

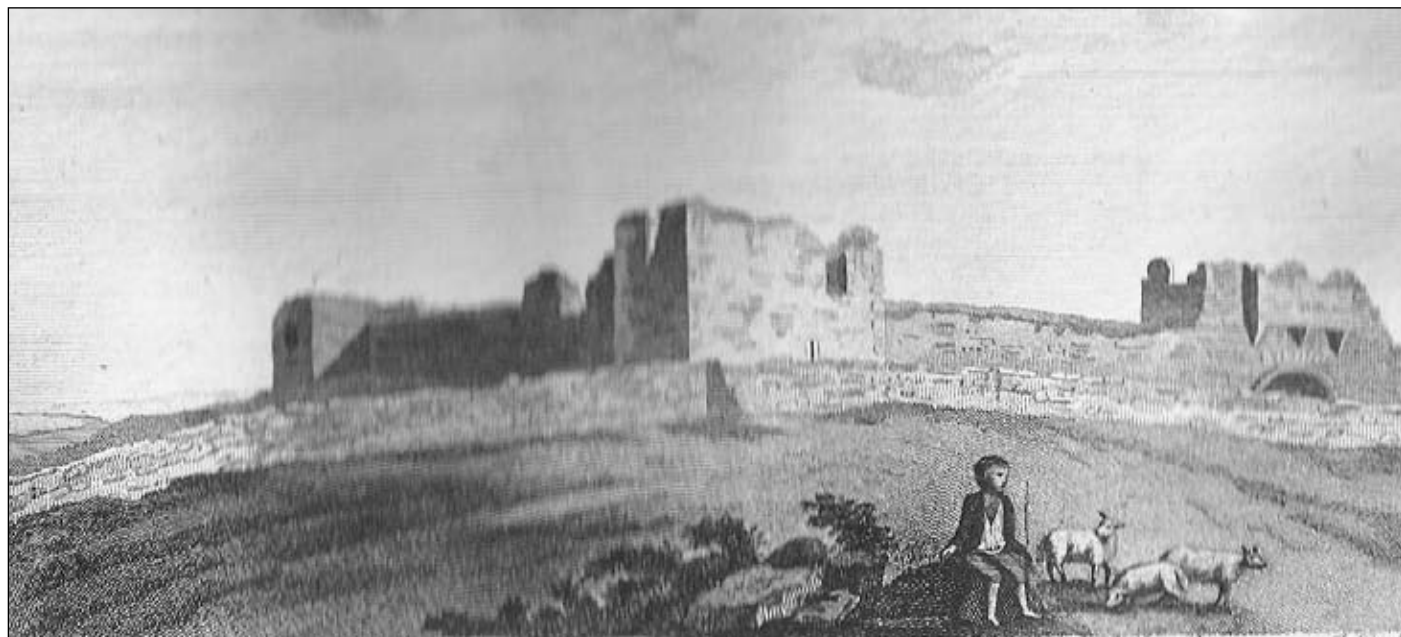
In the early 1720s while her husband, Oliver, was still alive, Mary O'Gara commenced a legal battle that was to last for a number of years. She sought permission to have an Act of Parliament passed in England that would allow her to start proceedings to have lands restored to her in Ireland. To obtain this permission she would have to have a pardon for the act of treason of which she was found guilty from 1689 because of the war in Ireland.^{xlviii}

Notes

- i E. Corp, *A Court in Exile* (Cambridge, 2004).
- ii Corp, *Court in Exile*, p. 32.
- iii C. F. Blake-Forster, *The Irish Chieftains or A Struggle for the Crown* (Dublin, 1872), p. 596.
- iv P. Wauchope, *Patrick Sarsfield and the Williamite War* (Dublin, 1992), pp 291-3.
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O'Gara Castle. Aidan Mannion Collection



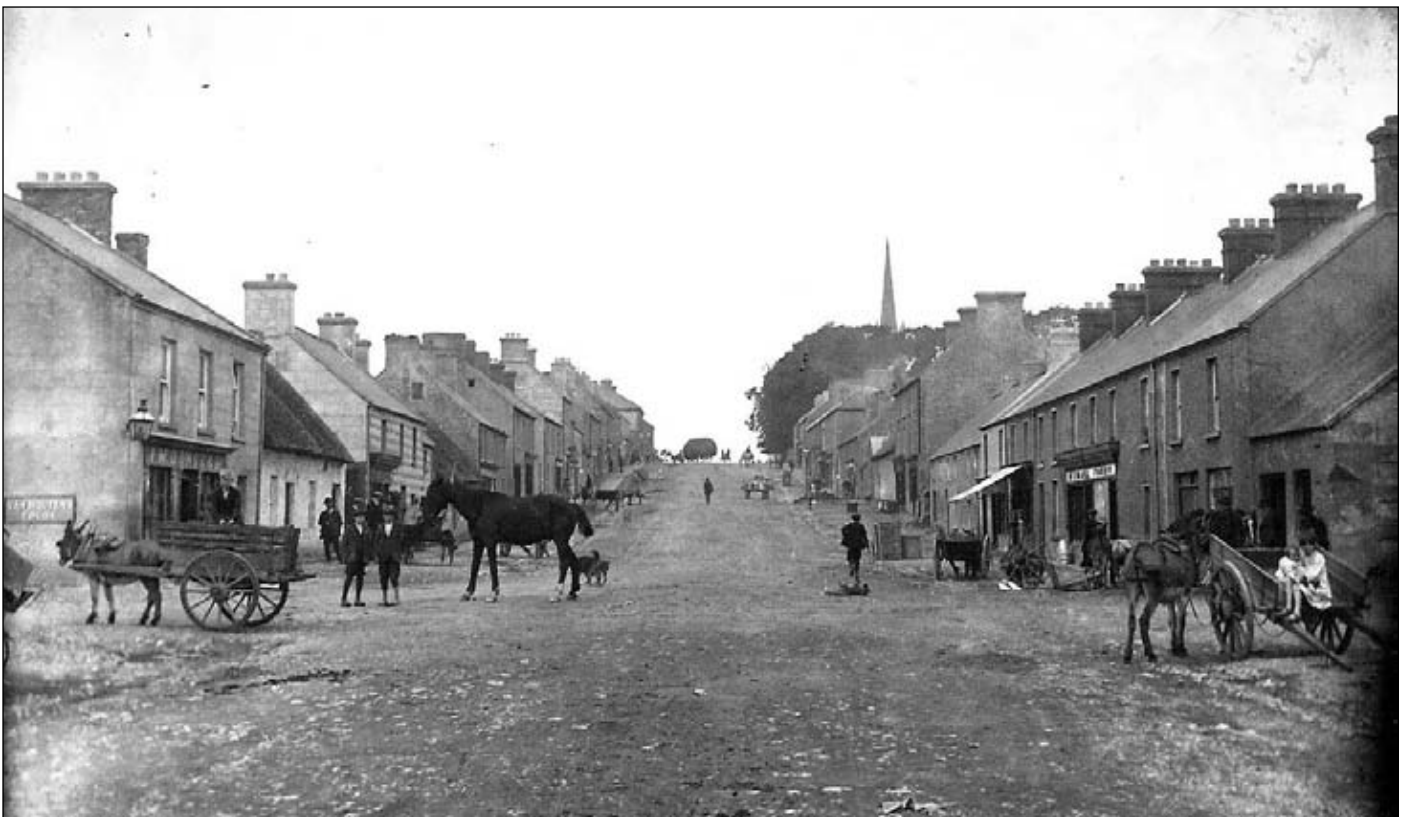
Hollybrook House, about 1940, taken from the shore of Lough Arrow.
Picture courtesy John Coleman, from the collection of Maisie McGovern.



Ballymote, looking up the hill along Lord Edward Street (Market Street). Note the gas-lamp, the cobbled water-channel, and the hen. Date? – probably pre-1900.
Picture courtesy John Coleman, from the collection of Maisie McGovern.



Ballymote, looking down along Lord Edward Street. Another gas-lamp and another water-channel can be seen.
Picture courtesy John Coleman, from the collection of Maisie McGovern.



Ballymote, looking up from Newtown along O'Connell St. Note, at the top of the hill, the large cart-load of hay (probably) waiting to be weighed on the weighbridge (recently displaced) at the then Market House.
Picture courtesy John Coleman, from the collection of Maisie McGovern.

The Year of the Feathered Piper

PJ Duffy

Back in 1957 the lower end of the Killavil district was suddenly alerted to the sensation of some strange high-pitched sounds coming from the Knockahurk Ardkeerin direction. With the passing of a couple of days it was established that the sounds were those of some strange bird that had arrived into the area.

It was during those days leading up to the middle of May that the sounds were first heard and nobody from around the place could say for certain what breed of bird was making them. One gentleman who had spent some years abroad in foreign lands seemed to identify the pitch-piping sounds as those of a sandpiper, a bird that seldom if ever was seen in this part of the country.

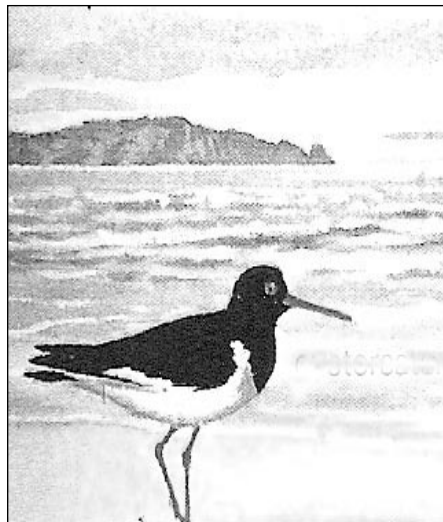
1957 was a year and a period when corncrakes were quite numerous in our country and at night-time especially you were likely to find a couple of them emitting their craking sounds from the direction of almost every meadow in the countryside. They were so plentiful that they were actually taken for granted. But people returning back to that part of Killavil, whether by day or by night, were completely baffled by the intermittent piping sounds that had come into their area.

Come the month of June, the strange bird stayed put, flying off during the daytime for short interludes in the immediate surrounding area but by evening coming back to roost in a clump of mature willows that once surrounded an old bakery, now in ruins.

It was only when a local lad returning home to the area in the early morning got a close-up view of the strange bird that its

identity was finally established. He described the bird as being black and white in colour with a red bill and a red pair of feet.

Some time later an ornithologist was consulted and he immediately identified the bird as belonging to a breed of sea waders called oystercatchers. He added that the presence of that particular bird in this part of the country was somewhat unique. They usually were associated with the coastline but sometimes were known to move inland during the hatching and breeding season. It was probably by some accident of fate that the bird and its mate happened to arrive here.



Oyster Catcher

The expert also explained that the persistent sounds created by the bird were a warning to rivals and intruders to stay clear of that particular area. Its mate apparently was hatching nearby and many of the sounds made by the male bird were coded messages relayed to its female partner. Should the female and her eggs, or later her brood, be in immediate danger she would communicate with her partner and he might arrive and feign a broken wing to lure away an intruder.

Just in passing, we might do well to remember that back in those days our country did not have anything like the standard of industrialisation and mechanisation that we see all around us today. Our rural areas were reasonably quiet and unpolluted.

I clearly remember, one night in particular while returning from a visit to a neighbouring house, the persistent sound of corncrakes coming from every direction along the wayside. It was a bright moonlit night and wisps of white fog were forming and curling around in the valleys. At every juncture you were met with the fragrant, sweet scent of whitethorn blossoms, lilac, honeysuckle and wild woodbine coming from the direction of hedges planted nearby.

Away in the distance I distinctly remember hearing the voice of a local ballad singer singing "The Valley of Knockanure" as he made his way home after a night's outing. But over and above all these sounds in the night there was the persistent piping of this strange visitor to our area. Coming up towards mid-July the tempo of that now familiar sound seemed to wane and by the end of the month it had finally disappeared.

We were later informed that this breed of bird was native to the Scottish coastline and groups might be seen flocking together there at a certain time of year. Its appearance here was undoubtedly linked to the breeding season and to carry out this undertaking it had certainly picked out a nice secluded spot.

Its coming to this part of the country was however a once-off occurrence and no sound of either it or its progeny has ever been seen or heard in the area since that memorable year.

James Cox, a Co. Roscommon Born Stained Glass Window Artist.

Noel O'Neil

I first heard of James Cox, the stained glass window artist, through a chance meeting with broadcaster and columnist, Fr. Brendan Hoban, in the Castlebar library. Fr. Hoban told me of a Harry Clarke Studio window in Lahardane church, at the foot of Nephin Mountain, Co. Mayo, and some days later I went there to see it. As I entered the church, I could see, to the right of the altar, a window, with a representation of the Blessed Virgin and the Child Jesus in striking colour, typical of the Clarke Studios. Then, to the left of the altar, I noticed a beautiful window depicting St. Patrick in the traditional style, which I took to be a product of the same studio; the colour was rich, the design mirroring some of the work on the Clarke window. However, I was wrong in that assumption, because a small inscription on the bottom right-hand corner, told me that it was the work of a James Cox, 1981, but there was no further information.



When I returned home I went on the internet and started a search for Cox, but to no avail, there was no mention of him. I made several enquiries in artistic circles, made phone calls, sent e-mails, and visited the library to

check lists of Irish artists, again all to no avail. I was puzzled, and together with my good friend Micheal Murphy, I revisited Lahardane for a more thorough examination of the window, to see if we could find any extra piece of information, but found nothing of use.

Disappointed, we were about to leave the church, but then a large Crucifixion window behind the altar in the sanctuary attracted our attention; this lovely window, executed in a modern style, depicts the crucified Jesus, with the Virgin Mary and St. John at the foot of the cross. It is a simple but powerfully vivid creation which captures all the pathos of the passion of Christ. We stopped to look at the window and noticed a small incised section at the bottom right-hand corner which gave us the information we were looking for; it showed that this window also was designed and painted by James Cox, but at the earlier date of 1966, and it was produced at the, now defunct, stained glass studios of Myles Kearney and Sons, of Ranelagh, Dublin. I learned later that this was the company, then managed by Mr. Patrick Kearney, that James Cox had joined many years ago to serve his art apprenticeship.

But where was James Cox from, and how did he come to be working in a Dublin art studio? After making some phone calls, I finally traced Pearse Kearney, the son of Patrick Kearney the man who, for many years, had employed James Cox at his studio; Pearse informed me that James Cox is now retired and living in Dublin, and that he still does some painting as a pastime.

Mr. Kearney put me in contact with the artist, and it was while talking to James Cox that I learned he was born in 1940 in the town-land of Cronkell,

about three miles from Rooskey, Co. Roscommon. He attended classes at the local national school in Druminardly, and from his earliest days he had a flair for art, a fact that did not go unnoticed by his teacher, who had encouraged him in every way possible.

In his teens, James served as an altar-boy at Rooskey church, and it was there that the local priest, Fr. Michael Tarpey, first became aware of his artistic talents. During that period, when restoration works were being carried out on the windows at Rooskey church by the Kearney studio, Fr. Tarpey took the opportunity to recommend James Cox as a possible apprentice to Stanley Tomlin, who at that time was partner in the stained glass business with Patrick Kearney of Dublin. Mr. Tomlin, who was the resident artist with the company, was so impressed when shown some examples of James's work that he promptly employed the young man on a trial basis. And so it was that in 1955, James Cox moved to Dublin and, at fifteen year of age, commenced his



James Cox window, Enniscrone.
Photo by Noel O'Neil

career as a stained glass artist.

James served his apprenticeship at the studio and attended an art college to improve his skills. Three years later, Mr. Tomlin and Mr. Kearney amicably dissolved their partnership, each going his own separate way. At that point, James Cox opted to stay with the Kearney side of the business; he became the resident artist and designer with the firm until its closure in 1991. For some years previously, the spate of church building which had been happening at the time slowed down, and the demand for stained glass had tapered off, thus accounting for the closure of several stained glass firms in Dublin and elsewhere.

Today, James Cox's work is still to be seen in churches all over Ireland, and much further afield; his first window, which he designed at about the age of seventeen, is in Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry, making him, arguably, the youngest artist to have his work installed in an Irish church. In Co. Roscommon, and the surrounding counties of Mayo and Sligo, there are some fine examples of his artwork, ranging from the modern to the more traditional style. At Lahardane, for instance, the main window, commissioned in 1966, shows a Crucifixion scene in a beautifully subtle modernistic style, while the St. Patrick window (1981), which first attracted our attention, is in the more traditional mode; it was commissioned to complement the Harry Clarke studio window already in the church. The Cox window is made up of an amalgam of Old English Streaky Glass and Old English Pot Metal glass.

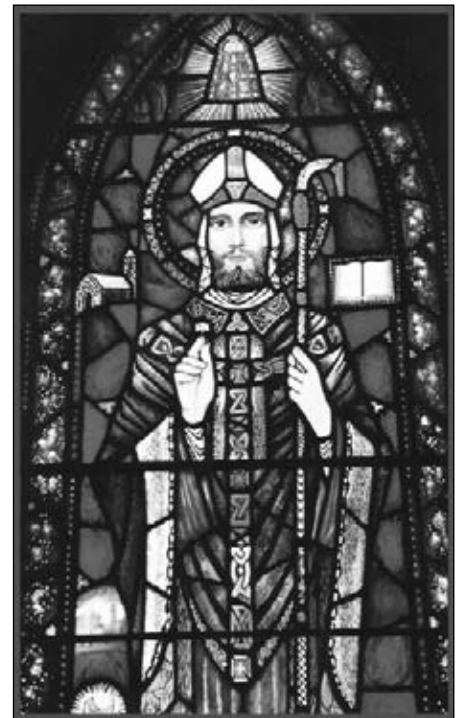
In Enniscrone, Co. Sligo, a very large and beautiful memorial window, depicting the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is fitted in the organ loft, over the main door of the church. In Co. Roscommon, his works may be seen at churches in Boyle, and Bellanagare, while in Co. Galway examples of his art are to be seen in the churches at Caherlistrane and Mountbellew.

The Vallemount church, Co. Wicklow, has a window representing

Pope Pius X, which James Cox created when he was just nineteen years of age. In Dublin, the beautiful St. Ann's Church of Ireland, Dawson Street, has more stained glass windows than any other church in the city. A picture window depicting St. Mark and incidents in his life, as well as Sts. Ann and Joachim was designed and painted by James. It replaced a window fitted c.1882 and broken beyond repair in April, 1978. It is a great tribute to the artistry of James Cox that his work was selected to be placed alongside the windows of the great English stained glass artist William Warrington, (1796-1869) and the celebrated Irish artist Wilhelmina Geddes (1887-1955); this latter artist was associated with An Tur Gloine, a stained glass studio set up in Dublin by Sarah Purser, in 1903.

In the southern United States of America, an Assumption window measuring 10.5 ft x 10ft (3.2m x 3.04m) was commissioned for St. Margaret's Church at Bayou La Batre, Alabama, on the Gulf of Mexico. This little fishing port gained notoriety as the set for the 1994 Tom Hanks' film "Forest Gump" and less welcome notoriety when it was devastated by the Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The window, which happily survived the tempest, was produced at Myles Kearney's Dublin Studio, and again, it was designed and painted by James Cox. Another of his works is displayed in a church at West Palm Beach, Florida, and yet another, depicting an American Indian saint in full tribal costume, is in the state of Oklahoma.

In July of last year, I had the great pleasure of meeting with James when he came to visit Lahardane to see his St. Patrick window in situ, and from there we went on to Enniscrone church to see his Assumption window; apart from the time he worked on them, he had not seen either window before. While chatting with James, I was very taken by his humility; he is a most unassuming man and a very accomplished artist. He generously credits his former colleagues, Stanley



James Cox window Lahardane.
Photo by Noel O'Neill

Tomlin, Patrick Kearney, and Tommy Kearney, the artist and master Uilleann pipe player, with imparting to him much of the knowledge he needed to succeed as a stained glass designer. He speaks glowingly of their artistic skills, their "eye" for colour, their masterful techniques, and their camaraderie.

I have been following the career of James Cox for just a short period and I am sure that in time, many more interesting facts will emerge about him, but as I have already mentioned, he is a very retiring man, and not given to talking about his achievements. Several people I have spoken to within the stained glass business have great respect for "Jimmy," both as an artist and as a gentleman, and they told me of his hard work, and of their admiration for him and for his art.

Some of the cartoons (drawings) of James Cox's windows have survived and are kept at the Irish Architectural Archive at Merrion Square, Dublin, these include drawings of windows from Mount Mellory, Enniscrone, Drumcliffe, Baileborough, Mountbellew, and several other churches, fifteen examples in total.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the work of James Cox to the readers of *The Corran Herald*.

Cornish Mining – A History

Lynda Hart

Although I was not born in the Duchy of Cornwall, my family moved there when I was young. Almost at once I was mesmerised by the large derelict buildings known as tin mines. These buildings were actually the engine houses, but to me they were and still are beautiful pieces of architecture. They dominate the landscape; in various stages of decay they are a reminder of the days when Cornwall was at the fore of industrial Britain. So rich a county it was that a law was passed for Cornwall to have its own parliament and laws. The *Stannary* (from the Latin *stannum* meaning tin) made laws and collected taxes.

The workmanship that went into building these structures was superb. Even with today's technology it would be hard to replicate.

Thus began my love of architecture, history, geology and archaeology. Whenever I re-visit Cornwall I still love to see these wonderful buildings.



Photo By Lynda Hart



Fig 1

During the later stages of the cooling of the mass of granite that makes up the majority of Cornwall, fissures opened which allowed molten rocks to bubble up through. These new rocks contained minerals and as they crystallized they formed mineral lodes, tin, copper, zinc lead and iron, as well as small deposits of silver. Because of the way they were formed the lodes were vertical, (unlike coal which forms horizontally in sedimentary rocks) so they had to be mined vertically. Each lode had to have its own shaft straight down into the earth. Most shafts were well below the water table and therefore needed to be pumped out so engine pumping houses needed to be built (Fig 1).

The first mining of tin and copper was a very different scene. Visited by metal traders from the Mediterranean between 2300 and 2000 BC, Britain was known as *Cassiterides*, “*Tin Islands*”, and the tin was found as alluvial deposits in the gravel of the stream beds. Panning was used to

separate the heavier ores from the gravel and sand.

The first organized trade came from the Phoenicians at around 1100 BC. They traded spices and today a saffron bun is a staple of the Cornish diet. Later came the Greeks. Trade was also established with the bronze-smiths of Ireland and many metals including gold passed through Cornwall. Smelted tin was collected at *Ictis* (St. Michael's Mount, near Penzance). From there it was transported throughout Europe.

By 500 BC Cornwall was a major tin producer. The people of Cornwall realized the importance of the commodity they had, and started to build fortified settlements to protect both themselves and the tin. One of the largest of the fortifications is *Chun Castle*.



Fig 2

Chun Castle (Fig 2) is an Iron Age hill fort situated in an area of Cornwall called Penwith. A large fortified structure of 90 metre circumference, it had two lines of defensive ditches and walls up to two metres high. Sadly it has been plundered for its stone down through the centuries and is in quite a destroyed condition. The entrance is still clear, marked by two upright standing stones. Excavated in 1895

and again in the mid-1920s the earliest recorded dates come from pottery dated to the 4th Century BC. Close by is Chun Quoit. (Quoit is the Cornish term for dolmen or cromlech). This structure is dated to around 2400 BC. It is speculated that Chun Castle was used for the collection and smelting of the tin, as evidence of smelting pits was found there.

By the 17th century mining had gone underground. In his *Survey of Cornwall*, Richard Carew says that some of the mines had reached a depth of 300ft. (91.5metres) In these small cramped shafts the miners would descend on rope stirrups for shifts that would last five hours. It would have been dark, hot, wet and cramped.

In the beginning of the 18th Century, it was discovered that not only was Cornwall abundant in tin, but also copper. Mining began to boom and many thousands of miners were employed. The biggest problem for the mine owners was trying to keep the ever deepening shafts free from water. In 1777 James Watt, the great Scottish born engineer, came to Cornwall and started building a new type of steam-powered pumping engine. These were so efficient they easily overcame the problems of the flooded shafts. A few years later a Cornish engineer Richard Trevithick made improvements to Watt's pumping engines and along with another engineer, Hornblower, produced pumps that were used throughout the world. Due to these improvements many more mines were opened. By the middle of the 19th Century over 200 separate mines operated in Cornwall, producing three quarters of all the copper used in the world and half the tin. Mine owners became

very wealthy people. Most of the National Trust-owned houses were built on the profits of mining.

The Cornish miner, however, was a skilled but poor man. His day might begin with a walk of 10km or more, then descending anything up



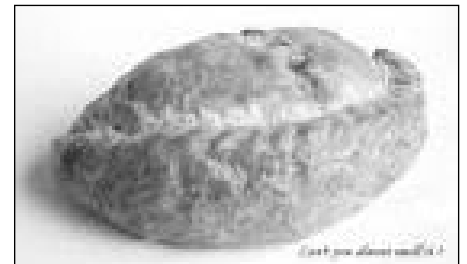
Photos By Lynda Hart



to 350 metres (1000+ft) to reach the deep levels. He would then work in temperatures rising to 46°C (115° F) for eight hours. At the end of the shift there would be the climb back up the shaft and a walk home. For this he was paid a "tribute" which allowed the miner so many shillings out of every pound's worth of ore he sent to the surface. It was very dangerous work and many accidents

happened. Many times exploding gas would kill the miners (in both tin and coal mines). In 1815 the Cornish scientist Sir Humphrey Davy invented the miner's safety lamp, which saved countless lives. Most members of the family worked within the mine. Boys would start work at the age of about ten on the surface with the women and then progress underground when they were able to climb down the ladders. The women or *Bal Maidens* as they were known had the job of preparing the ore on the surface. This was done in the open so they were exposed to the elements each day.

The staple food of the miner was the *pasty*, made traditionally with meat, potato, swede and onion wrapped



Cornish Pasty

in pastry and secured by *crimping* the edges of the pastry. The reason for this was that with nowhere to clean up or wash his hands they were very dirty and covered with arsenic which is a by-product of the tin extraction. The miners would hold the pasty by the crimp and eat around it. The crimp would be left



for the knockers.

The Knockers were small goblin-like creatures who were believed to live in the mines. They were dressed like the miners and created mischief by stealing food or tools. The name probably came about as just before a cave-in the miners would hear a knocking. This was actually the timbers that supported the mine walls creaking and groaning before they gave way. The miners believed that the knockers were warning them of an impending disaster, so to thank them they would leave them the crimp from their pasties!

Cornwall's deepest mine was *Dolcoath*. Situated north west of Brea village between Camborne and Redruth, the mine was first recorded in 1720 when copper was mined there. The mineral rights were owned by the Basset family. The deepest shaft was known as "New sump shaft" and it reached depths of 910metres (3,000ft)

Redruth and Camborne were the heart of industrial Cornwall. Between 1792 and 1798 James Watt (1736-1819), William Murdoch (1754-1839) and Richard Trevithick (1771-1833) were all living in Redruth, and it was at this time that William Murdoch was the first person to light his home with gas lamps. The mining brought huge prosperity to the area, and in 1801 Holmans of Camborne started. This company produced industrial equipment for the mining and road industry and they were the main employers in Camborne for many years until their closure in 2001. Camborne School of Mines was established in 1882 and has been known ever since for its excellence in training mining engineers. People have travelled from all corners of the world to be educated here.

The decline in both copper and tin mining began at the turn of the 20th Century. In 1900 there were 100 working mines. By 1918 there were 30 and by 1938 there were just 4 working mines left.

Conditions in the later half of the 20th century were much improved, although the dirt and the heat were unavoidable. Safety came to the fore and machinery took over.

With the decline in the price of tin due to deposits being found in other countries nearer the surface, and therefore cheaper to extract, mining in Cornwall collapsed. The Wheal Jane mine at Baldu, Truro closed in 1990, followed by Geevor mine also in 1990.

The last Cornish tin mine, South Crofty, closed in March 1998, it was also the last working tin mine in Europe. The mine did retain a handful of skilled men to keep the machinery in working order and so prevent the mine flooding.

In 2001, Baseresult Holdings bought the mine. As the price of tin again began to soar, perhaps re-opening the mine was a viable project. 350 miles of tunnels around Crofty needed to be surveyed and assessed, new equipment had to be bought and mineral planning permissions renewed. The site had, however, been ear-marked for a regeneration project by the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) and in 2006 they issued a notice of intent to compulsorily purchase part of the land. Baseresult Holdings were granted mineral planning permission at the same time, so it became a stand-off. Then in November 2007, Baseresult formed a new company, Western United Mines (WUM) and they committed to a £50 million investment which they hoped would lead to the creation of 200+ jobs by

2009. When Crofty closed in 1998 the price of tin was £2,400 per tonne. In 2009 it is approximately £9000 per tonne. At the present time the plans to reopen are still going ahead and some exploratory mining has taken place, and miners are being recruited.

Many of the miners that were left when the mines closed moved throughout the world taking their many skills with them. Many, when South Crofty closed moved here to Ireland and they live and work in Kilkenny and Cork, their engineering skills an asset to any company. Others travel the world helping to build everything from bridges to dams. Some hope to once again go underground in Cornwall. There is a saying in Cornwall "Wherever in the world you find a hole in the ground you will also find a Cornishman".

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This piece of timber, shown to The Corran Herald by John Martin, was found during renovations at Johnson's furniture shop, Ballymote. Written on it in pencil are the words "Michael Reynolds 2nd June 1906 Very bad weather". Does anybody know who Michael Reynolds was?



This photo was taken about 1950 at Roscrib House, Ballymote. The lady nearest the cartload of turf is John's great-aunt Rose Walsh (California). Seated behind the wall are his grandmother Jane Benson (née Walsh), on left, and his mother Cathleen Coleman (née Benson). The identity of the man is not known.

Photo courtesy of John Coleman, from the collection of Maisie McGovern.



The Loftus Memorial Hall, Ballymote, newly enlarged.

Picture courtesy John Coleman, from the collection of Maisie McGovern.



Ballymote Creamery, probably early 1900s (it opened in 1897). Note the barefoot boys with rolled-up trousers.

Picture courtesy John Coleman, from the collection of Maisie McGovern

The Humble Thimble

Kathleen Fairbanks

People who collect thimbles are known as digitabulists. This is a hobby I took up in recent years and I have found it to be a very fascinating, interesting and fulfilling pastime. I am proud of my thimble racks and they are now much admired.

A thimble is a protective shield worn on a finger when hand sewing, using needles and pushing them through fabric or leather as it is being sewn.

Thimbles date back to the first century. The earliest found was a bronze thimble. Later, steel, metal, wood, leather, glass, china and silver were used. All had indentations in their surfaces to keep the needle from slipping.

Known thimble makers date back to the 15th century and include such famous names as Meissen (German),

Charles Horner (UK) and Wicks (USA).

Thimbles came to be used for measuring spirits – hence the expression “just a thimbleful”.

A miniature thimble is one of the tokens in the game of Monopoly, and there is a game called “hunt the thimble”.

Leaving a sandalwood thimble in a fabric store was a common practice in keeping moths away.

We know that thimbles were given as gifts to commemorate important events and every housewife had one in her sewing box until the electric sewing machine was invented.

Collecting thimbles became popular when many companies made special

thimbles to commemorate important events. Now worldwide one finds thimbles as souvenir gifts in almost every city, and they are very popular with tourists. I am very fortunate to have relatives in different continents and to have many friends who think of me when on their annual holidays visiting the many islands and seaside resorts, all with their souvenir shops. A thimble is an easy gift to carry.

Some rare thimbles may be seen in museums and it is recorded that Christies and Sothebys auctioneers have sold some such to collectors. I must confess I do not possess rare ones, but I have some interesting places and names among my souvenirs: Titanic, Wall of China, Holy Land, Olive Tree (wood), Harrods, a royal wedding, Connemara marble, World Trade Centre, Chopin, Shakespeare.



Kathleen Fairbanks' Thimble Racks

The Clock of Life

Ann Conlon

The infant years, the formation years are the years that shape the body and the mind. The mind absorbs information and is eager to learn and life becomes a series of questions, so many questions. And so begins our use of language to aid and abet us in life. Words are the smallest single meaningful unit of speech or writing. A sequence of words make a sentence and a succession of sentences form rhymes, ditties, poems and stories.

Rhymes are our first connection with this world of words. They are an encouragement to this learning process and remain right through to maturity. They help us remember the number of days in the month -

*"Thirty days has September,
April, June and November;
All the rest have thirty-one,*

*But for February twenty-eight alone,
Except in leap year once in four
When February has one day more"*

and the names of the planets-

*" My Very Educated Mother Just
Served Us Nine Pizzas".*

They present us with advice, even at a young age, on that ever popular conversation the weather -

*"If March comes in like a lion it
goes out like a lamb,
If it comes in like a lamb it goes out
like a lion. "*

*"Red sky at night, shepherd's delight;
Red sky in the morning, shepherd's
warning."*

We are now truly prepared for the teenage years where words convey such depth and sometimes pain

which we didn't know could exist. We were shielded from this alien life, was it all a dream, who was that small person, did I really wear those clothes, who are our parents, why do they insist that everything is for our own good and how come they suddenly know everything? Ditties and proverbs are now paramount in our parent's conversations, who are quick to give their unique outlook on

Love -

*"There never was an Old Slipper
But there was an OLD STOCKING
to match it"*

Life -

*"Life is made up of getting and
giving, and forgetting and forgiving"*

Happiness -

*"Happiness is not a horse, it does
not run along a straight road"
"Happiness is a condition of mind,
not a result of circumstances"*

Laziness -

*"Laziness travels so slowly that
poverty soon overtakes him"
"Footprints on the sands of time
are not made by sitting down"*

Sleep -

*"Six hours of sleep for a man, seven
for a woman, eight for a fool"*

Sorrow -

*"If you are patient in one moment
of anger, you will escape a hundred
days of sorrow"*

Drink -

*"Drink is the curse of the land.
It makes you fight with your
neighbour, it makes you shoot at
your landlord - and it makes you
miss him"*

The years pass and we enter the adult world. The struggle begins for us to be recognized as grown-ups, to leave those comparative remarks to our siblings behind, to be seen as individuals, to create our niches in this fast moving world and to establish ourselves as being mature. Some of us are lucky enough to know what career we would like to follow and many others fall into careers that also bring contentment, while some of us struggle to find the profession that will fulfil us as individuals. Many hard earned savings have been spent on 'finding oneself' in distant lands. Perhaps the meaning of life is much nearer and in a language we can understand. Words gather momentum to form poems and stories that portray meaning which is too often ignored and forgotten -

*Wear a smile on your face,
Keep a laugh in your heart,
Let your lips bubble over with song;
'Twill lighten your load
As you travel life's road
And help some other sinner along.*

.....
*In colour and race, you had no
choice,
In selecting your parents, you had
no voice,
But the road you take as you go
along,
The choices you make between right
and wrong
The words you speak, the deeds you
do,
Are decided by nobody else, but
you.*

Don't Quit

*When things go wrong, as they
sometimes will,*

When the road you're trudging
seems all up hill,
When the funds are low and the
debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have
to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a
bit,
Rest, if you must - but don't you
quit.
Life is queer with its twists and
turns,
As everyone of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about
When he might have won had he
stuck it out,
Don't give up, though the pace
seems slow
You might succeed with another
blow.
Often the goal is nearer than
It seems to a faint and faltering
man,
Often the struggler has given up
When he might have captured the
victor's cup,
And he learned too late, when the
night slipped down,
How close he was to the golden
crown.
Success is failure turned inside out
The silver tint of the clouds of
doubt,
And you never can tell how close
you are,
It may be near when it seems so far,
So stick to the fight when you're
hardest hit
It's when things seem worst that you
mustn't quit.

As we advance, into the category
of 'the mature person' we have
the benefit of experiences that life
has given us. But does anyone
want to listen to the ramblings of a
'bewildered' mind? It is therefore
perhaps advisable for us never
to start a story with that timeless
expression 'in my day
' as this invariable leads to the

termination of what probably would
have been a mutually beneficial
conversation. Don't be deterred,
youth and age may never agree but
subconsciously youth will hold on
to those words of wisdom to use at
the appropriate time, for which of
course you will never be given the
honour of the credit.

Regrets, what if, love lost, if only,
would I do it all differently or
exactly the same if I could live my
life over again these can become
the reflections of one's life. The
freedom of time and the passing of
time lends to the creation of many
a wonderful array of words that
really should be noted especially
by the younger generation-

If you've left your dreams behind, if
hope is cold,
If you no longer look ahead,
If you ambitious fires are dead,
Then you are old.
But if from life you take the best,
If for life you keep a zest,
If love you hold,
No matter how the years go by,
No matter how the birthdays fly,
You are not old.

Happiness

The 92-year-old, petite, well poised
and proud lady, who is fully dressed
each morning by eight o'clock,
with her hair fashionably coifed
and makeup perfectly applied,
even though she is legally blind, is
moving nursing home today. Her
husband of 70 years recently passed
away, making the move necessary.
After many hours of waiting patiently
in the lobby of the nursing home, she
smiled sweetly when told her room
was ready. As she manoeuvred her
walker to the elevator, I provided
a visual description of her tiny
room, including the eyelet sheets

that had been hung on the window.

"I love it" she stated with the
enthusiasm of an eight-year-old
having just been presented with a new
puppy. "Mrs. Jones, you haven't seen
the room. Just wait". "That doesn't
have anything to do with it" she replied

"Happiness is something you decide
on ahead of time. Whether I like
my room or not doesn't depend on
how the furniture is arranged it
's how I arrange my mind. I already
decided to love it. It's a decision I
make every morning when I wake
up. I have a choice: I can spend the
day in bed recounting the difficulties
I have with the parts of my body that
no longer work, or get out of bed
and be thankful for the ones that do.

Each day is a gift, and as long as
my eyes open I'll focus on the new
day and all the happy memories I've
stored away ... Just for this time in my
life. Old age is like a bank account:
you withdraw from what you've put
in. So, my advice to you would be to
deposit a lot of happiness in the Bank
account of memories. Thank you for
your part in filling my Memory bank. I
am still depositing".

Remember the five simple rules to be
happy:

1. Free your heart from hatred
2. Free you mind from worries.
3. Live simply.
4. Give more.
5. Expect less.

Clock of Life

The clock of life is wound but once
and no man has the power
to tell just when
the hands will stop
at late or early hour.
Now is the only time you own,
So live and toil with will.
Place no faith in your tomorrow
for the clock may then be still.

The Irish Shebeen

PJ Duffy

Right up until the period of the early 1900s shebeens were quite numerous throughout our countryside. This was despite the fact that British legislators like Robert Peel, during his term as Home Secretary, had made stern efforts to prevent the illicit sale of alcohol.

Stringent licensing laws were put in place but enforcing these laws in places as remote as rural Ireland was another day's work. Cherishing the booze was very much part of an Irishman's culture and somehow he would be very reluctant to part with that part of his upbringing.

In remote rural areas the shebeen was the great meeting place for lonely working class people. They would come together here for what they would regard as a great social occasion. For the vast majority of them it broke the humdrum monotony of everyday country life. Toiling nonstop from morning till night was one thing but human beings needed a break and many of them just found that at the old shebeen. True, there were those people who overindulged in the consumption of alcohol but they were just a tiny minority.

Most shebeens in those days would be found to have a diverse variety of entertainment. You'd have had the local characters, spinning yarns and indulging in witty exchanges with their neighbours. You had the liars, the story-tellers, the tricksters and the jokers. Songs would be sung, music played, and dancers would take to the floor for the usual set-dances.

In actual fact the shebeen was just another version of the rambling house with intoxicating liquor laid on. For persons living on their own in isolated areas, places like these were the great antidote for depression and gloom. Even those people who were after witnessing bereavement would go there for refuge in what they believed to be a sort of lonely hearts' club. Alcohol was the only drug available at that time, so a reasonable amount consumed acted as a very good soother during periods of depression.

Of course there were the other types too frequenting the shebeens and these were the toppers who were out for a jolly good time and didn't give

a damn where the next shilling came from.

There were others who would not go next or near these places, or allow their children to go there. Many of them believed that shebeens were places of iniquity and a bad influence on the youth of the country. Disgruntled housewives whose husbands were drinking too much were sometimes found making complaints to policemen with a view to getting the places closed down.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the licensing laws were further tightened by Gladstone's Licensing Act of 1872. Intelligence gathering and surveillance operations were put in place by a newly revamped police force in an effort to catch offenders. During this period a number of shebeen owners applied for and were granted licences at the local courts. Many more were turned down for various reasons and a good number went out of business altogether.

Despite all this confusion there was still a sizeable number of Irishmen hell bent on holding on to what they still believed was an important part of their heritage. Large amounts of alcohol would be smuggled into an area overnight and the most bizarre of hiding places would be sought out in order to keep it out of reach of the police.

The shebeen owner also had his own small intelligence network which at times when raids were imminent would warn him of impending danger.

There were nights selected when trouble would be flaring up in other parts a good bit away, and people would know that the local police force would be on duty there. This gave an ideal opportunity for a good hooley and an extended night of revelry.

The shebeen owner would tackle his donkey, hitch him to the cart and set off to a secret location to collect the booze. Quantities of stout, whiskey and poteen would be loaded onto the cart and a small quantity of hay or turf placed on top. On his arrival back at his home the liquor would be unloaded and set up to be served at a convenient hidden spot.

Pint-sized delph mugs would be used for serving the porter. Spirits would

be handed round in cups or other small-sized measures. Glasses were very seldom seen on the premises of a shebeen keeper.

It wasn't on fixed nights alone that liquor was for sale at a shebeen. Local clients could call at any time of day for a jar of beer or a hot half one. There was usually someone at hand to serve a customer. Yet the whole operation was hush-hush and deadly secretive. The owner had devised the most ingenious of hideouts to conceal his booze.

When the United States banned the sale of alcoholic drink from 1919 to 1933, illicit beer houses sprang up all over the country. These places subsequently became known as speakeasies. Some people say that their operators adopted this name from Irish immigrants who often referred to the shebeens of their homeland as "spakeaisies". One of the most notorious bootleggers of that time was Al Capone and he had a number of contacts among Irish immigrant adventurers who gave him lots of ideas and advice.



Al Capone

Back in the 1940s and 1950s there were a number of people around who had vivid memories of the old shebeen and its subsequent demise. One woman had lived her life when gatherings of workers called meitheals were available to give a helping hand at turf cutting or the gathering of

hay. She recalled seeing the gathered hay being built into ricks as a very young girl. She also remembered being given two small tin cans called ceantíns and being dispatched to the local shebeen for two gallons of porter for the workmen. This was the usual procedure followed at almost all those old gatherings.

There was one gentleman in his seventies who had several stories to tell of funny incidents that often took place inside the confines of those old beer houses. There was one night in particular when this seasoned looking gentleman who appeared to be well into his seventies entered the shebeen and ordered a pint of stout. This man was generally known by the nickname "The Plucker", which he bitterly resented. He said he was returning from a wake and by all appearances he was already well intoxicated. He stood in the middle of the floor and proceeded to drink his pint. After a short while he leaned over and placed his drink on the mantelpiece. He then turned round and began to sing the praises of the man down the road who had just died. With that he flopped down on the hearth and caused a

small cloud of ashes to flare up. A man standing by shouted "Oh, the Plucker is down and he'll be burned in the fire". Another exclaimed "Give the old man a lift". Both men took him by the arms, lifted him up and put him sitting down on a chair. Just then he turned real nasty and attacked each in turn, one for calling him "Plucker" and the other for referring to him as an old man. "You need glasses", he said to one, "for addressing me as an old man". Turning to the other he snarled "I'm no plucker but you're a sucker".

Towards the second decade of the twentieth century most of these old watering-holes had closed down. Police harassment coupled with the fact that the people who operated them were getting on in years had hastened their demise. Most of them were tough hardened individuals who had come through difficult times and had little regard for British law.

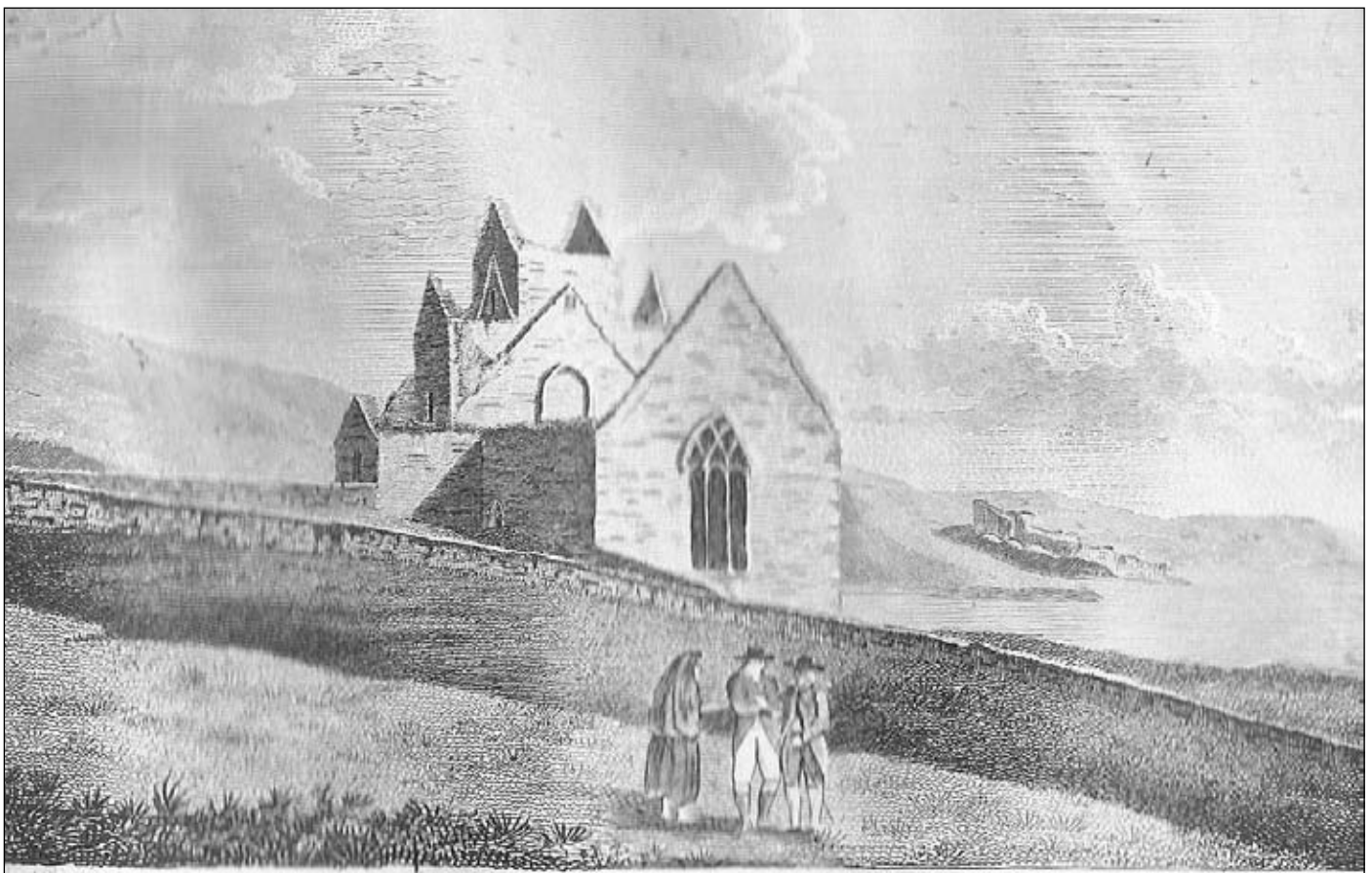
As we moved into the 1920s there seemed to be a decisive change in social trends. The vast majority of people who usually frequented these places had now died away and a rising generation was now destined to seek pleasure elsewhere.

The arrival of Irish independence and the establishment of new state institutions were barely in place to witness the demise of the Irish shebeen.

Note:

A ceaintín was a handy-sized tin vessel with a capacity to hold just one gallon of liquid. It was fitted with a dome-shaped lid and a rim that allowed air to penetrate to its inner chamber. In days gone by these old vessels were frequently in use around farmsteads and were often used by dairymen to deliver milk to people residing in towns and villages. Its ventilated lid helped to keep milk fresh and prevent rancid odours. Usually made by travelling tinsmiths they were the ideal vessel to be used for collecting liquor from the local shebeen in the days of the meitheals.

Stories relating to the Irish shebeen were told to the writer during the late 1940s by persons of a previous generation who were actually present on some of these premises when the events took place.



Ballindoon Abbey. Original Print 1792. Aidan Mannion Collection

Maureen Egan (1921-2008)

Maureen Egan, Keash Road and late of O'Connell Street, Ballymote passed away on the 23rd July 2008. In trying to compose some words about Maureen, what comes to mind is her unwavering faith, her quietness, her love of sport, her independence, her love of life and the love she had for her children and grandchildren.

It is very hard to sum up the life of an extraordinary woman and the wonderful inspirational person she was. Her life has been dedicated to caring for others, in a quiet, unobtrusive way. Born in Cartron, Ballymote, Maureen trained as a nurse in Jervis Street Hospital, Dublin, and was extremely proud of the profession of Nursing. She constantly strove for the highest standards as a nurse and eventually in her role in Nursing Management in Jervis Street. She could not tolerate things done by only half; her constant mantra was that if it was worth doing, it was worth doing properly. She had enormous pride in being a Jervis Street trained Nurse and held this passion right up to the day she was being wheelchaired into St. John's Hospital, Sligo, after becoming ill in early July 2008, when she stated to the attendant wheeling her in, "You know, I used to be a Nurse too!"

She always maintained the ideal of providing the highest quality of care to her patients and expected others on the unit to do likewise. Her son, Paul, remembers bringing Maureen to a Jervis Street reunion some years ago, and being introduced to her former nursing colleagues. One took him aside, told him of her delight of seeing Maureen after so many years and said the one memory all at the reunion had of her was that when Maureen was on duty, three things were certain: the patients would be extremely well cared for, the work would be completed on each shift properly and the patients' beds had to be made properly!

She left Jervis Street and worked for some time in Leopardstown Park Hospital before returning home to look after her own mother in Cartron. In 1957 she met and married Jack Egan and opened a shop in O'Connell Street, Ballymote. Two sons, Paul and Joe joined the family home some years later.

Maureen was of the view that three values were important: the values of respect for self, respect for family and respect for others. These values she constantly maintained throughout her life. She had no wish to listen to gossip, generally cutting the offender short with

her retort "right I'm leaving, if you cannot say something nice about the person, say nothing". That was Maureen to a tee.

Her caring extended to her looking after her own aunt Bea, her uncle Martin, and her sister Beatty who passed away in her care in 1977 in O'Connell Street. She then took to looking after her sister Sadie, initially driving twice a week out to Cartron but eventually,



for the last twelve years of Sadie's life, going five days a week: first she would attend Mass in the local Catholic church in Ballymote and then she would drive to Cartron from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each and every day, until Sadie's eventual passing.

Maureen was constantly looking after the needs of others in her own way, quietly and with dignity and absolute confidentiality. One example is that of a young woman who was unsuccessful after a number of attempts to get into Jervis Street as a student Nurse. On hearing of the third failed attempt Maureen took matters into her own hands and travelled to Dublin, demanding a meeting with the then Hospital Matron and persuading the Matron of the caring qualities of the young lady who as a result of the intervention, secured her nursing studies.

Religion was extremely important part of Maureen's life. Her devotion to the Blessed Virgin was unique. Her joy of being part of the local Legion of Mary in Ballymote could not be surpassed. Every Monday, she looked forward to the weekly meeting and to her visitations to people living alone, the sick and dying of the community as part of the Legion's work. Indeed

her missionary zeal on the part of the Legion of Mary brought her to such diverse geographical regions as Ennis, Donegal Town and inner city London, among others. Through such missionary work, the Legion brought the Catholic religion to the doorsteps of those that might have never heard of it before or who had fallen away from their religion. With Mrs Harrison, Mrs O'Donnell and Mrs Perry on such trips, not for them comfortable hotels. Rather, in most cases and in particular on one such mission, her bed for the week was a mattress on a national school floor - she was only seventy years of age at the time.

Her son Paul recalls that one Saturday afternoon, some short weeks before Christmas 2005 he asked Maureen if she wanted to come to his own house for Sunday dinner. She declined the offer stating that she was going to the Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch that Sunday. On hearing this her son agreed that she was right to go and have a great meal and evening with her peers, and perhaps have a sherry for herself because she deserved it. With great indignation, she stated that she was "not going to eat, she was going to the Senior citizens party to serve the food". She was 78 at the time.

Her love of all things Irish was a passion for her and one of her greatest loves was to go on heritage days round the county of Sligo and other counties and being told of the history of our country, its language and its heritage. She had an unquenchable thirst for all things sporting, regardless of code. When the Sligo senior football team won the Connaught Championship in 2007, hers was the Sligo flag flying proudly from her house on the Keash Road. She had a passion for golf for many many years and her happiest moment was when she was elected Lady President of Ballymote Golf Club a number of years ago. After a hard day's work in the shop, her greatest joy was to collect Ms. Sheila Johnson or Mrs. Ann Harrison and to head for the hills of Carrigans and more recently to the new golf course of Ballinascarrow. Membership of Ballymote Bridge Club was something else that gave her much pleasure over many years.

Her life was a life of giving to others unselfishly. Maureen passed away on the 23rd July 2008 after a short illness. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Maureen was a long-standing and hard working member of Ballymote Heritage Group. May she rest in eternal peace.



A group of young Ballymote footballers in Corran Park, Ballymote, in 1954.

Back (L-R): Fintan Ruddy, Brian Killoran, Anthony Mullen, Josie Mattimoe, Jimmy Finn, Richard Molloy.

Front (L-R): Fintan Molloy, Gerry Mattimoe, Gerry Keaney, Pauric Brehony, Michael Scully, Sean Healy, Francis Donoghue.

Photo courtesy Richard Molloy, per Neal Farry.



Ballymote Boys' School Band, St Patrick's Day 1962.

Back Row (L-R): Ivan Pettipiece, John Donegan, Tommy Duffy, Joe Donegan, Michael Duffy, Brian Meehan, Vincent Finn.

Centre Row (L-R): Sean Hunt, Vincent Brehony, John McDonagh, Sean Duffy, Patrick Chambers, Damien Tansey, Raymond McAndrew, Jim Hannon.

Front Row (L-R): Derek Davey, Austin Prior, David Corr, Jim Donohue, Paddy Hannon, Peter Golden.

Percussion Group (L-R): Francis Donohue, Michael Healy, Derek Droughton.

The conductor was Mr Chris Reid NT (on left of photo) and the instructor was Sr Gertrude Gallagher of the Mercy Convent (not in photo).

Photo courtesy Brian Meehan, per Neal Farry.



Ballymote fire-brigade at a fire at the Snia factory in Sligo in the 1970s.

It was the biggest industrial fire in Ireland up to that time. The fireman on the ground in the helmet is Johnny Price and facing him is Anthony Pettipiece. The fireman on the roof is Gerry Cassidy. *Picture courtesy Esther Cassidy.*



The house of Tom Commins the thatcher in Carrowcushacly. *Picture courtesy Esther Cassidy.*

Holy Trinity Church, Westport

Bernie Gilbride

On a cold, overcast February afternoon, we arrived at our hotel in Westport. Having booked in and deposited our cases we made our way down stairs to the glowing turf fire we had noticed on our way in. Drawing our chairs up to its warmth we proceeded to make ourselves comfortable and relax after our long journey, only to hear one of the receptionists call out: "The guide is here for those who are taking the guided tour of the town." We had not known of the tour and were amazed as guided tours at that time of year were not usual. Back to the reception area I went. My friend decided to stay put by the fire and read her book.

I met up with the group who had requested the guided tour, and was invited to join them. Though I had spent many happy holidays in Westport, I had never been on such a tour and so decided to join them, whatever about the weather. The guide advised that we all wrap up warmly, as a cold east wind was blowing and a walking tour, with its many stops, could be very chilling. This we did and having gathered again at reception, we started on our way.

Our guide was a young lady who worked in the Tourist Office, but which had not opened yet for the season. She was well versed in the history and lore of the place and took great pleasure in showing off its many good points. She was indeed very knowledgeable about every nook and cranny, and their association with the many episodes and the characters of the town down the centuries.

From its foundation she told of its history, of the people who, down the years, had helped create its formation as it is today, even to having the river diverted into its present course. It now runs straight in front of the entrance to the estate of the Marquess of Sligo and his descendants, who had such a big influence on the life of the town. Westport is a truly unique small west of Ireland town, with many historical associations - with its involvement in the uprisings and more or less constant

insurrections down the years. Because it was designed by an architect the town is very well laid out, making full use of its beautiful river which is central to its development. We visited the historical buildings and streets; saw the memorial statues erected to those who fought in its many battles during the insurrections and had given their lives in those long gone days.

By now we were feeling the cold and the sky was beginning to darken, when our guide announced: "We will now go to the Holy Trinity Church, our last call before the end of the tour." By then, history and architecture were losing their appeal for me and I was thinking of the warm turf fire I had left almost two hours ago. I was beginning to feel that my education for one day was sufficient, and had more or less decided to miss out on visiting this church. Another church, one way or another, what difference would that make to me or the tour?

Just then across the bridge from us I saw its high steeple, with its cross on top caught in the glint of light from the town lights which had been switched on. That steeple and cross drew me towards it as if by a magnet and all thoughts of returning to turf fires died the death.

We entered the church by a side door, and the cold air as we entered chilled us to the bone. We could feel the enthusiasm and awe in our guide's voice as she began to outline the history and workmanship of this gem of a building. Immediately I knew we were in an exceptional place. The beautiful altar and rails, pulpit, lectern and windows flashed across my view as I glanced about me. I moved into the body of the church and sat transfixed, unable to concentrate on the guide's voice, just looking in wonder at the history and workmanship of this gem of a building. Immediately I knew we were in an exceptional place. The beautiful altar and rails, pulpit, lectern and windows flashed across my view as I glanced about me. I moved into the body of the church and sat transfixed, unable to concentrate on the guide's voice, just looking in wonder at the history and workmanship of this gem of a building. The murals, depicting familiar scenes from the gospel (which I afterwards read) are said by some, to be copies of those in St. Peter's in Rome, and by others to be copies of the floor in

the Sienna Cathedral, in Italy, the best known being "The Last Supper" by Leonardo da Vinci. I was fascinated.

Next the guide was telling us that the pulpit was surely one the most beautiful in Ireland, carved from alabaster which had been washed up on the shores of the Marquess of Sligo's estate, from a cargo vessel wrecked in Clew Bay. Surely the Lord arranged this, that it might grace this lovely Church in His honour. It is so ornately carved, so gorgeous, as it gleamed like satin even in that dusky light. Surely any message imparted in a sermon from its lofty height must be lost, as the attention of those who hear it would be on the pulpit itself, not on the sermon.

Our guide then drew our attention to the stained glass windows; for me the most beautiful one was the rose window at the west end of the building. How it must glow in the dying rays of a golden sun on a summer's evening. The two small windows near the organ depict St. George and St. Patrick, and most of the others with their glowing colours, honour many of the Marquess' family down the years, and are well worth a visit on a sunny evening to see them in all their glowing colour, with the sun casting its rays through them over the whole church. This I will do in the coming months.

As I made my way back to the hotel, I was so glad I had decided to avail of the tour and to be lucky enough to have had such a guide, whose enthusiasm for the town, its history, and its lovely buildings, especially the Holy Trinity Church, gave us such pleasure, and an interest in coming back to see it again, under summer conditions.

I regaled my friend as I joined her before the fire with all the details of the tour, giving her the brochures to read. Such was my enthusiasm that, then and there, we decided to return the following June, when the sun would be at its height, that she might see for herself this lovely church, and that I might see the colourful glow of the windows fill it with their light.

Magh Tuiredh

Leo Mattimoe



The walking group in Highwood with Lough Arrow in the background. The author is first from left, standing.
Photo by Peter O'Rourke

Sunday 10th May was an exceptionally good day. I had known in advance that a walk had been arranged by a group of people in the Geevagh-Highwood area. It was to be a trial walk, with the intention of forming a club sometime in the future. Two things prompted me to take part: firstly, being reasonably fit I saw it as a bit of a challenge and secondly the area itself has an appeal for me like no place else in Ireland or Europe and of course I have ancestral ties in the Lough Arrow district.

Sixteen of us assembled that morning at Highwood Community Centre. We lined up for a photograph against the background of a beautiful, tranquil Lough Arrow. Someone said that was a

sign of good weather. Then Peter O'Rourke looking very much the part of a competent expedition leader got the party moving very quickly towards the Magh Tuiredh plateau.

The main purpose of the exercise was a trek but seeing that this trek embraced an area of no ordinary significance, it would have been a great pity not to have stopped occasionally to view some of the amazing natural features in the landscape, principally the 'erratics', large boulders which were dropped in their present positions by the retreating ice over 10,000 years ago. The place is littered with them but one of the most outstanding is a high limestone block called the 'Eglone', which can be seen

from the front of the Community Centre.

The area is a treasure trove of archaeological remains, megalithic (big stone) monuments, which reflects how important this location was to our pre-Celtic ancestors who choose it as their final resting place. These people lived during the Neolithic, (New Stone Age) period, (c4,000 – 2,500 B.C.). The number of megaliths must have been much greater at one time, judging by the great number of boulders which now form field boundaries, having been moved during land reclamation. Progress has been made in one sense but at a terrible loss to our heritage and this is one of the reasons why local people everywhere should

be conscious of the irreplaceable treasures in their own fields and the significance of these 'heaps of stones', as a local politician once described them.

It is an amazing place from many aspects. The landscape is practically unspoilt, with little evidence of the Celtic Tiger having left his scent. It is both remote but accessible at the same time and offers a fantastic panoramic view of the surrounding countryside from where it is possible to see at least five counties.

There is an atmosphere of pure enhancement which is reinforced by the presence of the ancient megaliths. They bear silent testimony to an era long since gone. In fact they tantalise us by their very presence, reminding us that we were not the first to tread this soil, that once in the distant past there existed a people whom we shall never know but whose presence seems to haunt the quiet air of the plateau. All of this combined with the incredible mythology relating to the area makes this place a sacred sanctuary for the collective memory of our race.

When I looked at Lugh's Seat, (pronounced Loo), I could not help but remember the silly clap-trap that was popular when we became full members of the E.U. It was implied that we had emerged from insular isolation for the first time and that we should feel privileged at last to call ourselves Europeans. Lugh would have had the last laugh because Lugh, (the bright one), was a well travelled fellow. He was known to the real British, (i.e. the Welsh), as Llew and the cult of the god Lugos was widespread on the continent. The Romans know him as Mercury and the French city of Lyon is named after him. So much for us becoming Europeans.

Well, back to Magh Tuiredh. I

think there should be a plaque erected at Highwood to Lugh because it was he who arrived in Ireland in the nick of time to rid us of that pest, Balor of the Evil Eye, his own grandfather, who was leading a group of Fomorian rowdies from Tory Island against the more sophisticated 'Tuatha De Danaan', the followers of the goddess, Danu. Lugh, with his slingshot got a hole in one and the rest is history, or should I say, mythology? Balor's eye fell out and burned a hole in the ground, forming Loch Na Suil (the lake of the eye). Lugh wasn't finished yet. He dallied long enough to see the birth of a son, none other than Cuchulain, who is revered in Ireland and the Scottish Highlands.

In the legendary secondary battle of Magh Tuiredh, Lugh has the advantage of having a very long arm. Hence his title, Lugh Lámhfhada (of the long arm). It signifies the idea of stretching out an arm to protect or rule his people – the long arm of the law, you might say.

The Roman emperor, Augustus, chose Lyon to be the capital of Gaul (now roughly France) and he instituted an annual festival to honour himself on August 1st. This coincides with the Irish festival of Lughnasadh. Why not revive this festival and focus activities at or near Magh Tuiredh which is associated so much with Lugh?

We were blessed with sunshine and apart from having to negotiate a few banks and electric fences the party moved rapidly on till we arrived at the 'Labby Rock', which is the best known of the megaliths in the area. It is a portal tomb, dating from the Neolithic age, (2,500 BC). The massive capstone is possibly the second heaviest in Ireland, weighing 60 to 70 tons. I can hear you saying, 'how did

they lift it?' Well they either had engineering techniques which have been forgotten or else they ate more porridge.

Diarmuid and Gráinne, the eloping couple, slept here for a few nights when fleeing from Fionn Mac Cumhaill to whom Gráinne was promised in marriage. It couldn't have been the most comfortable of beds, being exposed to the elements and inclined at a considerable angle, but I suppose when you are young and in love, inconveniences of this nature are only a minor consideration.

It is also supposed to be the burial place of Nuadha of the Silver Arm, King of the Tuatha De Danann, who lost an arm in the first battle of Magh Tuiredh where the Fir Bholg were defeated. Dian Cecht, the leech made him a silver arm which he put to good use against the Fomorians. It's a good job there wasn't a waiting list then.

The walk ended in the pleasant grounds of Cromlech Lodge where the group rested and had some more photographs taken. What better or more healthy exercise could there be then walking but what makes it even more enjoyable is an awareness of the countryside around us, the flora and fauna and the myriad of associations with a particular area. We are not just creatures of the present and what enhances our experience is an awareness of the impact that former generations have made. They have left their imprint on our beloved land in many ways and to ignore this dimension is to deny ourselves something of incomparable richness.

Thanks again to Peter for a most enjoyable outing.

Those Visiting Stuntmen and their Amazing Performances

PJ Duffy

Back during the early and middle years of the last century our local towns and villages were to become accustomed to visits by a unique strain of performers known as stuntmen. Usually at fairs and markets or other such gatherings, one or two of these gentlemen might arrive unannounced into their midst to enact feats of skill and strength that often left bystanders feeling spellbound and glued to the ground on which they stood.

Nobody around at that time seemed to know who they were or where they had come from. To the ordinary man in the street they seemed to be foreign-looking and not much akin to our own particular race.

From informed sources we were later to learn that many of these people were formerly employed by circuses on the Continent, but during the war years nightly blackouts were in operation right across Europe, and under these conditions circuses could not operate. We were told that during this time many performers had gone freelance and took to the countryside giving daylight performances wherever they were likely to find crowds of people assembled together. Looking back now from this point in time there seems little doubt but that these people were highly skilled, well trained and totally adept in their performances.

There was one burly-looking, well-muscled gentleman who used to be present at almost every fair and market held around the countryside. He usually arrived during the evening time, just before the crowds started to disperse. His source of transport was a small pony hitched to a light spring cart on which was placed a seventeen-rung ladder, a heavy horse cart wheel fully shod, and an iron cart axle.

After addressing the crowd and letting them know what he intended doing, he would get hold of the ladder and after hoisting it upright he would then balance it on his chin and move around in a circle with the ladder still upright on his chin.

After completing this action, he would take hold of the cartwheel, hold it upright with one hand and then placing it on his chin would put his two hands down by his sides and again walk around in a circle.

After this he would turn to the cart axle for a repeat balancing act while a stunned crowd looked on in wide-eyed amazement.

During the 1940s this same gentleman was frequently observed performing at local venues around the countryside, including after-Mass gatherings at church gates.

Different stuntmen had different tricks.

There was the man who would arrive carrying a glass bottle. After smashing it to bits he would place the glass in a neat pile near the town's sidewalk. After removing his shirt he would sort of flatten the pieces with his foot, and then lie on his back on top of the glass and invite the heaviest man in the crowd to jump on his chest.

Not many onlookers were willing to do so but there was always a stalwart or two ready to take on the venture. The majority of people standing around would look on murmuring low gasps of bewilderment.

After subjecting himself to this ghastly ordeal, the performer would raise himself up quite undisturbed and expose an unblemished back to the surrounding bystanders. One man standing there was quick to explain that the stuntman, while appearing to lie flat out on the broken glass, could in fact curve his backbone in such a way that the part of his body directly over the glass did not in actual fact touch the pieces.

Numbered among all these gentlemen was perhaps the most bizarre performer of them all, the fire eating man. He usually arrived in town carrying a small table under his arm. He would lay this wee table down in the centre of a crowd and, while doing so, would in a sort of rigmorole dialect of broken English explain to those standing by what he intended doing.

He would then place a dinner plate on the table and after procuring a wafer biscuit he would break it into pieces and lay them down on the plate. After pouring some kind of clear liquid on the pieces he would set the plate's contents alight with the flames leaping into the air. Then he would come up with a dinner fork and proceed to pick up the burning pieces one by one and place them in his mouth, while the surrounding crowd watched on in disbelief.

One evening a young boy on his way home from school accompanied by his father pushed his way into the crowd to see what was going on. "Oh! Daddy, Daddy" he cried out, "the man is eating fire. He'll burn himself inside". Before his father got time to answer, an old codger standing on the edge of the crowd spoke out: "There is no danger that that buck will do himself any harm. He's been doing that stunt for years. He'll quell them flames with his tongue long before they reach his gullet". "And what about the cinders?" enquired the boy's father. "Oh, he'll pass them tomorrow or the day after", replied the old gentleman.

There were other strange characters who could show up at meetings and

gatherings around the countryside. There was the trick-of-the-loop man who carried around with him a narrow limber strap measuring about two feet long by one inch in width. Like some of the other performers he too would use a small table on which to carry out his act. He would invite those people who wanted to make a quick pound to gather around. He then introduced them to this narrow belt of very versatile material that looked very much like the felt used in hat making. He would double this band and while doing so he would show the looped end to the people standing around. He would advise them to watch carefully as he rolled the doubled bands into one circle and put it down on the table. Then, picking up a pin, he would invite anybody standing by, for a decent wager, to place the pin in the looped end. The operator, it would seem, was a right conjurer for although many tried none succeeded in holding the loop on the pin.

Another slick operator of the day was the fellow with the three-card-trick. He was, it would seem, the most devious and cunning of them all. This fellow would produce a full pack of playing cards and pass them around for the public to view and make sure they were genuine. He would after a couple of moments take back the pack, shuffle them between his hands and invite somebody standing by to cut them. After this procedure he would remove three cards from the pack, one being the queen of hearts. He would pass the three cards from one hand to the other and then after holding up the queen of hearts for the people standing around to see, he would place the three cards face downwards on a table and, for a wager, invite some speculator to find the lady card. Many tried but few succeeded.

On one occasion a fellow standing in the crowd began to give out to some of the people standing near him. "That guy", said he, "is a right conman. He's using sleight of hand to wrangle gullible people out of their money by placing them in a no-win situation". The fellow had no doubt been stung before.

Some of the showpeople would on occasion take along a monkey as a sort of decoy to draw the crowds around. They would erect a small platform on which the monkey would sit and alongside this a bamboo pole about eight feet high would be placed. A group of onlookers would move in close to see the monkey run up and down the pole.

A well-known catchphrase used by the people at the time was "Come on, come on, if you don't speculate you won't accumulate".



First Year Class in Colaiste Muire, Ballymote. (Spring 1958)

Row 4 (back, L-R): Martin McDonagh, Val Davey, John Dennedy, John McAndrew, Francis Kielty, Brendan Benton, Jim Sreenan, John McDonagh, Shane Gilhawley, John Scanlon.

Row 3 (L-R): John O'Dowd, Richard Molloy, Bernard Tansey, Patricia Mattimoe, Kathleen Scanlon, Imelda Egan, Eileen Quigley, Kitty McGettrick, Kathleen Ballantyne, Mary Hogge, Michael Gilmartin.

Row 2 (L-R): Gerard O'Hagen, Margaret Killoran, Chris Hannon, Kathleen Cawley, Ann O'Hagen, Rita Davey, Mary Morrison, Eileen Keenan, Sadie Cunnane, Lydia McDonagh, Gerry Henry.

Row 1 (front, L-R): Owen Duffy, Paschal Fahy, Desmond Friel, -----.

Photo courtesy Kathleen Ballantyne-Martin, per Neal Farry

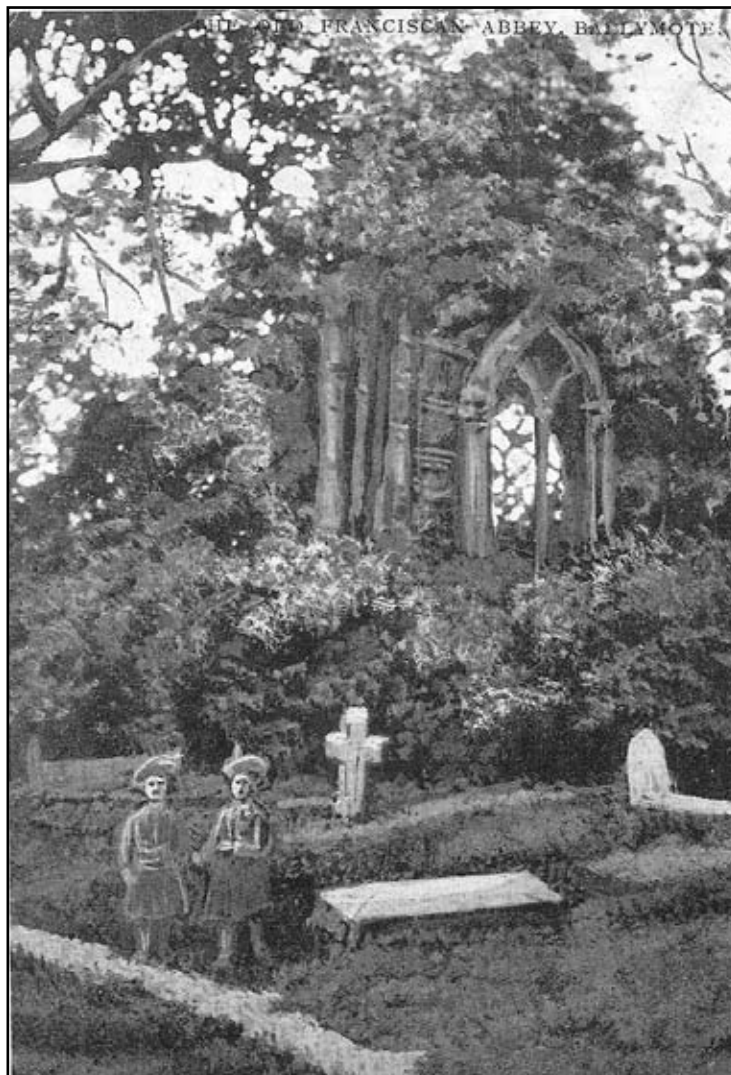
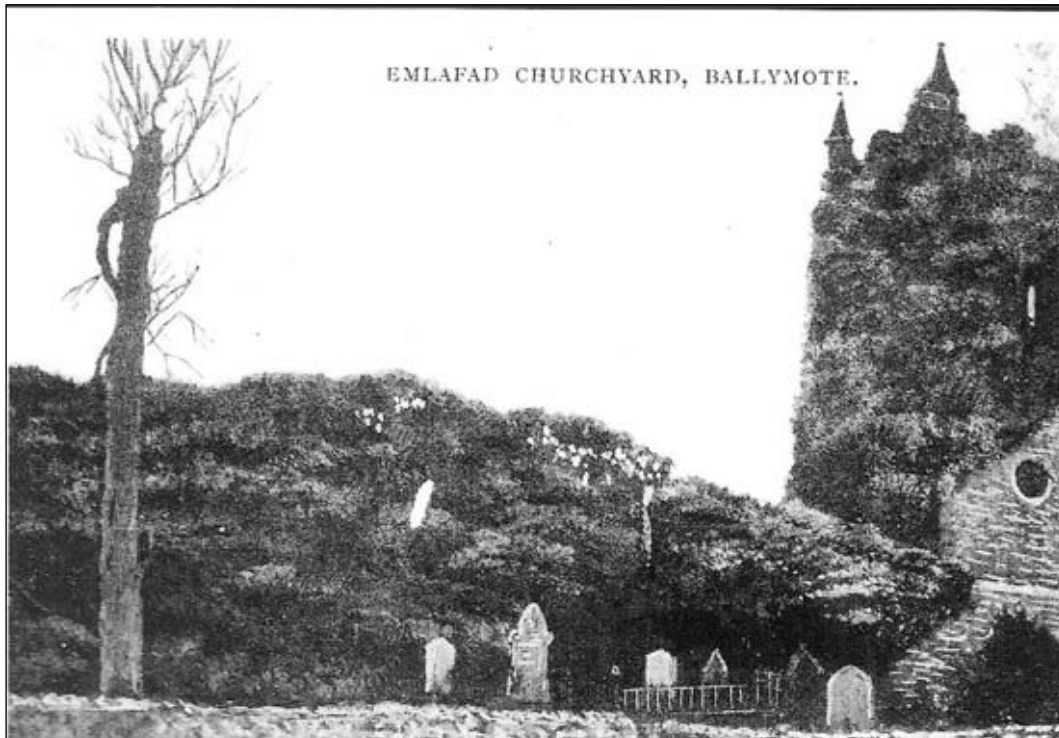


A group of boys in the Mill field, Keenaghan, Ballymote, in the spring of 1955. They played hurling, Gaelic football and rugby during their Sunday afternoon sessions.

Back Row (L-R): Michael Hannon, Andrew Rogers, Jim Sreenan, John Cassidy, Jim Hannon, Vincent Brehony.

Front Row (L-R): Val Rogers, Neal Farry, Martin Meehan, Owen Duffy, Michael Hoey, Joey Hannon, Brian Meehan.

Photo courtesy Peggy Hannon-Walsh, per Neal Farry



Two postcards of Ballymote from the Ward series, circa 1900 – 1905. The photo prints were made from original pencil drawings and they show Emlafad Churchyard, Ballymote, and the old Franciscan Abbey, Ballymote.
Photos courtesy Donal Gallagher, Falcarragh, Co Donegal, per Neal Farry.

Childhood Memories

Kathleen Fitzmaurice

When I looked out in the early morning I saw the belch of smoke that rose from the tall chimney-stack of the Creamery, heard the clatter of creamery cans as they splashed their contents into the measuring tank and savoured the mouth-watering smell when the engine-man fried his morning bacon on a shovel, balanced in the embers of the huge furnace.

On my way to school I heard the rhythmic clang of the blacksmith's sledge on the anvil in the local forge and saw the shower of sparks from his fire when he blew the bellows and I hurried past to avoid the acrid singeing smell when the red-hot horse shoe touched the hoof.

Since then I have seen the demise of the forge and the closure of the Creamery and, on the other hand, the advent of the Full Irish Breakfast in our filling stations and convenience stores. In between, there are many memories. I recall great days, good days and bad days, births and marriages, deaths and funerals.

In many houses it was a good day when the American parcel arrived, full of exotic clothes, unwanted garments of the family that Aunt Annie or Aunt Bea worked for in Boston or Philadelphia. It was a good day too when the letter with the English stamp was received, with a fiver from a son or daughter in London or Birmingham.

It was a bad day when the sick calf did not respond to the dose concocted for it by the local knowledgeable man or when a turkey, destined for the Christmas market, stood listlessly on

one leg, because we knew that the next stage was death. Sadly, turkeys had an uncanny tendency to pass infection from one to another - one death was the harbinger of many.

It was a good day when prices were high at the local fair, when the cattle sold readily and when "himself" did not over-indulge by way of celebration. But it was doom and gloom when prices were bad; cattle were taken from fair to fair and eventually sold at rock-bottom prices. That was the day, too, when the man himself felt he needed the consolation of a few drinks. At home, the woman of the house bore all these worries for the sake of the family. She firmly believed that "Is giorra cabhair Dé ná an doras". How right she was!

Then there were red-letter days. For all children First Holy Communion Day belonged to this category. Spiritual preparation was rigorous and a special effort was made to dress the child in a way worthy of this great event. Large sums of money were not bestowed on the communicant so there was no need to open a bank account next day.

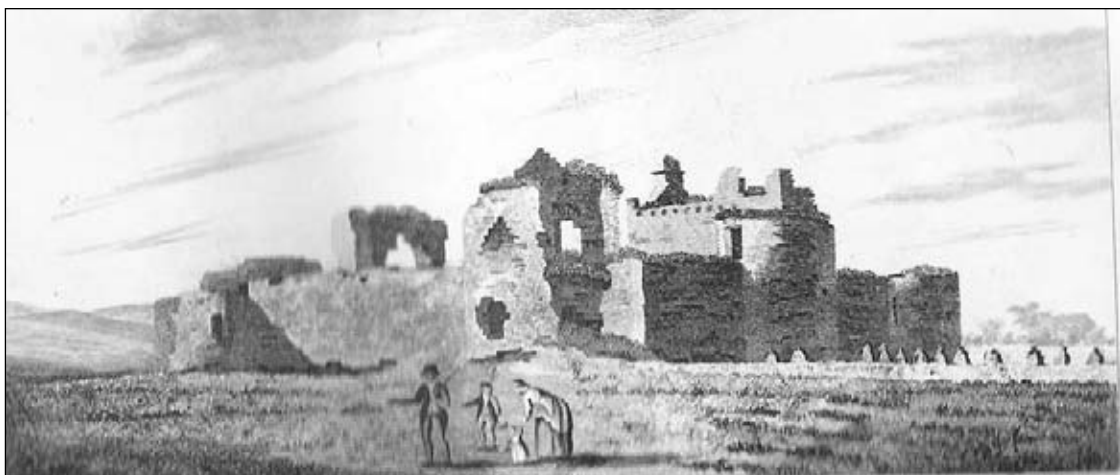
But my very own red-letter day came when I was about six or seven. It was the day I got my first Wellingtons. I had always been a puny youngster. Like the turkeys I never missed an infection. I was constantly being reprimanded for getting wet feet. This magical footwear enabled me to splash in puddles, walk in wet grass, step into cowpats and restore the gloss by paddling in the stream. I still remember the freedom the wellies gave and I bless the one

who first made them.

Every family experiences pain and loss. My earliest brush with death was as a four-year old when I saw my fourteen month old only sister taken from her cot, placed in a little white box which I afterwards learnt was a coffin, and taken away from the house. I had no idea of the grief of my parents - I was just bewildered!

There were things that scared the daylights out of me. We had a ferret at one time and it's hard to understand how such a small animal could pose such a threat! I always hid behind the closed door of my bedroom if the ferret was released from its cage. Growling dogs and hissing, wing-flapping ganders, which were certainly more plentiful in those days than now, were sure to set alarm bells ringing and were a high priority on my hate list.

I was fortunate enough to be taken to the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin in 1932. I have a vague recollection of the pageantry, the crowds, the music and the hush when the great John McCormack sang some wonderful hymn. Until that day I thought all human beings were white, but as the procession approached I spotted Prelates in magnificent vestments but with black faces. I quickly took refuge behind my mother's coat tails. I was delighted to leave it all behind me and to get back to the familiar surroundings of my own village. Even then I realised that I was lucky to have the peace and quiet of a good Irish home and I thank God for the happy days I spent there.



Ballymote Castle. Original Print 1791. Aidan Mannion Collection

North Roscommon Gaelicisms

Frank Tivnan

This work is a glossary of Irish words which feature frequently in the everyday conversation in English of a mainly rural community of North Roscommon.

This area of North Roscommon was Irish speaking until the 1880s. The noted Irish Scholar Fr. Tomas Ó Ceallaigh who was born in 1897 learned his first Irish words from his maternal grandmother Catherine Tivnan (Tivnan 1999).

As a young man Dr. Douglas Hyde learned Irish from James Hart, a gamekeeper on Lord De Freynes's estate in nearby Frenchpark. (Dunleavy 1991).

The Irish words which I have compiled are still used up to the year 2009 by people who are over fifty years of age. The community on which I based my research has been engaged in small farming and has lived in a tightly knit and rather isolated manner. Consequently the vocabulary reflects many agricultural terms, the cultivation of crops, the diseases of man and beast, terms of endearment, pejorative terms and of course many references to the Christian religion.

The role of the Seanachie, the traditional story teller, and house rambling has done much to preserve the native Irish vocabulary which is an essential and valuable ingredient to nourish and sustain the Irish psyche.

Achree (**a chroí**, oh heart) Term of endearment. "I'll do my best for you achree"

Acushla (**a chuile**, oh pulse) Term of endearment. "Acushla geal ma chree won't you marry, marry me".

Agni also agraw (**a ghrá**, my love) Term of endearment. "Would you make me a cup of tea agraw?"

Airgead Síos (**airgead síos**, money down). Deposit, ready money. "It must be airgead síos or forget it".

Alannagh (**a leanbh**, oh child) "How are you doing alannagh?"

Alp lukcragh (**alp luachra**, lizard of the rushes). A person who has licked an alp luachra will have the cure of the burn.

Amadawn (**amadán**, male fool or idiot)

Amshagh (**aimseach**, unfortunate, accidental (adjective)). In Hibernian English "amsagh" is used as a noun meaning damage, injury or accident: "He's gone through so many amshagh's recently".

Anam also onom (**anam**, soul).

"M'anam ón Diabhal": my soul from the devil.

Anam chara (**anam chara**, soul friend or spiritual counsellor).

Anoose (**anuas**, from above). Braon anuas: rain down or a leak especially from a thatched roof.

Ardeesh (**árd fheis**, national convention of a political party).

Arnawhn / arnau (**airneán**, rambling or visiting at night or having a hooley and a bit of craic).

"There was a great arnawn in Tivnan's last night".

Avick (**a mhic**, oh son, my son).

"That's the way it is, avick"

A voorneen (**a mhuirín**, my love).

Term of endearment. "Come back to Erin mavoorneen mavoorneen" (famous Irish song).

Bockock (**bacach**, lame, defective).

A beggar; a lame person; a chair or stool that stands unevenly on the floor. "That chair is a bit bockety".

Bockawn (**bacán**, a forge-made hinge in the shape of the letter L).

"He needs two bockawns to hang the door on".

Badging (**bádh**, a hay swath).

Cutting grass around the edge of the meadow.

Ballower (**baileabhair**, difficulty).

"John made a ballower of himself" – a fool of himself.

Bawneen (**báinín**, a white woollen pullover at present known as the Aran sweater).

Ballawhaun (**balbhán**, a mute, a stammerer).

Bawnee (**banai** lady killer, found of women).

Banshee (**bean sídhe**, a female fairy whose crying forecasts a death in particular families. "Colm was wailing like a banshee".

Bosstoon (**bastún**, an ignorant person).

Baddy (**beadaí**, a pet name or childish name for a goose). Used to call geese to their food.

Blaw (**bláth**, shine or bloom) "The

blaw is gone off the house since my mother died".

Bodhran / bawnrawn (**bodhar**, deaf). A deaf person; also a goat skin drum played with a special stick call a keepeen.

Bogóg also bugóg (**bogóg**, a shell-less egg). Also bags under ones eyes. Breaking of wind emitted noiselessly and by instalments.

Bolgadawn (**bolgadán**, a small fat person usually with a paunch).

Bunagh bwescka (**bolg uisce**, water bag). A water bag of cow before calving.

Bronack (**brónach**, sorrowful or miserable). "You look very bronack, what's up with you?"

Bruitin or brewsey (**bruitín**, mashed potatoes specially prepared for young children)

Buachalan bui (**buachalán buí**, ragwort)

Booshta (**búiste**, a sluggard). A big lazy and ignorant man.

Bundoon (**bundún**, intestine, rear end). One who makes a desperate effort is said 'to be out of his/her bundoon'. 'John put out his bundoon to rear his family'.

Cac (**cac**, excrement). **Cac iarainn** = iron ore or rust which oozes from damp land.

Cailleach (**cailleach**, a hag or a witch). A cailleach bed or prishtee bed was a recessed bed beside the kitchen fire of old thatched houses along the west of Ireland.

Cally (**ceallaí**). Dish of pounded potatoes (especially new potatoes) with hot milk, salt, butter and scallions. "Nothing like a plate of cally to please a hungry man". 'Cally arse' one who has a big rear end.

Camogue (**camóg**, a big stick)

Ceap madagh (**ceap magaidh** a laughing stock). 'Maire is the greatest ceap madagh in the parish. Ceolan (**ceolán**) a small giddy person.

Ceis a rough temporary bridge made of mud, branches and stones usually in a bog.

Ciarrogue (**ciaróg**) a beetle or cockroach. 'Aithníonn ciaróg, ciaróg

eile'. 'Greek meets Greek'. 'Birds of a feather flock together'.

Ceiste (**ciste**, a chest or treasure, savings) 'Sara has a good ould ceiste in the mattress'.

Cipin (**cipín**, stick or twig.)

Kindling wood.

Cuit amach, out cat, to leave hurriedly. 'Such a cuit amach, out of the kitchen'.

Currigrifeen (**codhladh gríbhthín**) pins and needles

Dardaol or dordin (**dardin**, a contrary or waspish person. 'Don't mind that ould dordin')

Dauny or donny (**donaidhe**)

Delicate; a person in bad health

Deoch on dorais (**deoch an dorais**) 'One for the road'

Drass (**dreas**, a turn, short spell)

'John is taking the last drass out of his pipe'.

Duidin (**dúidín**, a short clay tobacco-pipe). 'The Knockcroghery

Dudeen', clay pipe made in Knockcroghery, Co. Roscommon. Very much used at wakes.

Famaire (**fámaire** a big well built man, a big animal) 'A famaire of a hare'. 'The cat killed a famaire of a rat'.

Fear gortach (**féar gortach**, quaking grass, hunger grass). 'Mick has the fear gortach', a ferocious hunger. There was a belief that anyone who walks on a famine victim's grave will suffer extreme hunger.

Feilleastrum (**feileastram**, iris). 'The field is covered with feilleastrums'.

Feochadan (**feochadán**) a thistle.

Foidin mearai (**fóidín mearaidhe**, sod of confusion). If you tread on this ground you'll be led astray.

Foiseach n., headland near the wall of a meadow where tractor mowing machines cannot cut. The fosieach has to be cut by a scythe.

Fooster (**fústaire**, a fussy busy

person). Fussing; rushing around, bustle. 'Will you stop foostering for God's sake'.

Fraughan (**fraochán**). Bilberry, small blueberries growing wild in boggy places.

Fuaran, foreawn (**forán**), herb fed to pigs.

This Article will be continued in our next Issue.

The Gift

Bernie Gilbride

Greet the morning, rain or shine,
Check the diary one more time,
Get this done before nine
Thank God the memory is fine.

Breakfast with my four legged friend
His intake of food knows no end.
The beach, it calls us to walk,
Meet with friends, talk, talk, talk.

Ever changing sea enchants,
Breakers foaming over rocks,
Gentle waves cleansing sand
Leaving strand looking grand.

This beautiful world
All mine to enjoy
Given us free
By the Almighty.

December Light in Pearse Street

Mary Guckian

Damp air hangs
over Pearse Street
on a cold December day
Along the footpath
oily steel blue bulbs
with a frosty sheen
blink from windows.

Traffic lights turn
red, for seconds
the temperature rises.
Green lights return
punch the foggy air
bring colour back
to a leafless street.

At South Dock Square
red matchstick poles
reflect on icy water,
where weaving waves
of the Grand Canal
forge movement,
a reminder of logs
blazing on hearth stones
at Christmas time.

Fair Day in Sligo 1930-40

Bernie Gilbride

"Oh dear God! What on earth was that?!!" I find myself sitting straight up in bed in the dark, about eight years old in the house where I was born.

"Hup, hup" shouts a man down below on the street and I hear the sound of cattle charging around the side of our house, in a stampede, one would think, with all the bellowing, shouting and noise on the street. Down in our kitchen "Punch" our terrier is going mad, barking and scratching the door to get into the hall.

The noise I heard could only have been a bullock hitting the hall door. The bang reverberated through the whole house, waking us all including my new baby brother now joining in the din with his lusty cries. I realise it is Fair Day and the Fair Green opens onto Temple Street, almost directly opposite our front door.

Striking a match to light the candle, I check the time. It is only 6.30am and still dark, but the farmers are here with their cattle, all ready for the fair. The fairs brought a hustle and a bustle to Temple Street: it became alive with people, animals and noise, neighing of horses, bellowing of cattle, shouting of farmers and helpers, even the barking of dogs.

Fair days were very big in Sligo, with lots of cattle for sale, as Sligo port was so convenient for immediate export, if that was the dealer's intention; many a herd was bought and straight away driven to the quays for export.

The eating houses, as they were then called, opened at the crack of dawn for business. Many a farmer having walked miles with his cattle was glad to avail of a chance to have something to eat, and the smell of rashers and sausages frying was everywhere. Likewise the pubs, with much to-ing and fro-ing did a roaring business as sales were made. "Luck money" was given back to the trader.

Over fifty years later, as part of the management of a hotel, it fell to me to hand the bride's father a rather hefty bill for the wedding. This he perused carefully as I expected he would. We had been asked to spare no expense and we had done as requested. On asking if everything had been to his satisfaction he assured us it had. Taking out his cheque book he made out the amount to the last penny. Handing it to me he smiled "Mary is my only daughter and I wanted everything perfect for

her on her big day and it was. Thank you." Having given me the cheque, he stood looking at me. I held out my hand to say goodbye, but he just stood there with a question in his eye. I had no idea what was wrong, was at a complete loss what to do, when he said "what about the luck money?" I was completely dumbfounded. I had not heard of that since I was a child. Hastily I found an envelope and gladly gave him an equally generous luck money back which I later saw him hand unopened to his lovely daughter with a big hug. I often wondered what such a modern young lady made of that gesture and if she queried where it came from, and why. Anyway, I sincerely hope it brought her all the good luck in the world, in the old Irish tradition in which it was intended, by both her adoring father and me.

On thinking of it I imagine it was the origin of my parents' habit of always looking for discount when they purchased clothes and shoes or household wares when we were young. Something never done now, what with Supermarkets and indifferent cashiers taking the cash.

Farmers were very shrewd when buying and selling cattle, with much walking around animals, examining them from every angle, their eyes, teeth, haunches, with much walking away and much following, before the deal was struck. The seller never allowed a good customer to walk very far, but was always willing to negotiate. A firm hand shake sealed the deal. We youngsters watched with interest, whenever we managed to escape outside as we were confined to home whenever a fair was on. The older lads offered to help herd the cattle, spreading out their arms to keep the cattle together and blocking them from running into gardens or down the side street towards the market yard, where they could spread out either side of the covered stages at the centre, in all directions in seconds, down Harmony Hill to O'Connell Street, out the other gate and down by the Friary towards Market Cross, causing panic everywhere. They got many a shilling or two for their help and to the farmer or dealer were well worth every penny.

The dealers were clearly evident in their high leather boots, great coats and small hand whips. The money

that changed hands was huge. Rolls of notes were taken from deep pockets and counted into the seller's hand, luck money was handed over, then a spit on the palm and a firm hand clasp and the deal was done. I never heard of any robberies though everyone knew huge amounts of cash were being carried.

All doors were firmly closed on Fair days as a young bullock or calf was not unknown to break loose from a herd as they were being moved and make his way into a narrow hallway. Then the fun began trying to reverse him out without doing too much damage, and in his fright he might leave a calling card - not nice!!!

Fairs were a magnet for 'hawkers' with their trays of knick-knacks. Musicians came too, especially fiddle players, many of whom were really expert and a delight to listen to, but had fallen on hard times and their fiddles were their only source of income.

By four o'clock the fair green would be almost empty, except for the pig pens in the far corner where pigs were sometimes kept awaiting their export from the quays within a day or two. Their squeals could be heard for hours as they were frightened being left in a strange place.

As the fair ended the big clean-up began. The streets were swept, the Corporation's sprinkler brought into action and every footpath and roadway washed clean, much to the relief of the residents, glad that that day was over for another month.

With the coming of Marts, fair days in towns are no more. That way of life was over, not regretted by the residents of Temple Street, St. Patrick's Terrace, Pound Street, and Hanley's Terrace. The fair green itself is no longer in use. There is talk of turning it into a park for the area, with play areas for children and tree-shaded walks and seating for adults. This would, I believe, be a fitting use for a place that once played such an active part in the lives of the people surrounding it. A green oasis on their front door. A quiet place to sit and chat. The new dual-carriageway has taken most of the traffic away from the town, and Temple Street in particular; a park would be the crowning glory after all the hassle of the fair day years.

The Other Side Of Side

Jack Gilligan



Gate to old city, Side

Photo By Jack Gilligan

Although never actively involved in politics, I have always had a keen interest in the process which determines the people who govern us at local, national and European level. As election results come in I can be found glued to the T.V. or radio for as long as they stay on air, even into the small hours. It was with more than a little sadness that I recently encountered a Dublin taxi driver who had no idea as to how our proportional representation system works, even though he has been voting for several years. He was of the opinion that candidates, when elected, “gave away” surplus votes to whomever they liked!

On a visit to Side (pronounced “see-deh”) in the south of Turkey, earlier this year, I was pleased to discover that local elections were imminent and would take place during my stay. How would the people of this historic region engage with the electoral process, I wondered.

Through my many visits to the ancient city I have learned that the history of Side can be traced back to the seventh century B.C. It became a wealthy commercial, intellectual and entertainment centre in the second century B.C. but a century later it had fallen to pirates and been turned into a naval base and slave market. History suggests that the people seemed to tolerate the pirates and their slave trade because of the profitable nature of their activities and the benefits to the city! Under Roman rule, however, the pirates were ousted and the city began to reclaim its good name and prosper, especially during the second

and third centuries A.D.

Now, seventeen hundred years later, like every city in the world, Side is feeling the effects of the recession and elections are looming. In the days prior to polling the parties are out in force looking for the public vote. Cars and vans emblazoned with the faces of candidates seem to be everywhere and vehicles with loudspeakers traverse the area exhorting the people to vote for their particular candidate. Some commercial premises are nailing their colours by displaying pictures of candidates in their windows – a risky gamble I would have thought! Television indicates that the same scene is played out all over this vast country of more than 70 million inhabitants. In Side a robust campaign is taking place for the five-year post of Mayor. The straight vote system in operation in Turkey would make life easy for my Dublin taxi man! The ruling Justice and Development Party, led by Prime Minister Recep Erdogan, is seeking the endorsement of the people for its governance of the country. Around 48 million voters are due to cast their votes at more than 177,000 polling stations. Voting will begin at 8 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. and the counting of votes will commence immediately after the close of polls.

On polling Sunday, in late March this year, I spent the day with Turkish friends, enjoying a late breakfast, outdoors, in the pleasant Mediterranean sunshine! Later in the afternoon we drove to the old city of Side to relax at one of the many bars. We settled into a nice pub overlooking the harbour and just a stone’s throw

from the site of Apollo’s Temple. It was then that my friend, Ahmet, broke the news that the sale of alcohol is not permitted in Turkey during polling! The prohibition is in the interest of public order and safety, as the people tend to be as passionate about politics as they are about football. As I resigned myself to the idea of the ‘pub with no beer,’ Ahmet spoke quietly to the waiter and afterwards suggested that all would be well. A few minutes later the waiter came out with the required drinks and a supply of large grey mugs instead of glasses! A Turkish solution to a Turkish problem I thought as I poured my cool beer into the mug and placed the bottle discreetly on the floor!

Next day I stroll through the ruins of the old city. I pass the monumental fountain, currently under restoration, and look forward to seeing water flow from it soon again. I marvel at the remains of the city’s extensive commercial and cultural centre, the agora. Then past Side Museum, housed in the excavated and restored bathhouse, which dates from the fifth century B.C. Passing through the impressive arch, which forms the city gate, I come to the Amphitheatre with its capacity of over 16,000. With election happenings fresh in my mind I pause and wonder about the legislators of old who would have used this theatre to deliver edicts and proclamations. I have no doubt that some of them occupied the best seats at infamous combat displays between gladiator and wild animal. They would also have presided, there, over unthinkable displays involving criminals, slaves and other unfortunates. Maybe, then, I muse to myself, it was a ghost from these troubled times who made the electricity fail as I witnessed a latter-day legislator attempt a speech in the theatre some years ago! Just then I am jolted back to the present by an approaching cavalcade of jubilant supporters with flags, banners and blaring music. The newly elected Mayor of Side is on his way to take up office.



Apollo Temple, Side

Photo By Jack Gilligan

The Carrigeenmore and Castle St., Sligo, Bone Scoops

Martin A. Timoney

In *The Corran Herald* of July 2007 I published a bone scoop in the possession of Ballymote Heritage Group members, the sisters Eileen Tighe and Nuala Rogers. That publication already requires a follow up article.

CASTLE ST., SLIGO

Between March and July 2008, the former W.A. and A.F. Woods hardware, tools, glass, bicycle, delft, nursery, paint, toy, shoe, seed, manures, gardening and farming stores which developed at 5, 6, 7-8 Castle St., Abbeyquarter South, Sligo, from the mid-19th century until closing in 2005, was archaeologically resolved under license 07E0096. The site was developed for the Quinn family to the design by HKR Architects; Rhatigan was the main contractor and Norris was the groundworks contractor.

Following clearance of the demolished buildings initial earth removal got underway. By one of those strokes of luck that make life exciting an unfinished bone scoop (Figs 1b, 2b) of the type of the Carrigeenmore scoop was found late one evening under the foundations of the buildings to the rear of No 5. Several copies of the 2007 article on the Carrigeenmore bone (Timoney 2007-2008) were distributed to workers across the site the next day as the unfinished bone was taken around for all to see. A complete un-worked bone of the type used for making the two known examples was found in roughly the same area (Figs 1a, 2a). Days later one of the shuttering team saw the finished decorated bone scoop in the soil at the river end of No. 8 (Fig. 1c, 2c).

MANUFACTURE

To paraphrase and expand on Mullins (2007, 35) on the production of socketed longbone points, these objects were produced by transversely cutting off one end of the bone, and then detaching a longitudinal segment of the longbone wall for a portion of its length while retaining the full circumference of the shaft for the

remainder.

Hurley (2004, 463) describes it in other words: "they were easily made from the metapodials (metacarpi or metatarsi) of sheep or pig. The distal end formed the handle, with the articular condyles left intact. The proximal end was cut off, and half of the wall of the shaft was cut away. The edges were then pared and polished to give a sharp cutting edge."

DESCRIPTIONS

Before proceeding to discussion the Carrigeenmore and the three Castle St. pieces are described.

The Carrigeenmore example (Figs. 1d, 2d) measures 13.4 cm in length, 7.4 cm of the bone was cut away to form the 7.5 cm long working part. There is a tiny bit of the edge of both sides of the scoop left uncut; these look to be minor touches of decoration rather than functional. The piece is decorated with several poorly laid-out scored lines and the letter R is faintly scratched on the back.

The complete un-worked Castle St. bone (Fig. 1a, 2a) measures 11.8 cm. Both ends are intact. This piece is a dull caramel in colour

The unfinished Castle St. bone (Fig. 1b, 2b) measures 14.5 cm long. There are two transverse cuts, one for the end and the other 6.6 cm further up for the end to terminate the split. The upper part has been cut away to make a 6.6 cm long working part and 2 cm of the right side of it has been broken off. Fashioning of the object was abandoned at this stage. This piece is dark brown in colour.

The finished decorated Castle St. example (Fig. 1c, 2c) measures 11.8 cm. The working part is 7 cm long and the working end is rounded and the back has been worn down. The decoration on the front consists of two panels with an X cuts while the lower has an extra transverse cut that continues around the back. On the back of the upper part are what appear to be two letters; four grooves form an M or a W, three grooves form an N but with the link line beginning and ending away from the ends of the

verticals. This piece is golden brown in colour.

REDATING

The Castle St. examples were found in contexts that were producing late 16th to early 19th century material. This strained the assigning (Timoney 2007-2008) of the Carrigeenmore bone to the Early Christian period to say the least. However, I showed the Carrigeenmore bone to Prof. Emeritus Etienne Rynne. He immediately referred to examples from Staple Howe Iron Age hillfort in Yorkshire and to ones on display in Neolithic cases in the British Museum. Later Siobhán de hÓir, that bibliographer extraordinaire of RSAI provided copy of *North Country Folk* which has illustrations of several examples. And then Vol. XVI of *The Journal of Irish Archaeology* arrived. The article by Mullins (2008) concerned somewhat similar bone objects, the sort of ones that I was comparing the Carrigeenmore example with, which caused me to arrive at an Early Christian date. On receipt of copy of my article Mullins kindly replied pointing out the differences between the Carrigeenmore example and the socketed bone points of Early Christian date where both ends of socketed longbone points are open. The date for these objects is not in the Early Christian period but in the last few centuries; clearly I was very wide of the mark as regards date and function. Mullins included copy of a page from Pinto (1969).

COMPARABLE

A re-examination of the literature, the Internet and personal contacts was undertaken. Examples are of bone ivory, wood and metal.

Wood-Martin (1888, Pl. VI:10) illustrates an example that is similar, despite Wakeman's somewhat odd depiction of the articular condyles end of the bone. He (1888, 59) considered it to be a scoop, serviceable for extracting marrow. Regrettably he does not say which crannog the piece is from.

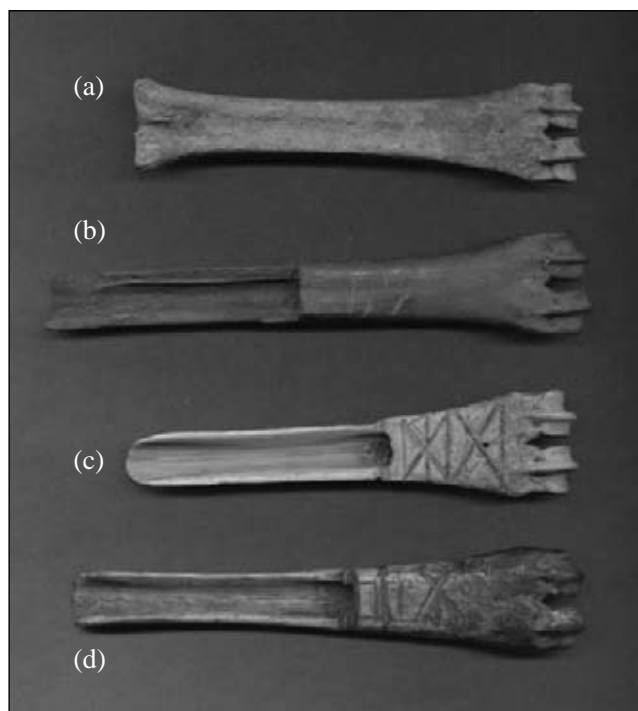


Fig. 1: Front views of Co. Sligo bone scoops

- (a) Complete un-worked Castle St. bone
- (c) Finished decorated Castle St. bone scoop

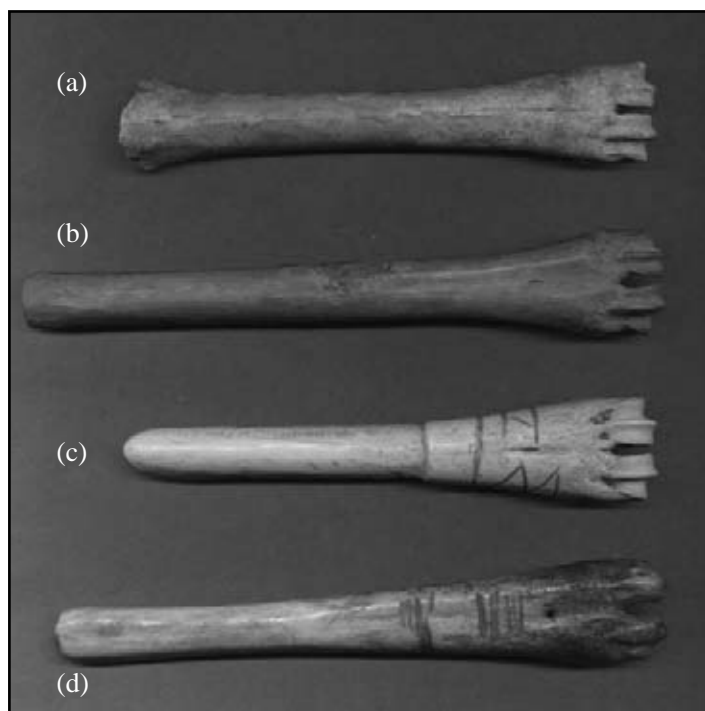


Fig. 2: Back views of Co. Sligo bone scoops

- (b) Unfinished Castle St. bone scoop
- (d) Carrigeenmore bone scoop

Pinto (1969, fig. 80) illustrates a variety of 'apple and cheese scoops' of the 18th and earlier centuries; Fig. 80, A, M and N are similar examples in bone to ours.

Marshall (1976, 55) illustrates two examples. She suggests (1976, 54) that these apple-corers and scoops were for assisting people without teeth to eat apples but later were used as apple corers and when used for cheese were called cheese-splitters. She says that they are known in a variety of materials and some dated ones are from the 18th and 19th centuries. Some with initials, hearts and other amatory motifs were love tokens.

MacGregor (1985, fig. 97) illustrates an unprovenanced 'apple-corer or cheese-scoop' in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and he allows 'that different scoops served different purposes'. He argues that there is no evidence to support Pinto's (1969) suggestion that implements of this type were common before the post-medieval period.

Brewster (1963, 127, fig. 72:3) found examples at upper levels in the soil at the Iron Age hillfort at Staple Howe in Yorkshire; he considered them to be 'Probably of fairly recent origin'. His illustrated example has a criss-cross pattern. The British Museum label, at least when noted in Sept. 2007 by Etienne Rynne (pers. comm. 2008), assigned a date of 800

to 650 BC to it. Rynne considers them to be more like 19th century apple corers (pers. comm. 2008).

Brears (1989, 28, fig. 13:f) illustrates an 'apple-corer' from Pool-in-Warfdale.

Cleary, Hurley and Shee Twohig, eds., (1997, 259, fig 106:11) illustrate an apple corer/scoop from Skiddy's Castle, North Main St., Cork, and explain (1997, 269) the coring aspect as being relevant to the making of cider, the removal of the acidic pips before the apples were pressed.

In 2001 a fine example was found in the rubble infill of a wall dating from the late 19th century in a property adjacent to Main Guard, Sarsfield St., Clonmel, Co. Tipperary (Buckley 2001). It has parallel incised lines superimposed on a criss-cross pattern. Following from that Stone (2001, 48) wrote that several examples, including evidence for manufacture, were found during the 1993 excavations at Hereford Cathedral Close. The decoration was of the same style as the Clonmel example. See Stone and Appleton-Fox (1996) for illustrations. Stone (2001, 48) was not happy with the apple corer / apple scoop idea, and, even though he knew of older generations who remembered seeing them used for that purpose, he preferred to see them as marrow scoops. In a further response to Buckley's initial note Morton (2002)

suggested that that the Clonmel scoop may have been a 'Trier', a personal device used by grain merchants for sampling sacks of seed or grain.

Sheehan, Hurley and Ní Loingsigh (2004, 32-34, fig. 12) describe and illustrate one from a seventeenth-eighteenth century context at Red Abbey Yards, Cork; see also Hurley (2004, 463). This one is unusual in that it has five perforations to the lower end of the handle.

There are 42 of these in the Museum of London and also some from archaeological excavations. In general, these have been assigned a date of the 17th to 18th century. MoL. No. L33/3 has a date of 1789 carved on the 'front'. The majority are decorated – a very plain simple 'X' to a few very elaborately decorated. Mol Acc. No. 4804 has decorative notches on the working front edges of the scoop shaft. Some are also completely plain. There is no record of where MoL. No. 4807, image No. 000444 on website, was found. Two from Norwich are published in Margeson (1993, 120 and fig. 85), one from a first half of the 17th century context and the other in a broadly dated context of 17th to early 19th century. (Jackie Keily, Curator, Museum of London, pers. comms.)

Hurley with McCarthy and Price (2004, 463, Fig. 6.9:1 a and b) illustrate two broken examples described as decorated bone apple-

corers from excavations in Merchants' Road and Barrack Lane, Galway. They say they are found in post-medieval contexts in Ireland and Britain.

Teehan (1976, 12, top left) illustrates two metal marrow spoons, dated c. 1720 and c. 1765, and he comments that the marrow spoon came into use about 1710. He points out that it was the long slender scoop-shaped handle that was used for extracting the marrow. This part of the spoon is very similar to the bone scoops being discussed here.

There are two plain metal apple corers in the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum's collection and a few combined factory mass produced tinned metal potato peelers [Lancashire peeler pattern] and corers all of which date to the first half of the 20th century. Apple corers were sometimes made from hardwood or even silver ... although 18th century silver 'marrow' scoops rather than apple corers are well known collectibles. (Carragher pers. comms.).

There are four unlocalised examples in The National Museum of Ireland Folklife Collection; they are described as apple corers. They are similar and similarly decorated to those under discussion here. One is particularly interesting in that it has "1762 L:1" incised on the front; it is from the collection of Harry P. Swan, a Donegal collector (pers. comms. Clodagh Doyle, NMI).

ORNAMENT

Several of the known or illustrated examples are ornamented; see figs. 1 and 2 for the ornament on the Co. Sligo examples. Scored or incised lines forming a criss-cross pattern or rectangle(s), with diagonals and diameters are the norm; see references for illustrations.

LETTERING

Four grooves form an M or a W and three grooves form an N on the complete Castle St. example. If it is W rather than M perhaps it belonged to one of the Woods family. The R finely scratched on the back of the Carrigeenmore example could be original from the Rogers family.

USE

Most authors and people that I have talked to are quite happy to say that these bone scoops were used as apple-scoops or apple-corers, reluctantly admitting to them being cheese-samplers, but accepting that

their use is uncertain. If these were apple corers then their function would be to extract a cylindrical piece from an apple but in such a way as that the hole would hold sugar, honey or spices, though removing the pips before the apples were pressed in making cider. Their use for marrow extraction also was found acceptable. Morton (2002) suggested that the Clonmel scoop may have been a 'Trier', a personal device used by grain merchants for sampling sacks of seed or grain.

Being one who uses tools and gadgets for whatever they seem suitable for, as opposed to what they were designed for, I think that these scoops could be used for measuring out salt, sugar, jam, in cooking, etc., as well as functioning as scoops or gouges. To me these suggestions seem more plausible than apple coring. The term 'apple-corer' does not fit comfortably for me though I am not excluding apple coring.

Dr Geoff Egan, who works for Museum of London Archaeology, suggests that instead of being used for apple-coring, the bone scoops may have been used for scooping out bone marrow.

DATE

These scoops, whatever their uses, date from the 17th century onwards, though nobody in publication seems to have made mention of their manufacture into the 20th century. One in The National Museum of Ireland Folklife Collection has "1762 L:1" incised on the front and one in the Museum of London has a date of 1789 carved on it.

CREDITS

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Killaraght Early Christian Cross Slab

Mary B. Timoney

The most southerly parish in Co. Sligo is what was Killaraght Parish, now Gurteen Parish. The road from Boyle to Frenchpark passes through the parish. To the west of this road is the isolated ecclesiastical site of Killaraght. Until recent decades the graveyard here was set well back from the road surrounded by a complex of earthen banks and roads with some more ancient monuments in the surrounding landscape. The extension of the graveyard brings the graveyard closer to the road and makes it feel less isolated. St. Attracta is said to have received the veil from St. Patrick although she lived well after St. Patrick's time (Gwynn and Hadcock 1988, 320; Swords 2008, 8). She founded a hospital here, which continued until after the suppression of the monasteries. It was not until 1591 that the convent lands were seized.

No evidence of an Early Christian church survives. A piece of shaped Old Red Sandstone, probably of Early Christian date, can be seen in the old section of the graveyard. It has four D-shaped projections, the top of each is decorated with a swastika. Dressed stones from the medieval church can be seen used as grave markers. A Protestant church was built here in 1742, the date stone can be seen in the old section of the graveyard.

In April 2007, on a visit to Killaraght graveyard, Co. Sligo, to check an 18th century headstone the author discovered an Early Christian cross slab which had been reused as a grave memorial in recent times. The Old Red Sandstone slab was

lying on the ground in front of the Goldrick family grave plot in the old section of the graveyard.

The slab measures 99 cm long, the upper two thirds is about 40 cm in width with a maximum thickness of 8.5 cm. The left side of the slab is complete but parts of the right side have been cut or broken off. The inscribed cross with T-shaped terminals measures 14.5 cm long and 21 cm wide. The cross is cut in a V-section groove with a maximum of 1.5 cm in width and a depth of 0.5 cm. The terminals are U-shaped in section.

The inscribed cross is comparable to that on the Early Christian slabs at Knockmore (Timoney 1997; 2004-2005). Knockmore is also in the modern parish of Gurteen and is only 10 miles away as the crow flies.

The slab was reused as a grave memorial, probably in the 19th century. It was inscribed with the name Martin Rodgers in sloped lettering. The letters are a mixture of upper and lower case and are cut to an uneven depth. The lettering was done locally and is not the work of an experienced stone mason.

The discovery of the Killaraght slab adds another location to those where Early Christian cross slabs have been found in recent years.

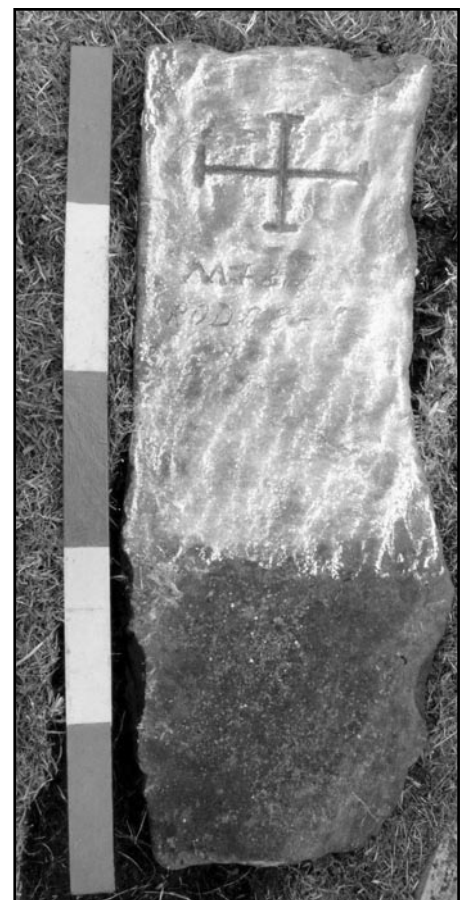
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Killaraght Slab

Photo By Mary B. Timoney

The Duirling Boats

Eugene Gillan

A Frenchman, touring Connaught in 1791, came across some boats of unusual construction in Co. Sligo. As Coquebert de Montbert travelled along the coast road out of Enniscrone to Easkey, he noted that the boats along that part of the Sligo coast had two keels. All traces of these boats have long disappeared, but according to the folklore of the area, they were propelled by four oarsmen each pulling a single oar. A sail may also have been used. These boats were known as duirling boats.

The Irish word duirling means a stoney or shingly beach, suggesting that these boats were used for landing on such beaches. De Montbert noted that the locals were not fishermen, but did land large quantities of kelp. We also know that shells were burned in several small kilns along the shore, to produce lime. Two of these kilns still survive on Oyster Island. Sand, both for agricultural and building purposes, was also landed. Periwinkles, cockles and mussels were loaded on to ships trading in and out of Sligo and Ballina, mostly for export to Liverpool. Many of these cargoes were transported in baskets made of sally rods and

twigs. These baskets were known as *purdógs*.

One can see that some sort of flat, or round bottomed boat with a keel either side, would be useful for landing such cargoes in a location and time in which quays were few and far between. Such a boat would take the ground easily and remain upright when beached with a cargo. They were less likely to be damaged on a stoney beach than a boat with a conventional hull.

The importance of seaweed to the local community, as a fertiliser, is evidenced in de Montbert's conversation with a twelve-year-old boy at Easkeybridge. The boy listed four different types of seaweed used for that purpose: *famnagh*, *rach*, *cliondach* and *slat mara*.

De Montbert's surprise at this boy's ability to name various species of flora and seaweed in Irish reflects perhaps, an upper class bias towards the Irish peasantry; a bias that would have been common among the Irish aristocracy whom he visited and with whom he frequently lodged. On a visit to Kinsale in Co. Cork, de Montbert even goes so far as to suggest that the peasantry had thick lips as a result of

speaking the Irish language. It may have been this bias that also led him to conclude that the people of the Enniscrone/Easkey area were too lazy to fish and restricted themselves to a diet of potatoes. The fact is, that while there was obviously a number of boats in the area, most people, having little or no monetary income, did not have the means to buy a boat and fishing gear. People did however, barter agricultural produce with fishermen for fish.

One interesting side-note concerns the cylindrical tin lanterns which were used as lighting on the piers and slipways. Almost a foot tall and filled with goose grease, these so called 'gooselamps' burnt with a bright yellow flame, providing guidance to the returning fishing boats at night and in poor visibility. Houses close to shoreline would also display lamps in their front windows. These simple lamps consisted of scallop shells filled with fish oil with wicks of dried rushes and were known as 'slige', from the Irish for shell.

With thanks to Cormac Levis and Gerry Donagher.

Old Familiar Irish Sayings – Now More or Less Forgotten

PJ Duffy

On Horses

You can bring a horse to water but you won't make it drink.
Never look a gift horse in the mouth.
The old warhorse, he smells the smoke of battle.
Horse sense is common sense.
It's late closing the stable door when the horse has bolted.

On Dogs

The old dog for the hard road and the puppy for the byway.
A dog's bark is sometimes more shocking than his bite.
If you lie with the dogs you'll rise with the fleas.
Did you hear the latest scandal – don't the dogs in the street know it?
You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
Every dog gets his day.

On Cats

Cats are very playful when they are young but they grow grave as they grow old.
Cats we are aware repose on a chair while kittens cling to the legs.
He's gone off and a smile on him like a cat going rambling.
He's as straight-laced as the cat that ate the candle.
What's bred in the cat comes out in the puishín (kitten).
(Expressing wonder) Oh, that's cat altogether.

On the Weather

A red sky at night is the shepherd's delight; a red sky in the morning is the shepherd's warning.
There's many a change in a Spring's day.
A wet and windy May fills the haggard with corn and hay.
A fair February scorns the remaining

months of the year.

March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb.

On Time

(Advice to a youth) Take it easy, dear, you've a long life ahead of you.
Time and the tide waits for nobody.
Time is a healer and a destroyer; it gradually wears our lives away.
Take it easy, boy – the Man who made time made plenty of it.
Once upon a time strange happenings took place hereabouts.
Time takes the loved ones from our homes but not from our memories.
One hour of crowded glory is better than a lifetime of misery.

On Contentment

As happy as the day is long.
As content as the flowers in May
As settled as a stone in a bog hole.

St Brigid's Church, Highwood, Golden Jubilee

Kathleen Fitzmaurice

On Sunday October 7th 2007 we celebrated the Golden Jubilee of St. Brigid's Church, Highwood. It was a wonderful night for the parishioners especially for those of us who had been present some fifty years earlier when the building had been originally consecrated. For weeks we had been preparing, tidying, decorating and giving the place a new look and we were blessed with a clear, crisp night, with a touch of winter in the air.

The original church in Highwood dated back to the early years of the nineteenth century and it had been enlarged in the 1880s. In the early 1950s the Church needed total refurbishment and renovation plans were put in place. However, when architects examined the walls, they were pronounced dangerous and the decision was made to build an entirely new Church.

Many people regretted the demolition of the old building. It was there they had been baptised, received their First Holy Communion, and been confirmed. No doubt they hoped to spend their last night within its hallowed precincts, too. But the decision was made and the fund-raising began.

At this point I must pay tribute to the two curates, the late Fathers Flynn and Dunning, who had the daunting task of guiding the project, aided by their energetic committees. No doubt they are enjoying their reward in Heaven.

It was well known that where a Church was needed a Church would be built, regardless of the sacrifice entailed. It is an everlasting tribute to the people of this area who rallied to the call and although times were tough and families' needs were pressing, they denied themselves and gave generously.

For a few years, a levy was imposed on every household at Station times. It was a heavy burden, but generally was well supported. Our relatives in far flung places were also involved. Items like seats and other furnishings were donated, and thankfully, donated anonymously. Our Church of Ireland neighbours helped as well

our own carnival too, not in the marquee in Drumlish, but in the marquee in Kilmactranny. Organising and running a carnival was a risky business, involving much planning and hard work, but we had enthusiastic committees who ran these events safely and successfully. Ar dheis Dé go raibh siad.

Of course those of us who were young looked forward to the annual carnival. It was an opportunity to enjoy some of the leading Show bands of the day on our own doorstep.

At last the big day dawned and the new Church was ready. The late Bishop Hanly blessed the building and dedicated it to St. Brigid. He celebrated the Pontifical High Mass assisted by a large gathering of Diocesan clergy. The homilist on the day was one of our own, the late Rev. Dr. Séamus McLoughlin of Ardline, who in spite of very obvious ill-health, spoke eloquently of the loyalty of the people of Highwood to the Church and to the Catholic faith.

Some alterations have been made since that day in 1957, most notably the changing of the Sanctuary in accordance with the decrees of Vatican II. We now also have a carpeted floor, central heating and a public address system. As cars became more plentiful, it was necessary to demolish the perimeter wall to provide a parking area. What a far cry from the opening day when the late Canon Dodd remarked on having seen an elderly parishioner arrive on "his beast of peace"- his donkey. Landscaping too has contributed to the embellishment of the location.

Sadly, we no longer have a resident curate, but with God's help we will overcome this challenge and keep our Church vibrant for our own spiritual benefit and as a lasting monument to our ancestors who preserved the precious legacy of the Faith for us.

Go gcoimeádaí Bríd Naofa faoi'n a brat sinn, anois agus i dtólamh.

The 1950s were the era of the carnival and we had

Modern Day Reverse Diaspora – us Blow Backs

J Anthony Cuming

To me as an Irishman who was brought up in the Ireland of the late 1950s, Ireland now in retrospect appears to have then been a poor country on the edge of Europe, still bound up with the recent “emergency” and the events of only a generation before. My parents left Dublin in 1955 with their four young sons when my father left Aer Lingus¹ and took up a similar post with BEA, London; thus we joined the Irish Diaspora².

Although we had lived in Portrush, Antrim (with grandparents) we moved to Dollymount, Dublin, in 1947. This was where my formative years were spent. I believed that Dublin was the centre of the world, with Belfast and the North somewhere one went to see relatives in a region which was clearly Irish, but a bit different. My Dublin was Bill Cullen’s town, as his account of incredible poverty and deprivation are graphically related in *It’s a Long Way from Penny Apples*. Who can forget the barefoot kids just off O’Connell Street and the ubiquitous “shawlies”?

Even though Dad worked for an airline, we never went abroad, we never even went West or South, apart from Punchestown, but we had it all, living as we did on the seafront with bus, or trams in the early days, to the Pillar in O’Connell Street in twenty minutes. It was a carefree time when kids were let roam at will, so unlike these days.

Then at the age of 12 to be transported to the outskirts of London, away from Granny in Rathgar and all my relatives, to a land where people did not know what twopence or threepence were, so that one had to learn to say tuppence and thruppence, was a culture shock. To be desperately trying to tune into Radio Athlone for RTE, hearing Dad interviewed on RTE as ‘being an exile in England’, all very strange.

Over the next 55 years I had been back to Ireland on visits to relatives and on business innumerable times, but all the time growing away from those early experiences. Bridget and I have lived in America, Australia and three years in Malaysia, but one knows one is not going to set down roots in these countries. Fortunately work has taken me to many places. What places? The jungles of south East Asia and South America, the deserts of

Arabia, the plains of Africa, mines in the Dominican Republic, South Africa and even Tara Mines in Navan, Co Meath! as well as offshore in the South China Sea, North Sea and Norway.

Diaspóra na nGael meaning the ‘Irish Diaspora’, appeared in a 1954 book ‘The Vanishing Irish’, but it was not until the 1990s - mainly due to President Mary Robinson - that the phrase came to be used to describe Irish emigrants and their descendants around the world. In our travels we have met members of the Diaspora in most of the 50 countries we have passed through, and not all behind mock Irish bars either.

Ireland Roots³ states that 75% of Irish-born people living abroad are in Britain. There are also approx 1.7 million in Britain who were born to Irish parents, the third generation Irish community in Britain could be in the region of 6 million, 10% of the UK population.

My wife Bridget’s (nee Leahy) grandfather was from Cork, so she felt an affinity for my country too and we resolved to return in some way. By the 1990s property prices in Dublin and the Pale had reached ludicrous levels so we looked to the west. We knew close friends from Boyle and had relatives with property in the area.

So it came to pass that, after a few false starts, 11 years ago we found ourselves buying a property in Roscommon, a few acres/hectares on the shores of the dually named Lake Drumharlow/Loch Edin near Cootehall. We were joining at that time a major flow of what I think of as Blow-Backs, who are related to Blow-Ins, but subtly different, or so we liked to think. The renowned Celtic Tiger was roaring and many who had left these shores for jobs or education saw Ireland as a changed and changing land of milk and honey.

What is the reaction to these returnees? Is it as depicted by Frank McCourt in *Angela’s Ashes* that there is an element of ‘why on earth did you come back here?’ or as depicted in John Ford’s *The Quiet Man*⁴ where Wayne’s blow-back boxer with too many bucks is resented by the Mayo folk. There is another aspect as well; that of resentment of the Dubs coming up the N4 for the weekend bringing

all the food and drink with them, and racing round the lakes and the Shannon in fast flashy boats. Even our local hero, John McGahern in his *That They May Face the Rising Sun* has the Rutledges returning to Leitrim from London and finding a changed Ireland.

Our great joy has not just been the idyllic Drumharlow side peace and quiet but the pace of life when we are here and the welcome we have had even though we are blow-backs or maybe worse - Dublin Gobs.

By a strange twist of fate, the 1635-1641 Survey and Distribution of Land in Co Roscommon includes in the 20,000 acres under Mac Dermot ownership in Tumna Parish (V III 5), Annaghmagurthan, the townland my wife Bridget and I purchased in 1998.

Dr James Cuming⁵, my great grandfather, married Miss Harriet McLoughlin, daughter of Catherine McLoughlin, nee MacDermot, who was from Coolavin, Roscommon. So we have, inadvertently, returned Annaghmagurthan to the MacDermot line.

The tale of how the Catholic families in Ireland managed to retain any major land holdings after Cromwell and the Penal Laws, the laws passed in the period after 1691 and not reversed until the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1828, is for another time.

Notes:

¹ James Cuming (1904-1976) was Chief Supplies Controller for Aer Lingus and Aerlínte Éireann, who procured the Constellation aircraft for the first transatlantic service.

² “Diaspora”, from the Greek word “to scatter”, is defined as any group migration or flight from a country.

³ www.irelandroots.com/index.html

⁴ Director: John Ford 1952.

Starring John Wayne, Maureen O’Hara (born Maureen Fitzsimons, Ranelagh, Dublin).

⁵ Dr Cuming (1833-1899) was the first Catholic Professor of Medicine at the Royal Hospital in Belfast. and was Charles Gavin Duffy’s Brother-in-Law

A Stab in the Dark

Molly Howard

The Celts! What marvellous people they were!

New to the country and fascinated by their myths, their legends, their history, Anne had bought every book she could find that concerned these intriguing people. Two weeks after spending every evening reading up on them, her interest narrowed.

Finn mac Cumhal and the Fianna began to obsess her.

What heroic people they had been, she thought, living close to nature, standing up for what was right, defending those who couldn't defend themselves, beating off foreign invaders, and all the time thoroughly enjoying themselves.

She thought of those working with her in the ordering office of a large supermarket. How shallow they were, how far removed from the basics. All they could talk about was the programme last night on the telly or the film they were going to see that weekend. Everything they were interested in seemed to be one remove from real life. Even the food they ate - packaged, frozen, simply heat and eat - appeared totally artificial.

But her life, she had to admit, didn't come into contact with nature very often. She lived in a flat in a city. She travelled everywhere by car. Trees and grasses could only be seen when she went to the park to eat her lunch. And they were not wild and carefree, but tidy and orderly, neatly organised by gardeners.

'Oh,' she would think, 'if only I could have lived in the days of the Celts! Lived a real life!'

Then one day she saw an announcement of a travelling exhibition that featured artifacts dating from the third century A.D.

The day it opened, she called in sick to work that she might spend the day at the exhibition, she was that eager to see these things used and handled by her heroes.

Almost breathless with awe, she wandered around the displays. There were pots to see, there were shields and spears, there were horse trappings, but most of all there was jewellery, beautiful, ornate, solid creations. Here, she lingered, fascinated. There were necklaces, tiaras, rings, bracelets, but it was the brooches that held her. Time and time again she found herself returning to the brooches.

The one she found herself drawn to the most was quite ordinary, really. A dark, deep blue stone, no larger than a florin, it was mounted in a simple silver filigree with a long stabbing pin on the back for attaching it to one's cloak. Every time she visited the exhibition, and that was

almost every day, she lingered over this brooch, yearning to have it for her very own.

On the last day, she was almost the only visitor. This time she headed straight for the blue stone pin. Staring hard, she tried to print every aspect of it on her memory, wanting to be able to see it in her mind when she could no longer see it in actuality.

As she studied it, her hand moved to the brooch and picked it up. Horrified, she looked around to see if anyone had noticed what she had done. None had. And as she looked, her hand with the brooch thrust itself into her coat pocket, her body turned towards the door and her feet took her past the attendant, down the steps and out onto the street.

She was appalled with herself. How could she steal such a piece, something which had existed for hundreds of years? She must put it back, she must!

Even to eat her supper that night, she was unable to let go of the brooch. She fell asleep with it still clutched in her hand. But with sleep came a vivid, lifelike dream unlike anything she'd ever dreamed before.

She found herself kneeling by a stream, struggling to clean a heavy stew pot with handfuls of sand. She could feel the individual pebbles pressing into her knees and the continued pain of sore fingers once again being scrubbed against the sand. Sprays of rain through the trees around her caused her to flinch automatically.

Her new self was shorter and skinnier with lank, dirty blonde hair which kept falling into her eyes as she worked. She had a desperate desire to scratch, scratch, scratch her head, it itched so. ('Head lice?' she thought, horrified.) But she couldn't scratch as both hands were involved in an obviously urgent job.

At last, her dream-self ran her hands once more around the inside of the pot. Convinced that no more could be done, she rose. Clutching the heavy pot with both hands, she set off at a half-run up the path away from the stream. She was barefoot!

Anne was surprised to discover that running over pebbles or through mud and various bits of litter didn't hurt her bare feet, although nettles still stung. But she was cold, colder than she'd ever been. It was a damp cold and it made her ache. Her feet were cold, her hands were cold, she shivered constantly but apparently that was the way things were.

A solid wooden fence built of stakes taller than Anne soon came into view. Her other self headed for the open gate through which could be seen a large

building whose walls started as stone but finished as wood and had a heavy thatch for a roof, totally unlike anything Anne had ever seen. ('Wattle and daub?' she wondered.)

Once through the gate, the pot-carrier moved as fast as possible to another building, a three-walled structure standing to one side of the main house. Obviously the kitchen, it was a hive of activity around a huge central fire. A number of men, women and small boys were peeling, mixing, beating, chopping, minding spits or checking large pots over the fire, all being directed by a fat woman and an even fatter man.

Out of the corner of her other self's eye, Anne caught glimpses of other buildings - huts? stables? dwellings? She couldn't tell as the eyes she was using were directed at the fat woman.

This one had turned and grabbed the pot Anne was clutching, snarling 'What took you so long, you idle tramp? If you were mine, I'd sell you!' ('Sell me?' thought Anne. 'I'm a slave?')

As the fat woman seized the pot, she aimed a clout at Anne's head. This must have been a regular occurrence, for her head tipped to one side as the pot left her hands.

Her eyes flicked to the even fatter man. Catching her glance, he roared, 'Send her for some firewood, this basket's almost empty.'

An enormous basket was thrust at her. 'Here. Get some decent stuff, not those thin twiggy bits you brought me last time!'

She was out of the gate and into the woods beyond before the fat woman could change her mind.

'I'm in luck,' ran through the mind Anne was occupying. (Anne gathered that collecting firewood was like having a rest break.) 'I must have pleased him last night.' Anne didn't need to wonder how she had pleased him, as a close-up view of the fat man, looming naked over her where she lay on some straw, filled the mind she was in.

The girl paused in the woods, once they were out of sight of the gate, thinking, 'If I go down that way I might be able to see them arrive. Maybe he'll even let me see them in the hall.'

She shivered, this time in anticipated delight, before setting off, collecting and stacking firewood as she went.

She was in luck once more. Less than a minute had passed after arriving at her concealed observation post before horses, men and dogs began to stream past her.

First came a few on foot. (Scouts?) Then a mounted man passed them. Blonde with the fair skin of a redhead, he was solidly built, sitting astride an

equally solid horse. On each side of him ran two large, beautiful, red setters. (The leader?)

After him came two more mounted men. Anne guessed they must be the seconds-in-command. Not that they were dressed differently from any of the others but their weapons seemed to her untutored eye to be of better quality.

As they watched the first mounted man go by, the name 'Finn mac Cumhal' drifted through the mind she inhabited. Gratitude, admiration, a bit of fan worship filled her. Anne was not given any time to dwell on the fact that she had been granted her wish to live in the time of the Fianna. Nor was she allowed to study the rest of the company.

As soon as the first three mounted men went by, the slave girl she was linked to headed back to the kitchen as fast as possible, hurriedly filling the basket with her collected piles of firewood in an attempt to get back before the visitors arrived.

She made it, just. As she nipped through the gate and headed for the kitchen, a couple of strange dogs came around the bend, followed by the first two men she'd seen.

At the kitchen, her basket of firewood was replaced by a couple of large pots with instructions to get them clean, "not just rinsed out, mind!" plus the usual clout to the head.

The rest of the day was spent scrubbing. Big pots, little pots, ladles, platters. Sometimes she wouldn't have finished one before another was sent down with instructions that she was not to be so slow. Other times she would get almost to the gate before she was given more to clean out.

But eventually, as the light faded, the need for ever more cooking pots ceased. The feast was ready. She got all the way to the kitchen with the last pot in time to watch the procession of servants bearing all manner of food set off for the hall. The girl watched them wistfully. She had so hoped to be one of the food-bearers and get to see all the visitors.

Anne's thoughts were different. ('At last. Maybe there'll be some food for us.')

There was, of a sort. With another ducked clout came an earthenware container, this time with some stuck-on remains which could be eaten. It would then need cleaning. Of course.

As emptied pots began to return from the feast, back they went, as did Anne, to the stream - to cold water, sore fingers and bruised knees, this time with a young lad, also on scrubbing duty. With the lad periodically returning with clean things and coming back with more dirty ones, it must have been close on an hour before the two had completed their work.

The last time he returned, his hands were empty. He'd simply come to collect the large platter she was cleaning, one of

the few that were silver. It was needed to take the last item in.

Having already got to her feet to start back, the slave girl told him she would carry it. Inside she was hoping that the fat man would let her collect the dirty platters for a change. That way she could get into the main hall.

Anne wondered if there was any bone in her body that didn't ache ('Why on earth doesn't she run away? I would!')

At the kitchen, the fat man was beaming with his arm across the fat woman's shoulders, having just been congratulated on the feast he'd produced. So when the slave girl asked timidly if she might collect some of the dirty trenchers, his answer was a jovial, "Yes!", sweeping her on her way with a mighty swipe at her bottom.

Her spirits soared. At last! Would she see that handsome young man with the odd mark on his forehead? She'd seen him when the troop had been there before on their way out to some fight or other.

Anne was definitely unenthusiastic. All she wanted to do was collapse and get some sleep. Anywhere would do so long as it was warm.

But once inside the main hall, she perked up a bit. It wasn't as cold for a start. There were two fires roaring at each end of the hall and there were decorated blankets(?) hanging on the walls. Under foot as well, it was warmer with a thick layer of straw on the floor, although at this stage of the feast there wasn't just straw there.

And there were dogs everywhere, chewing bones thrown to them or snapping at each other over a choice piece.

As the slave girl scurried around collecting dirty plates, Anne did her best to get a good look at a genuine Fianna-type homestead but it was difficult. The girl she was linked to was indifferent to her surroundings, having seen them many times before. It was the men she was interested in.

By now, most of the visitors and their hosts were well into being drunk. The Fianna, on their way back to Tara after defeating the invaders, had justifiably felt that a little celebration was in order.

As Anne moved towards the door, carrying the trenchers, she found herself treading in things that made her feel nauseated to think about. Food thrown to the dogs, uneaten bread, pools of ale, even, she suspected, places where someone or something had been sick, all this lay ready for her to step in. ('At least the kitchen is kept swept,' she thought in disgust.)

Her desire to live 'a real life' had disappeared totally.

From where she was, the twentieth century way of life resembled paradise.

The door from the hall grew ever closer. Anne wished her carrier would hurry up, she'd had enough of this.

Surely she would be allowed to sleep now.

The young man at the last table had other ideas. As the slave girl picked up his dirty plate, he stood up, took those she had and beckoned to a page, watching from the doorway.

"Here," he bellowed, "take these to the kitchen." As he did so, he caught her by the arm and drew her to him. "You're too pretty to spend all your life in the kitchen" he said, planting a great wet kiss on her.

As he fumbled with her clothes they overbalanced onto the straw between the tables. His mates laughed and egged him on.

The slave girl was not too upset. It was warmer here than where she would have to sleep, and, who knew, he might take her with him.

But Anne had had enough, more than enough. The last straw came when she caught sight of the brooch he wore to hold his cloak on his shoulders. It was the self-same one she'd had clutched in her hand as she'd fallen asleep.

The sight of it enraged her, driving her to take over the body she was 'visiting'. Tearing the brooch from his cloak, Anne threw it from her, violently and with disgust. As it arced over the tables to land on the floor beyond, she blacked out.

Her alarm clock ringing was the next thing Anne was aware of. Startled, she bolted upright in bed, with every muscle aching and her mind protesting at having to go through yet another day of such cold, grinding labour.

Gradually, the softness of the bed beneath her, the warmth of the duvet around her and the sight of the familiar pictures on the walls of her bedroom convinced her that she was indeed back in her own time and place.

Whether what she'd just lived through had been a dream or a genuine return to the past she never knew, but that morning she vowed that never again would she look at the past through such rose-tinted spectacles.

As the two keepers packed the exhibits that day for the move to the next city, one of them exclaimed, "Have you packed that blue brooch? I can't find it anywhere."

The other went to help look. Eventually, it was found under the cloth-covered table where it had originally lain, entangled in a pile of threads and dust curls, with its pin snagged in a chicken bone, of all things.

As they cleaned and then packed it, the second keeper said, "You know, that's not the first time that brooch has gone missing. The last time, do you remember, we found it stabbed into the curtains with blonde hair snagged in the setting. Maybe next time we should exhibit it under glass."

The Hermit of Drinane: Taidy Marron

The following is an excerpt from an interview (Feb 6, 1915, Sligo Champion) by J. F. Cunningham F.R.G.S F.Z.S Barrister at Law and born in Moyrush, Bunninadden, in 1859. His brother Patrick lived in Ballymote in the 1930s and was known as Pat Jack. J.F. was a correspondent for the Sligo Champion.

As a boy I went to see this extraordinary man. He lived a hermit's life in a small hut on the crest of Drinane Hill. His hut consisted of one small room. There was a fire place and a jagged hole in the roof to let out some of the smoke. There were no windows. There was a door, but it did not fit the doorway, and it is quite possible that the boards touched each other in its early days, but, when I saw it, there was no pretence that the door was intended to keep out the blasts that whirled around the crest of the hill – a slit three inches wide separated board from board, and there were no fastenings – simply because there was not object in shutting such a door. Tradition said that the door had once been closed, but tradition is often so vague and incredible! There was a nook near the fire where the hermit slept, but by no stretch of the imagination could it be called a bed. The furniture consisted of a skillet, an old creel, and a fishing rod.

Taidy was a keen fisherman. I have often seen him on the wildest March mornings fishing for pike along the Clooncleigha-Templehouse river, walking swiftly along the bank, his eyes screwed to the surface of the water, every moment expecting a bite, always with a slain pike or two dangling from his waist. His favourite bait was a strangled frog. There was no plot of land attached to the hermit's hut. I wondered how he lived. Fish certainly formed part of his food, and he was successful in finding wild birds' nests, but these were, at best, uncertain supplies of food. The truth was that the hermit lived among a group of gentlemen farmers – Mr Gormley on one side, Mr Healy on another, Mr O'Brien close by and Mr Roddy but a short distance away. These gentlemen and the children of their households, always made the hermit welcome at mealtimes, and when he happened to be ill they saw to it that he was

liberally supplied.

Well, directly I entered his hut and I sneezed.

"Was that to the right or to the left" asked Taidy

"Was what?" I replied, taken by surprise

"That sneeze?" Taidy asked again

"I don't understand" I stated

"Don't you know that to sneeze to the left is unlucky, and to sneeze to the right is lucky?"

"I have never heard that before"

"Oh, how little young people know in these days. But don't forget it. And if you sneeze near a graveyard – nothing could be worse".

Just then I sneezed twice in succession, not the ordinary sneeze, but two real splitting howler.

"God bless you" said the hermit.

I apologised.

"Now, you should know that two or three sneezes are always an omen of good luck; one is bad unless it is to the right?"

Then Taidy's turn came and he sneezed an awful howler.

"Is that to the right or to the left, Taidy?" I asked.

He made no reply, but waited, expecting another, and the other nearly came off. He drew in his breath, half closed his eyes and failed, utterly failed. Then he looked at me:

"Why did you not say 'God bless you'?" he asked

"God bless you, Taidy, I hope it is not too late"

"Yes it is, it is most unmannerly"

"Shall I say it again?"

"No use now, too late. But I expected it. This morning whilst lacing my boots I did the same"

"Then you don't attribute the misfortune to me"

"This never happened me before. Now, there is no help for it but to go back to bed" and he pointed to his nook.

"Please wait a minute. I came to ask

about cock-crowing."

"That's another curse that p??uses me, but I'll be rid of it. She always leaves me when my neighbour's cock crows, and I won't stand it much longer. They are very kind to me, and I am reluctant to do anything to vex them, but I must put an end to that cock next door."

"Why not poison him, Taidy?"

"I have none"

"Then knock his brains out with the blow of a stone."

He considered the suggestion for a moment, and I saw his eye resting on a pile of small stones in front of the hut that had been collected from the lea field on the hill top: "that would mean a loss to them, and I cannot inflict a loss on good neighbours. For the moment I am uncertain how to do it without giving offence, but get rid of him I must the next time he causes her to disappear."

"Does he crow too loud, Taidy?"

"No, but too soon. I have timed him, and the villain, instead of waiting till dead of night, crows fifteen minutes before that time, and fifteen minutes lost with her is a century – an era – epoch to me."

"But who is she?"

"I thought you knew."

"Is there a girl in the case, then? I never heard a hint of such a thing."

"Sure?"

"Honour bright, Taidy."

"I was beginning to fear it had leaked but..."

"Not a word, you are supposed to be a woman hater."

Taidy was then about 70 and a whisper of calumny was never breathed in regard to him. His conduct had always been saintly, but recently he was gloomy and made no secret of his grievance against the crowing of his neighbour's cock.

"I a woman hater – if only they knew the truth. But I'll tell you if you promise not to give it away."

"Certainly I promise."

"Well, you see that creel? She comes in here at dusk and remains sitting there until that infernal cock crows."
"Good Lord, who? What's her name?"

"I don't know."

"Is she tall?"

"Yes, divinely tall."

"Her Hair?"

"Black as a raven's wing"

"Her lips?"

"Like a sunset in a coral sea."

"Her eyes?"

"Blue and deep as the realms of space."

"Her arms."

(Thus far the description tallied with a goddess of my own on a neighbouring hill.)

"Her arms, Taidy, her arms?" I asked.

"Arms, wings you mean. She has wings fleecy white."

"Living! Certainly not."

"Then I know her Taidy, you have described the Madonna in Bunninadden Chapel. So it is she who visits your humble hut and sits on your creel til the cock crows".

Just then we heard the step of someone approaching the hut, Taidy looked at me and touched his lips in token of silence.

"Your promise" he reminded me.

"Never a word" I replied, and I was gone.

Some little time afterwards I heard that the hermit paid a visit to his neighbour, Mrs. _____ and professed great admiration for the cock. It was a bird of no special breed and was not worth more than a shilling or two. Taidy offered five shillings for it, and when the cock was caught and paid for he requested Mrs. _____

_____ to kill it for him. As soon as

the cock's head was severed from his body the hermit took his departure.

"Won't you take the body with you, Taidy?"

"No, thank you. Now that he is dead he can crow no more."

Here was a man who believed in the superstitions connected with cock crowing. This is not fiction but actual fact. It happened some thirty years ago. There is probably not a trace of the hut remaining today, but I can distinctly see on the tablet of my mind the weird structure that served as his house, and the old boothtree bush with the clusters of black berries that sheltered it.

(Taken from the Sligo Champion of February 6th, 1915)

Supplied by Padraig Doddy

Saturday Night

Bernie Gilbride

A night for fun
When we were young.
Meet at seven
Home by eleven.

The 'Gaiety' our destination,
Balcony our expectation.
Talent and style on view
Caught our eye, well they knew!

On dance night grand
At the 'Ritz' we'd land
Best band in the land,
Joe Burns in command.

Years on, little ones to care,
Baths, stories, fun
Clean clothes
For every one.

Polished shoes
Lined the wall
Mass next morning
No time at all.

Now vigil Mass for one
Paper by the fire
Little ones gone
Peace and quiet, palls

Not appreciated in its day,
Sadly missed when gone away.

A Flash in Time

Bernie Gilbride

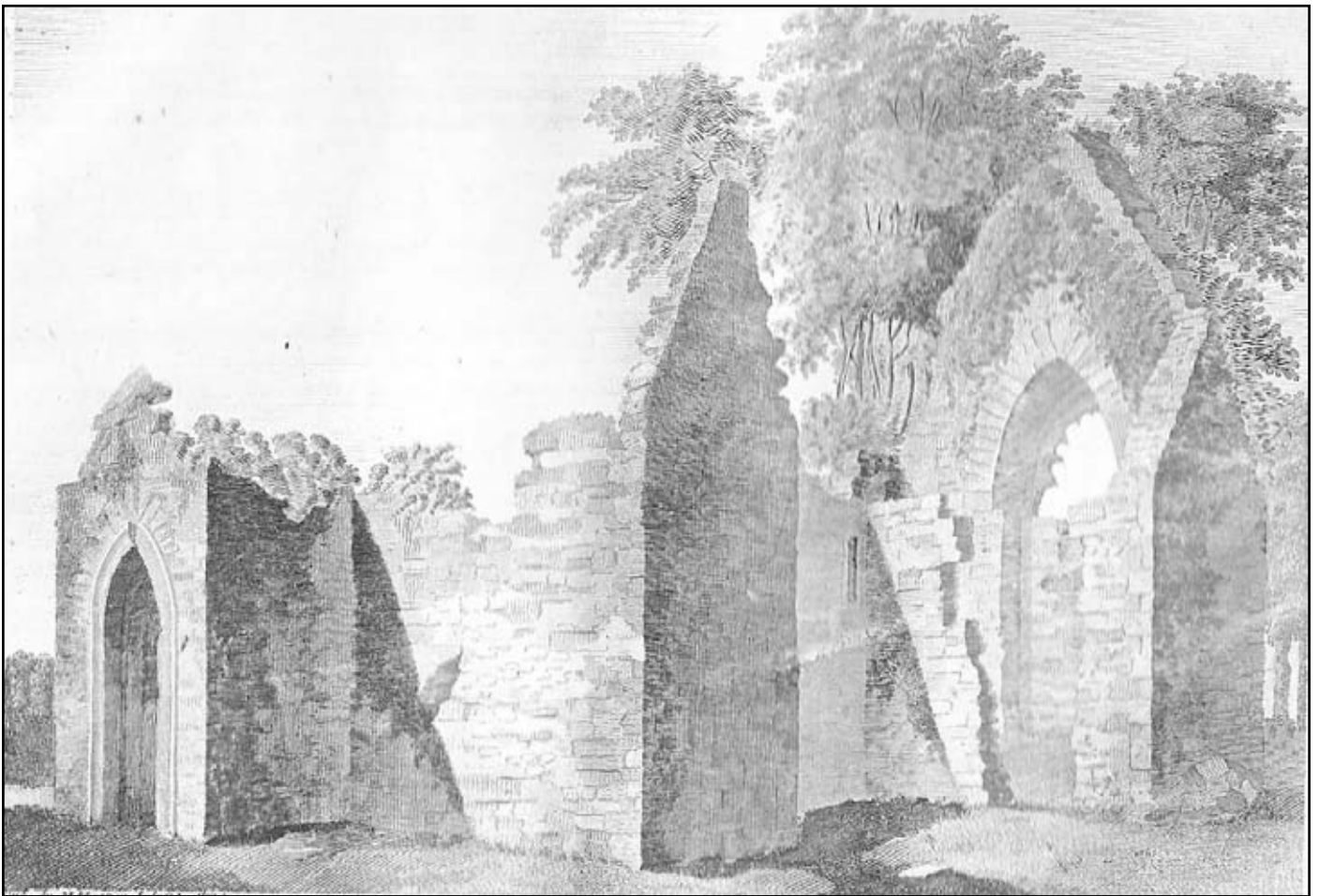
A plane so large
On the runway stands
Awaiting its place in the queue
To take off out of view.

Grows tiny in a vast blue sky
Vanishes from the eye
Leaving an ever widening streak,
Dispersing as we speak.

Our lives are such:
A flash in time
A vanishing streak
A speck so fine
In the universe of time.



Countess Markievicz. *Aidan Mannion Collection*



Ballymote Franciscan Friary. Original Print 1794. *Aidan Mannion Collection*



A group of men at a house party in the home of Michael Hannon, Keenaghan, Ballymote in 1959.

Back Row (L-R): Mr Gallagher (the bodhrán player), Josie Mattimoe, Mick Reynolds, Mick Cunnane, Mick Meehan, Jimmy Healy, John Hannon (Grattan Street).

Centre Row (L-R): Pauric Connell, Hudie Gallagher, Liam Fahy, Jimmy Finn, Noel Gardiner.

Front Row (L-R): Francie Healy, Michael hannon, Leo Hannon, Bertie McDonagh.

Photo courtesy Peggy Hannon-Walsh, per Neal Farry

University of Limerick Library are Recipients of Valuable Irish Archive

UL News : Week Beginning 24 Jan 2005

The University of Limerick Library were recent beneficiaries of a very valuable collection of books, prints, videos, and other materials relating to Irish historical, linguistic and ecclesiastical culture. The collection is the private collection of Dr. Máirtín

Ó'Droma, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Electronic and Computer Engineering at the University of Limerick. In addition to valuable first-editions of Irish language material the Collection also includes important monographs relating to Irish folklore, Anglo-Irish literature, translations from the Irish and Irish and European church history.

One of the latter manuscripts which Dr. Ó'Droma presented to the library is a copy of the Book of Ballymote, one of the few copies of this book in circulation in Ireland. The history of this book is itself a chronicle of some of the most turbulent times in Irish history and it was originally published in the year 1400. The manuscript gives a fascinating insight into how the monks and scribes of the fifteenth century moulded the Irish classical tradition in the form of historical, legendary, genealogical,

legal and metrical subjects. It also includes much of value concerning the maintenance of the Brehon laws, the Dinnseanachas (Place-name) tradition and the intricacies of the Ogham system of writing.

Amongst the scribes who worked on the book through many years were Maghnus Ó Duibhgennan, Tomás O Duirnighin, Donall MacEgan, Robert MacSheehy and Sólamh (Solomon) O Droma, an early antecedent of UL's Dr. Máirtín Ó'Droma.

Dónall MacEgan, who directed the work on the manuscript sold the first draft of it to chieftains named McDonogh who were based in Ballymote in Sligo.

It remained in the possession of this family for over a century until their castles and lands were besieged by Hugh Óg (son of Hugh Roe O'Donnell) in the early 1500s.

Interestingly despite the fact that the O'Donnells who were book-collectors forcibly took possession of the McDonogh lands they still felt obligated to pay for this valuable manuscript which the McDonoghs sold to them for the then huge sum of 140 milch cows. Thus, in 1522 the

manuscript passed into the possession of Hugh Óg O'Donnell, who was known then by the title Prince of Tir Conaill. The manuscript disappeared from view then for over a century although a casual note by the famous scribe D. MacFirbis mentions its presence in Dublin.

In 1720 the manuscript resurfaced in the library of Trinity College Dublin, but it disappeared again after being given out on loan. In 1769 it turned up in Drogheda in the possession of a scribe and collector named Tomás Ó Duirnin. He passed it to an Anglo-Irish book collector named the Chevalier O'Gorman who presented it to the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, in 1785.

The acquisition of this manuscript and the contents of this valuable collection can only serve to enhance the University of Limerick's growing status as a repository for Irish culture in the mid-west.

Courtesy of Moira O'Gorman Flanagan, University of Limerick Library.

Supplied by David Casey.



At a dance in the Loftus Hall, 1950s. Picture courtesy Esther Cassidy

Nursing Home Story

Des Gilhawley

Pauline lived alone for most of her life in a small cottage overlooking Ballisodare Bay. Late in life, when her capacity to look after herself diminished, she agreed to move into Nazareth House.

As she was a distant relative, my wife and I would include her in our Christmas time visit to the nursing home. She shared a small two bed room in the home, her bed being the one farthest away from the door into the room. Pauline spent most of her time in or on her bed looking out the window. She could see Benbulbin and Sligo Bay and she enjoyed looking at the scenic view.

When we visited her this particular day I entered the room first and was motioned to the chair beside the window. My wife followed behind and sat on the chair at the end of the bed.

After some time the old lady offered us a soft drink from her 7Up bottle. She took the only cup in sight from the top of a small chest of drawers beside the bed, filled it and handed it to me. I passed the cup on to my wife. I would later argue, with little conviction and a complete lack of success, that I was just being the gentleman by offering the first drink to the lady in the room. I sat back into my chair feeling somewhat relieved that I had dodged the bullet. I looked over at my wife and the frozen look I got back told me clearly that there was no need to go find some ice to chill the drink.

Pauline then offered me a drink and I declined graciously, but she insisted. I said she had no cup and offered to out to the kitchen to get one. However, my wife was sitting at the end of the bed in the small room and there was no quick way for me to get past her. Not thinking too much about it, I said it was ok, and that I did not need a drink.

However, in what seemed like a

lightning move, Pauline opened a drawer and lifted out a small glass full of water and containing her false teeth. She then emptied the glass: the water and false teeth poured into the drawer on top of all the clothes.

It was like we had entered a parallel universe where things seemed to happen so quickly that I was unable to do anything to halt events, and yet at the same time in some sort of mesmerizing trance it all happened in ultra slow motion where everything was moving so slowly and deliberately to its inevitable outcome.

She filled the glass full of 7Up and handed it to me. I was completely transfixed with the speed with this had been done and with the situation I was now in.

Panic stricken, I looked over at my wife. With as sweet a smile as I had ever seen, she lifted her glass to me and said "cheers". It was too late to make a break for the corridor to find the local kitchen and a clean cup, and neither could I make any sort of diplomatic exit to empty the cup as my escape route was cut off.

The conversation drifted on. I just sat there and pretended I was interested while all the time hoping that someone would enter the room. Perhaps the other resident in the room would return or some staff would come in and cause enough of a distraction so that I could do something. Every so often Pauline would stop talking and ask me was I not going to drink the 7Up and I would mumble something and hope she would forget about it. Every so often I looked over at my wife. With an angelic smile, she would lift her glass to me and say "cheers". I would then look into my glass and see the set of false teeth. I kept thinking at least she could say "sláinte"; that would be much more relevant to my predicament.

The conversation drifted on and on.

There was talk of the price of sheep, how the neighbours were doing, how the country was doing. I could see no escape. I looked at the window but it was locked shut. I thought about letting the glass slip out of my hand by accident, but that would probably only lead to refill, so no way out there. I thought about feigning being sick, but on reflecting on the knot in my stomach, I concluded that there was no need to feign feeling queasy.

Suddenly Pauline stopped talking. She looked me straight in the eye and said "are you not going to take the 7Up?" There was a deadly silence. I was frozen in mind and body. I looked over to my wife for some hope of evasion, and she gave me another angelic smile, lifted her cup and said "cheers" once more.

After we said our good byes to Pauline and we walked down the stairs to the exit, my wife and I had an highly animated conversation about future teamwork in a situation such as that; about how she should cause a distraction to get me off the hook; about how we should check for cups when we enter a nursing home bedroom; maybe we should bring our own cups, maybe we should bring a bottle of mouth wash so that there will be something to drink after being trapped into drinking from a glass that had just held a set of false teeth; perhaps she should bring a large water proof handbag that could act as temporary sink; perhaps we should arrange our seating so as to make sure that there is an escape route; perhaps we should not visit any more ... perhaps we should just not talk about it any more.

Hidden Jewel

Mary Kelly-White

I was on my holidays in Glenkillamey, Arigna, when I discovered a little stack of books in a press in an old thatched cottage. The cottage and the farm belonged to my uncle Mick Dolan, my mother's bachelor brother, and it belonged to us after his death in 1950.

One wet foggy day we set about searching the presses and boxes. I took over an old press. Because my uncle was not married and had lived alone all his life he had little or no interest in the presses. They were full of antiques which we regarded as junk at the time: an old gramophone, *His Master's Voice*, vinyl records and books, but the records and the books were destroyed with dampness. The English hardbacks were soft and thick, with the covers faded. There was just one book written in Irish, but the cover and a few pages front and back were melted away altogether with dampness, so it was lucky that the title of the book *Thiar i nGleann Ceo*, was printed on the top of every page.

We were living and attending school in Sligo. It was Leaving Cert year for me and although we were not native Irish speakers we were pretty good at Irish, oral as well as written. We took it in our stride. Even though much of the book was missing I read the chapters that remained, each chapter a good story in itself.

"I noticed you reading that old Irish book", my father said when I had finished, "what was it about?" I gave him a general synopsis as best I could and he said "Isn't education a great thing? That book is there for the past forty years and no one ever knew what was in it."

My father remained on the farm in Glenkillamey while my mother and we seven siblings returned to Sligo and to school. We always spent the holidays with my father and he visited us in Sligo as often as he could. Of course the years passed and we got

jobs and got married and Dad was often alone on the farm for long periods. We all visited him regularly and often when my children were young the fog on the mountain was so dense that I couldn't see them in front of me in the fields around the house. The narrow one-lane road was even worse; I had to switch the car lights on and off again and again in order to stay between the ditches. The children were terrified. They crouched behind the front seats and we prayed "Please God get us out of this awful place, please"

Twenty years had passed from the time I read the old book, *Thiar i nGleann Ceo*, before I connected the title "West in the Foggy Valley" with Glenkillamey which is in fact the foggy valley. I was angry with myself for not realizing it sooner and I promised myself that I would get the book and read it again but where was it now? The house was gone as well as the books.

A further twenty years went by. It was 1995, and I was still on the lookout for the book. Tadhg O Rabhartaigh from Tir Connell was the author. He was a teacher in Breffni Ui Ruairc at the time (1926/30). He married Ellen Thady Gaffney from Glenkillamey. I knew her family. I got the opportunity in 1995 to spend Seachtain na Gaeilge at the Irish language School in the Downings, Donegal, and I grasped it with both hands. I was still fairly fluent with Irish even though I hadn't been using it for many years. During the course we visited The Crannach, a library, in Bunbeg. Imagine my delight when on a wall behind a glass panel the covers and front pages of books written by Donegal writers were displayed, and among them *Thiar i nGleann Ceo* by Tadhg O Rabhartaigh. There were only three copies at Siopa Thomas, the

book shop down the road. They were priced at 3s 6d. The translation of the cover notes is as follows: *The great Arigna Mining Area where the three Counties meet, Sligo, Leitrim and Roscommon, is where the author Tadhg O Rabhartaigh had in mind when he wrote Thiar i nGleann Ceo. As well as giving a graphic insight into the mining of coal in Ireland, and the dangers associated with it, it gives a social history of the people from the time of the Landlords to the foundation of co-operatives. Tadhg O Rabhartaigh was born in The Rossa, Tir Connell in 1909. He began his teacher training when he was sixteen years old. He spent short spells slaving in Scotland; one such spell was spent on the farm where his father had died. Most of his education was done from books, but it was from a series of lectures on Gaelic Literature by the renowned author Seosamh Mac Grianna that his interest in writing was awakened. He spent thirty years teaching in a Vocational School in Breffni Ui Ruairc on the Leitrim /Cavan border. He returned to his native parish in 1953 when he wrote Thiar i nGleann Ceo. Also woven into the story is the Fight for Freedom and a harrowing love story* [Tadhg died on July 6th 1982. He was predeceased by his wife in 1976. They had seven sons and one daughter.]

Well, I took the book home and I read it, but I could not take it in, so I decided to translate it into English, and have it published in its own right which is what I have just done with the publication of "West in the Foggy Valley", available on line at www.originalwriting.ie It is a great read and in my opinion has the potential to follow Peig Sayers through the Educational System.

Visit by Major General Vincent E Boles to Ballymote

John Perry TD

On Friday 24th April a colourful ceremony took place at the Monument to the Fighting 69th Regiment and Brigadier General Michael Corcoran in Ballymote, Co Sligo. The ceremony was held to mark the visit of Major General Vincent E Boles, and his mother Rita to Sligo.

The ceremony opened with the singing of the US and Irish National Anthems by Michael Lang. Those in attendance included Lt-Col Shawn C Purvis, US Airforce and Defence Attaché US Embassy in Dublin; Master Sergeant Jimmy McDowell of the US Army; Brigadier General Gerry Hegarty, GOC 4 Western Brigade, representing the Chief of Staff of the Irish Army; Lt-Col Mick Rock, OC Reserve Defence Force; local officers of the RDF; Superintendent Kevin Ginty representing the Garda Síochána; Fire Officers Paul Coyle and John Martin representing the Sligo Fire Service; Deputy Eamon Scanlon and local political representatives; Fr Gregory Hannan and Fr James McDonagh of Ballymote Parish; members of the Boles and Taaffe families.

Deputy John Perry welcomed all these and all US citizens living in or visiting the area and everybody present. He went on to say

“As many of you already know, Brigadier General Michael Corcoran was born in 1827 a few miles outside Ballymote. He emigrated to the US in 1849 and became a leading Irish American General in the US Army during the Civil War period.

“Today we welcome back another son of Sligo who has achieved eminence in the military service of his country. Major General Boles’ father and mother emigrated from Sligo to New York in the early 1950s.

His father James K Boles came from Geevagh and his mother Rita Taaffe came from Ballintogher. They raised four boys in New York. The eldest son Vincent, or Vinny as he is known to his friends, is our guest of honour today.

“At this point in our ceremony I would also like to again extend a special welcome to the family relations of the Major General. We have in our audience Mrs Rita Boles, mother of the Major General, accompanied by members of the Boles family from New York, the UK and Geevagh, and the Taaffe family from Ballintogher.

“Major General Boles was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the US Army Ordnance in 1976. Thereafter he rose rapidly through the officer ranks, becoming Brigadier General in 2000 and Major General in 2004.

Major General Boles has also received many decorations for his distinguished military service to his country.

“On behalf of the people of Sligo I would now like to make a presentation to Major General Boles. For our presentation piece we have selected a copy of a picture hanging in the official reception room of Leinster House.

It shows President John Fitzgerald Kennedy making a presentation of a flag of the 69th Regiment, Irish Brigade, to the people of Ireland in 1963. The flag hangs today, in a place of national honour in Leinster House.

“In a memorable speech to what he described as ‘the free parliament of a free Ireland’, President Kennedy reminded his audience that ‘our two nations divided by distance have been united by history’. ‘No country’ he said ‘contributed more

to the building of my own than your sons and daughters who left behind hearts, fields, and a national yearning to be free...’ ”

Deputy Perry then presented the picture to Major General Boles. He then continued:-

“On behalf of the people of Sligo I would also like to make a presentation to Rita Boles. For our presentation piece we have selected a piece of bog oak inscribed in the Ogham script with the Boles and Taaffe names.

“Bog oak dates back 5000-7000 years. The bogwood used in the making of this piece is sourced in the Sligo and Leitrim region of Ireland. It is carefully dried, and beautifully handcrafted, then inscribed with the Boles and Taaffe surnames in the ancient Irish Ogham language. Ogham writing is the earliest known form of written Irish. The alphabet predates the 5th century. It consists of twenty letters used for stone and wood inscriptions in Celtic Ireland. Ogham was carved and read from bottom to top.”

Deputy Perry then presented the bog oak piece to Rita Boles.

Major General Boles laid a wreath in memory of deceased Irish members of the 69th Regiment.

.....

Major General Boles’ awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Meritorious Service Medal with Four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Parachutist Badge and the Army Staff Badge.

The Mask

Bernie Gilbride

On a writing weekend we were given a choice of masks as part of the course, to stimulate our imagination, I imagine. I chose a white one and having sat staring at it, evidently with a blank mind, the tutor, from the kindness of her heart, suggested that I try putting it on before a mirror.

As I approached the mirror, I saw in my mind's eye the beautiful masks in the shops in Venice, every colour under the sun: gold embellished with tiny multicoloured stones, blue, green, yellow, red. I thought of the Carnival Nights, the glitter, the glamour, the complimentary costumes, the balls, the ladies 'incognito', the romance, the excitement.

Hearing my name called out rather impatiently, I came back to reality with a bang, to the plain white mask in my hand. With an apologetic sheepish smile, I proceeded towards the mirror at the back of the lecture room, glad to be out of sight of my so busy writing companions.

As I look in the mirror wearing my mask, I see an unearthly creature staring back. In a deep sepulchral voice, it assures me it comes from outer space. "I am a Martian, part of the community on the planet Mars", it said.

"Why are you so pallid looking?" I ask.

"We must live underground", it said, "that's why we are white and ghostly. We in our Community wish association with you Earthlings, as you are the Interplanetary beings most like ourselves".

"We are?" I am speechless

with wonder, never having met a Martian before. Its voice enthralls me and its command of English. "Where did you learn English?", I ask.

"We speak all languages, they are simple to us"

"They are" I say. "Do you know you are in Ireland", I ask, "and can you speak Irish?"

"Of course. Didn't I tell you I speak all your languages?" By now I began to feel rather foolish, so I changed course.

"Why do you wish association with us, rather than other beings on other planets, if there are other beings on other planets?"

"There are many interplanetary beings, but you earthlings we prefer. We love the freedom you enjoy to range the Earth at will, especially now that you have learned to fly, though that took you lot long enough. We would like to sample your foods, games, pastimes, feel your fresh air on our bodies, and smell the scent of your oceans, the trees, the crops, as you do. We know most things about you.

"It was our ancestors built your Pyramids, intending to live in them and enjoy the earth as their new Kingdom. Unfortunately a Universal Implosion made that impossible and centuries later they were usurped by the Egyptian Pharaohs as burial chambers. When first built, the top layers of them were covered in gold and we could see them clearly from Mars, our spacecraft travelled regularly to earth at that time but alas can no longer do so.

"As mathematicians, we are light years ahead of you, but our atmosphere condemns us to live underground. When we solve that problem we will be lords of the outer spaces and control the whole Universe.

"We visit you now and then to see how you have advanced, with the hope of meeting you properly when your civilisation has advanced to meet ours, and we have solved the problem of having to live underground or else perish.

"Our cities are magnificent, our culture first class. We have conquered war and have no need of arms. Our greatest secrets are our survival. Perhaps in the future we may help save you. Now you are in the process of destroying your environment and if you are not careful you may soon become like us a subterranean race. The poisons you have helped create may make earthly global living as you experience today, impossible."

With that grim warning it vanished and I am back, holding a white mask before my face in front of the mirror, wondering, what in the name of heaven I will write for the tutor.

A Policeman's Lot RIC Code of Regulations

Supplied by Eileen Tighe

The R.I.C. code of regulations, which remained in force up to the disbandment of the force on 31 August 1922, was stringent. In fact, the policeman who was forced to comply fully with the code had less freedom than a ticket-of-leave suspect. Fortunately most officers and officials had sufficient common sense to turn a blind eye on the more degrading sections of the regulations, and, without impairing the efficiency of the force, made it possible for a policeman to live as an ordinary, self-respecting citizen.

The code was most comprehensive. A policeman's every move, whether on or off duty, had to be recorded in the barracks-diary. When walking for

recreation his walk was restricted to a radius of two miles from the barracks. When cycling for recreation his absence could not exceed three hours and the time of departure and return to barracks had to be recorded in the diary. After ten o'clock at night he could not leave the barracks without special leave, which was given only on rare occasions. If he wished to attend a dance or other function after midnight a full day's leave would have to be taken for 'private purposes'. (And by GAA rules, not RIC rules, he was forbidden to play Gaelic games).

When taking up duty as barracks-orderly at 8 a.m. he had to be properly dressed and inspected by the senior officer in charge. Each time that

he left on or returned off duty he was inspected by the senior officer, unless the senior officer happened to be absent, in which case the next in seniority would do the inspection, and each inspection was entered by the barracks orderly in the diary. An active policeman who took walks and cycle-spins and did his two patrols each day would be inspected up to a dozen times a day, whereas a ticket-of-leave suspect generally had to report only once a week to the police.

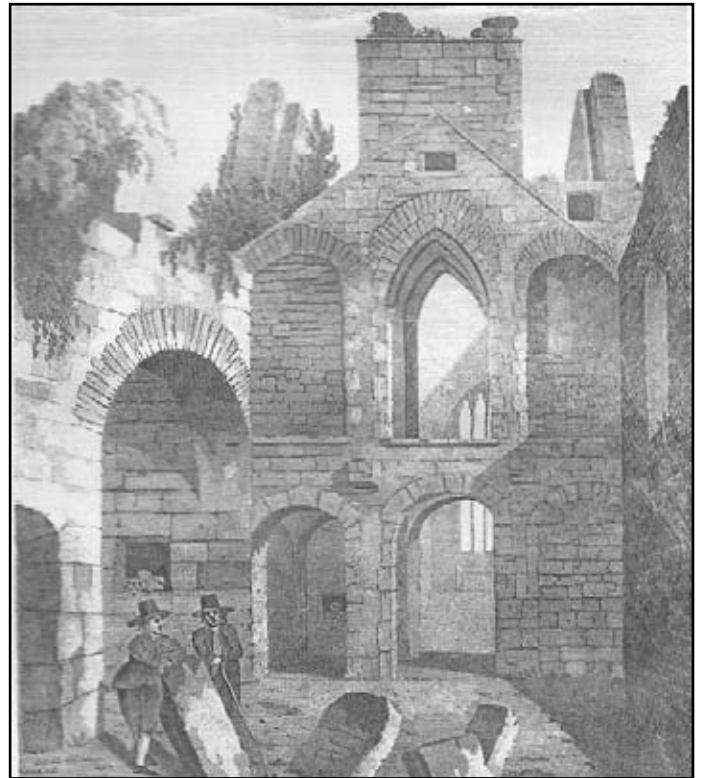
Source: J Anthony Gaughan, *Memoirs of Constable Jeremiah Mee*, Anvil Books Ltd., 1975

Emptiness

Bernie Gilbride

An empty beach mile on mile,
No one has walked here for quite a while
No footprint to be seen anywhere
Sea-weed, rock pools, stones just here.

The tide far out, a murmuring sound,
Has cleaned the beach as it turned around
Obliterating signs of man,
Leaving the beach as time began.



Ballindoon Abbey Interior. Original Print 1791.
Aidan Mannion Collection

Death and Funeral of Mr Michael Cryan, Ballymote (October 18 1902 Obituary)

Supplied by Eileen Tighe.

It is with regret that we record the rather sudden death of Mr Michael Cryan which took place at his residence, Ballymote, on the 3rd inst. The deceased was in failing health for some months past, but it was only on Thursday night, 2nd inst., he showed any signs of collapse, and he quietly passed away on Friday morning at 2 o'clock, during which period he received all the consolations of the Holy Catholic Church, of which he was a devout member, as well as the kind attentions of a loving wife and affectionate children.

Deceased was one of the best known and most highly respected

gentlemen in the neighbourhood and his sad end occasioned the keenest regret amongst all his acquaintances. He had reached the age of 54 years and leaves a wife and family of ten to mourn his loss, and, though their sorrow must be bitter, still it makes it somewhat easier borne to know that they have the cordial sympathy of every person who in life had the pleasure and privilege of the acquaintance of the deceased.

On Saturday the remains were interred in the family burial ground in the old Abbey, Ballymote, and the cortege that followed the bier was, without exception, the largest and

most respectable ever witnessed in the locality.

The chief mourners were – Mrs M Cryan (wife), P, J, MJ, Bt and J Cryan (sons), M, ME and AE Cryan (daughters), Mr P Cryan, Newtownforbes, and Mr B Cryan, Ballinamore, (brothers), Mr P Kerins, Ballymote (uncle), Mr J Dennedy (nephew), M Dennedy, Dublin (niece), J Herins, J Davey, A Flynn, J Benson, J Flanagan, P Davey, A Walsh, P Cosgrove, B Flynn (cousins).

Rev Canon Loftus officiated at the grave. – RIP.



Pam Benson, Ballymote Heritage Group joint treasurer, is a carer to Dr Stephen Hawking, Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University, England. The picture shows Pam and Dr Hawking with His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI in Rome on the occasion of a plenary meeting of the Vatican Academy of Sciences on October 31st, 2008.

Photo courtesy Pam Benson



Coláiste Muire gan Smál, Ballymote, First Holy Communion Class 2009.

Back Row of Children (L-R): Roisín Dury, Saoirse Cunningham, Mikey McMorro, Terri Kelly, Laura Kerins, Dylan Martin, Ciara Perry, Edel Rafferty, Jonathan Murtagh, Bryan Willing.

Second Row from Back (L-R): Jake Flannery, Lauren Kilcoyne, Mark Mulligan, Roan Mooney, Ada McDonagh, Joseph Donohoe, Eimer Conlon, Adam Murtagh, Mark Devlin.

Second Row from Front (L-R): Cian Quinn, Aaron Scanlon, Kathlyn Kyle, James Gardiner-Egan, Brendan Whitehead, Niamh Currid, Dylan McLoughlin, Jack McGrath.

Front Row (seated): Max Kolak, Chloe Egan, Marc Willing, Katie Anderson, Patrick Murtagh.

Also included are (at back at left) Fr James McDonagh, CC Ballymote, and Ms Aoife McWeeney, teacher, and (at back at right) Ms Dolores Taheny, Principal teacher, and Fr Gregory Hannan, PP Ballymote.



Knockminna NS First Holy Communion Class 2009

Back Row (L-R): Shane Langton, Alec Richardson

Middle Row (L-R): Sarah Curran, Nicole Scanlon

Front Row (L-R): Senan McNulty, Adam King

Also included are Fr James McDonagh, CC Ballymote, Mrs Louise King, Principal teacher, Mr Brian Henry, teacher, and Karen Tansey, Mass-server.



An entertainment troupe passes in front of the old cinema (also the Hibernian Hall) in Ballymote (on right). The film being shown was the 1938 musical comedy “That Certain Age”, starring Deanna Durbin, Jackie Cooper and Melvyn Douglas. The protruding section of the building above the door was the projection room (now gone). The rest of the building, with the cinema balcony still surviving, is now occupied by Lee Mundy. Most of the building to the left has been demolished. *Picture courtesy Cathleen Cryan.*



Michael Cawley, from Greyfort, Ballymote, at 6ft 5ins in height allegedly the tallest Garda in Ireland at the time of his passing-out ceremony in Templemore. He is seen here with the then minister for Justice, Mr Collins.

TEELING STREET.
Ballymole, Oct 21st 1918
CO. DUBLIN

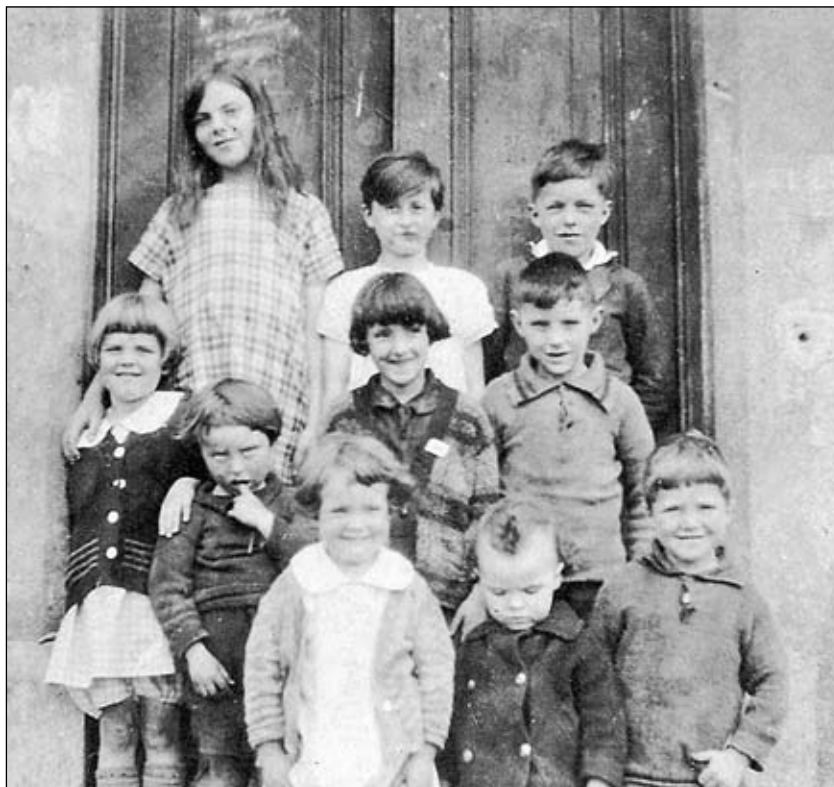
Mrs Alesie Gilman & Co.
Ballinascarrow

To BARTHOLOMEW CRYAN, Dr.
LEATHER MERCHANT, SADDLER, HARNESS AND CUSHION MAKER.

1918			
Feb 30	repairs to saddle	9.	6
May 31	repairs to traces	2.	6
June 1 st	straddle	1	15-0
July 6	repairs to Breeching	3	6
..	lining & repairing straddle	6	6
Sept 27	straps to collar	1	6
Oct 8	repairs to harness	6	6
		<u>£ 3</u>	<u>5 0</u>
Nov 10	" collar	6	6
			<u>3 11 6</u>
	By Invoice		9 6
	Balance		<u>3 2 0</u>

By Invoice
Balance

How times have changed, both in work and in cost, since 1918!
Supplied by Cathleen Cryan.



Back Row L/R: Mydre Clynes, Mary Donoghue, Jackie Clynes
Middle Row: Mrs Gilmartin's grand-niece, Mona Cryan, Mickey Cryan
Front Row: Jackie Mullen, another grand-niece of Mrs Gilmartin, Bartley Cryan, unknown.
Picture courtesy Mona Cryan.



At a Ballymote/Ballinamore tennis encounter, 1959.

Front Row, from left: First three were Ballinamore; then Peggy Dockry, Rosie Cassidy, Paddy Mullen, Carmel Mullen, Berchmans Scully, Ballinamore player, Rainy Cassidy

Back, from left: First five were Ballinamore; then Paddy McEvoy, Mary Dockry,, Ballinamore player.

Picture courtesy Carmel Mullen.



At the retirement function for Tom McGettrick NT. Mid 1980s.

Front Row L/R: Joe O'Hara, John Kivlehan, Tom McGettrick, Paddy Mullen, Dick Molloy

Back Row L/R: Pat Tansey, Fred Simson, Bill McGovern, Paddy Healy, John Cunningham, Tommy Lavin, Francie McDonagh

Picture courtesy Carmel Mullen

Heritage Group 24th AGM

An encouraging and successful year was reported at the 24th Annual General Meeting of Ballymote Heritage Group which was held in Fawlty Towers, Ballymote, on Wednesday September 24th, 2008. The Heritage Weekend, held for the first time in the Coach House Hotel, Ballymote, had lived up to all expectations and its lectures and outings were much appreciated by the large audiences. The Corran Herald, with its usual broad range of topics, had sold very well.

After the meeting and its elections, the Officers and membership of the Group are as follows:

President: Eileen Tighe

Chairperson: Des Black

Vice-Chairperson: Carmel Rogers

Secretary: Betty Conlon

Treasurers: Pam Benson and Mary Martin

PRO and Editor of The Corran Herald: James Flanagan

Olive Beirne, Mary Black, David Casey, Matilda Casey, Gerry Cassidy, John Coleman, John Conlon, Anne Flanagan, Brenda Friel, Noreen Friel, Paddy Horan, Molly Howard, Gerry Keaney, Jack Martin, John Perry TD, Marie Perry, Nuala Rogers, Carmel Rogers, Michael Rogers.

Sponsors

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