The Corran Herald

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The Corran Herald

Annual Publication of Ballymote Heritage Group

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Issue No 55 2022/2023

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

31st Annual
Ballymote Heritage Weekend

Friday 29th July - Monday 1st August 2022

Lectures at The Loftus Hall, Ballymote, Co Sligo. Admission fee €10

Organised by Ballymote Heritage Group Ballymote, County Sligo
www.ballymoteheritage.com. Further Information 086 3542905

Friday 29th July

8.30 p.m. ***Official Opening and Lecture: 'Development of Irish Drama in the late 19th / 20th century' -Irish Drama, The Hidden History'.***

Speaker: Professor Emeritus Hubert McDermott, D. Phil., D. Litt (h.c.).

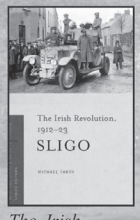
Professor McDermott, a native of Ballymote, spent a lifetime as lecturer in English at NUI Galway. In 1992 he edited and published, with an introduction, what is now regarded as the first Irish novel "Vertue Rewarded or The Irish Princess", which first appeared in 1693 and then " disappeared" for almost 300 years.

Saturday 30th July

8.30 p.m. ***Lecture:'The Pity of War - History and Poetry Sligo 1912 – 1923'.***

Speaker: Dr. Michael Farry

Dr Farry of Trim, Co. Meath and a native of Coolaney is the celebrated author of a number of Co. Sligo histories- "Killoran and Coolaney, a Local History", "A Chronicle of Conflict, Sligo 1914-1921" and "The Irish Revolution" - Sligo 1912 - 1923". As a poet Michael has also published a number of poetry collections e.g., "Asking for Directions" in 2012 and "Troubles" in 2021.



The Irish Revolution 1912-23 Sligo

Sunday 31st July

8.30 p.m. ***Lecture:'Co. Sligo's Potential World Heritage Site, its Passage Tomb Landscape'.***

Speaker: Dr. Robert Hensey, University of Galway.

Dr. Hensey is an archaeologist and author who specialises in the investigation of the Neolithic period with particular interest in Irish passage tombs. He published "First Light - The Origins of Newgrange" in 2015.

Monday 1st August

2.00 p.m. ***Lecture and Tour: 'Ballymote Castle and Ballymote Franciscan Friary***

Speaker: Dr. Yvonne McDermott, Atlantic Technological University

Dr. McDermott lectures on the History & Geography programme at the Mayo campus. Her PhD research investigated the Franciscan and Dominican friaries in the west of Ireland during the late medieval period (1350 - 1550). This tour will commence at 2.00 pm at the Castle.

No admission fee for this guided tour for members of the public.

Loftus Hall

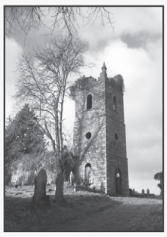
Sunday 14th August

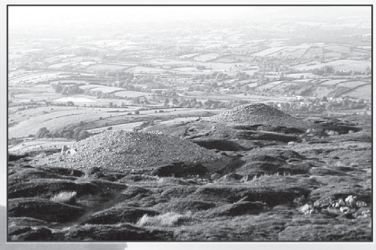
National Heritage Week Event

2.00 p.m. ***A visit to Emlaghfad Church and Graveyard.***

Speakers: Keash archaeologists, Martin and Mary Timoney. The Timoneys will discuss the importance of the Emlaghfad Ecclesiastical Complex. The box tombs, the medieval history and the star fort will be examined.

No admission fee for this event for members of the public.

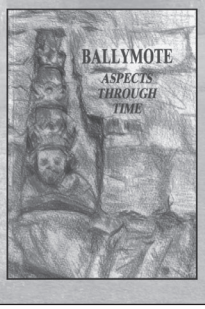




Carrowkeel, Co Sligo

The Ruined Franciscan Friary, Ballymote

Carrowmore, Co Sligo



Ballymote Aspects Through Time by Nuala Rogers

Car parking spaces available in the vicinity of the Loftus Hall, in the town and in carparks on both sides of the Tubbercurry road.

Ballymote Castle

Orbicon Print 071 9133409

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IN MEMORY OF NUALA ROGERS (RIP)

by Pat Tighe

Nuala Rogers RIP

The second daughter of Pat James (PJ) and Elizabeth Rogers, Nuala was born into a political and farming family at Carrigeenmore, Ballymote in 1933. Nuala had a happy and fulfilling childhood growing up on the family farm with her parents, sisters Eileen and Noreen and her beloved uncle George Rogers. She often reminisced about her incredibly happy childhood helping on the farm, walking through the fields and in later years welcoming the many visitors to the family kitchen table….the unofficial Fine Gael constituency office.

She attended school at the Convent of Mercy in Ballymote before moving to Dublin, at 18 years of age, to train as a general nurse at Baggot Street Hospital. Nuala had wonderful memories of her time in Dublin, where she made lifelong friends and quickly settled into city life, enjoying shopping, style and arranging her many trips. Her fondest memories of those early years were of her regular visits to Dáil Éireann to meet her father, PJ, who at that time was serving as a Fine Gael TD. Together they enjoyed many meals in Leinster House.

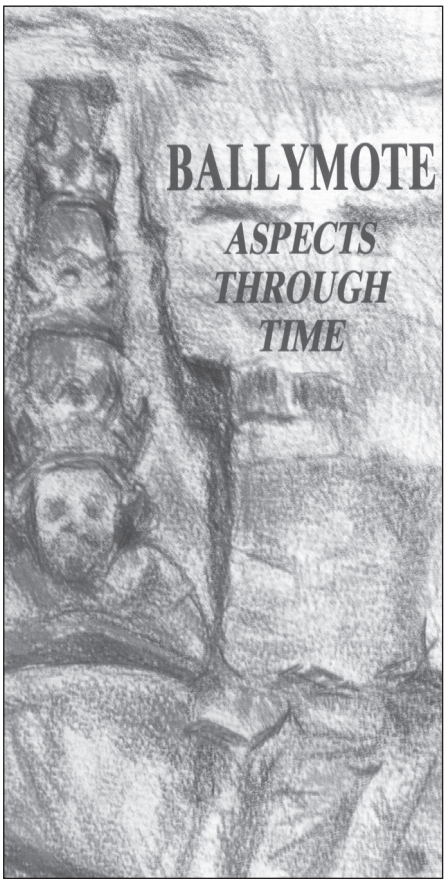
Nuala's nursing career spanned over three decades and whilst most of her career was spent in Sligo General Hospital (now Sligo University Hospital) she also held nursing positions in Belfast and Summerhill College, Sligo. Her competence and caring nature were attributes which were acknowledged by both patients and colleagues alike throughout her career.

Nuala had a keen interest in history and archaeology and was a member of Sligo Field Club and Ballymote Heritage Group where she particularly enjoyed lectures and field trips. Her early retirement allowed her to pursue this interest further and one of her proudest moments was the publication of her book "Ballymote, Aspects Through Time" in 1993. As an avid reader, she spent many enjoyable hours not only researching local history but also discussing her findings with family and friends. She also had a keen interest in golf and was an active member of Ballymote Golf Club for many years.

Nuala took great pride in her family. Although she had no children of her own, as each generation arrived, she played an integral role in the daily lives of her nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews. She displayed endless patience, kindness and interest and this will never be forgotten.

She was an independent lady who always spoke her mind, loved life, good food and the company of good friends. Her faith was incredibly important and this guided her on her journey through life.

After a life well lived, my Aunt Nuala passed away on 22nd May 2022 in her home in Corhober in the company of her family. Her memory will live on in all who knew her.



Ballymote Aspects Through Time
by Nuala Rogers

ORIGINS OF GAELIC WORDS

by Garreth Byrne

Table 1: Here is a sample list of Irish words and their Latin origins.

IRISH	LATIN
Scríobh (write)	scribo (I write) script scripture
Léighim (I write)	lego (cf. English **legible**)
Peann (a pen)	penna
Litir (a letter)	littera
Leabhar (a book)	liber (cf. **library**)
Sagart (a priest)	sacerdos
Eaglais (church)	ecclesia (cf. **ecclesiastical**)
Mainistir (monastery)	monasterium
Aifreann (Mass)	offerendum (cf. **offering**)
Peaca (sin)	peccatum
Clog (bell)	clocca
Asal (donkey)	asinus (cf. **ass**)

Great work has been done during the past two centuries by scholars interested in the Irish language. Scholars have studied ancient manuscripts in libraries around continental Europe and in the UK and Ireland. They have determined that Irish Gaelic is one of 439 languages belonging to the Indo-European family and that Gaelic is a member of a distinctive family of languages that include Cornish, Breton and Welsh among others.

From the late 18th century linguists and philologists from England, France, Germany and Switzerland took a special interest in the study of ancient Sanskrit, Latin and Greek and their vocabulary and grammatical influences on modern European languages. Their researches led to the theory that possibly more than six thousand years ago there was a notional Proto-Indo-European language with its roots in the Indian language called Sanskrit.

The migration of ethnic groups over many centuries from the north of modern India and Pakistan into south-eastern Europe and Asia Minor and the subsequent migrations of Greeks and Romans into northern Europe, is believed to have transmitted Proto-Indo-European vocabulary, via ancient Greek and Latin, into the languages spoken in most parts of Europe today.

An example of Sanskrit vocabulary influence on English and Irish is the verb 'to carry':
Sanskrit: bharami, Old Irish: berim, Gaelic: beir, and English: bear (i.e. to bear arms).
In Sanskrit, arya means 'freeman' and in Irish aire means 'nobleman'.
Spoken Irish language as such may have begun and developed during megalithic times, more than five thousand years ago. Its written form was preceded by Ogham script, inscribed on about 400 ogham stones found around Ireland and western Britain. These date from the fourth century to the sixth century AD. Ogham stones seem to be based largely on Latin alphabet, but old Runic script from Germanic languages including Old English (Anglo-Saxon), has also been deciphered.

The evangelisation of Ireland was undertaken from about 420 AD by Declan in the South-East and then by Patrick and his followers more widely around the island. Latin script was promoted by monks and cursory Irish writing, sometimes on the margins of manuscripts or as Addendums, made its first appearance.

It can be seen from Table 1 that the Latin 'ecclesia' itself comes from the ancient Greek word 'ekklesia', so Greek itself has contributed to Irish vocabulary. The Gaelic word for a small prayer building known as chapel is séipéal, coming from the Latin 'capella', a word used in modern Italian.

As time went on other influences left their mark on Irish. The Vikings raided several places. They founded a port town called Dubh Linn, meaning a black pool. (Even then the Liffey was polluted!) Other Norse influences on Irish include:

Some Irish words of Old Norse Origin (after Prof. David Greene, 1973) in Table 2 (below).

Irish	**English**	**Old Norse**
ancaire	anchor	*akkeri*
bád	boat	bátr
trosc	cod (fish)	*porskr*
margadh	market	*markadhr*
cnaipe	button	*knappr*
bróg	shoe	*brók*

Table 2

The Hiberno-English word 'brogue' usually refers to home-made shoes, sometimes made from wood. Does it mean that a 'brogue accent' (country accent) has its origins in Scandinavia? Probably not. Accents are social constructs.

After the Normans invaded Ireland in 1169 AD they introduced, along with French monastic orders, new forms of architecture, agriculture, cooking, diet and clothing. The Gaelic word 'seomra' meaning a room, comes from Old Norman 'chaumbre' which in modern French is spelled 'chambre'. Norman vocabulary that entered Gaelic includes words like bagún (bacon), páipéar (paper) and sicín (chicken).

ENGLISH	LATIN	CELTIC	SANSKRIT
Mother	mater	mathir	matar
Father	pater	athir	pitar
Brother	frater	brathir	bratar
Sister	soror	siur	svasar
Nephew	nepos	nei	napat

Table 3

Hundreds of English words helped to enlarge Irish vocabulary, to such an extent that linguistic purists have waged war against a cardinal sin called Béarlachas (anglicisation). An example of modern Béarlachas is: Tá an rothar pumpaithe suas agam. (I have pumped up the bicycle.) Note that the Gaelic word 'rothar' probably comes from the Latin word 'rotatio'. A bike's wheels rotate. Many new Gaelic words for medical, engineering and scientific terms tend to draw on Latin and Greek – a feature of vocabulary development in many languages around the world. It is a fascinating process in human development.

Finally, a list of some common family terms in English, Old Irish, Latin and Sanskrit, Table 3.

THE ROCKING CHAIR STAGE

by John McDonagh

When the bones in your neck are all creaking
And your head, it just won't turn around,
When you think" maybe something is leaking "
And your bum's getting nearer the ground.
When the knees and the joints are all stiffening
And the old carcass is showing its age,
You're complaining but nobody's listening
You're approaching the rocking chair stage.

When the vision is blurred and uncertain
And your legs feel they're weighing a tonne,
You're struggling to get the old shirt on
And you know that there's worse still to come.

It's a struggle to buckle your braces
And shirt buttons get you into a rage,
When the wife has to tie your shoe-laces
You're approaching the rocking chair stage.

With failing libido, you're way past your peak,
Spirit quite willing but the flesh is too weak,
Despite your best efforts you twaddle and twiddle,
You try to stand straight but you're bent in the middle.
Knuckles swollen and gnarled like knots on a rope ,
You're doing your best but not able to cope.
Your mind is still active but the limbs won't engage,
You're sadly approaching the rocking chair stage.

The skin's getting flaky and the eyes turning red,
The neck is too shaky to hold up the head,
Your attempts at a walk all end up in despair,
You gratefully stagger back home to the chair.
You wish you could put these conditions on hold,
There's nothing at all to recommend getting old,
When all you can see is the end of the page,
Just relax and enjoy, it's the rocking chair stage.

WHEN SLIGO STARVED IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by Padraig Deignan

'There is no misery which famine can induce that did not afflict our country …' [1]

The regular recurrence of famine catastrophes seems to have been at first to some extent diminished by the introduction of the potato, which occurred between 1586 and 1588. However, even before the beginning of the eighteenth century there had been blights and diseases affecting the potato tuber resulting in numerous subsistence crises or famines[2]. The first half of the eighteenth century was one of the worst famine prone five decades in Irish history[3].

Following the end of the 1689-91 War, Ireland experienced more than a quarter of a century of population growth. The number of people in the country increased from between 1.75 and 2.06 million in 1706 to between 2.18 and 2.56 million in 1726[4]. In Co. Sligo the population increased from between 38,160 and 47,382 in 1706 to between 47,382 and 55,692 in 1726. The strong population growth was not mirrored with a strong increase in economic output. The people were at the mercy of the weather.

Conditions were so dreadful that in 1720 famine reared its apocalyptic head[5]. Improved harvests from 1722 to 1724 took the pressure off the poor. However, the economy was underdeveloped and with widespread poverty, absenteeism, rising rents, the preference of pasture over tillage and British restrictions on external trading opportunities, the economy was likely to remain in this sorry state. There was also a legacy of financial debt from the 1710s and in 1725 it was reported that the country was in debt[6]. The people were always living on the edge

Women at grave

and tenants were hard pressed to pay off arrears from bad times. Landlords were under continuous financial pressure with reduced rents and lack of tenants and many of them had lost money in stock ventures. Landlords were also loath to eject tenants as in the early part of the century it proved difficult to replace them[7].

Sligo and Connacht were particularly hard hit. The year had begun with a depressed beef market and farmers were unable to sell their livestock. The torrential rain and accompanying floods destroyed corn and hay. The flax crop also failed due to the wet conditions and the turf could not be saved[8]. The rain continued throughout the autumn and the winter of 1725-6 was harsh. Any hopes for a rapid recovery were quashed due to tenants being unable to pay rent arrears and the outbreak of disease in Connacht which killed 'an abundance of cattle'. [9]

The year of 1726 experienced a large number of wet days and storms resulting in an inadequate harvest. The government did make an effort to avert a disaster and in the period from October 1726 to March 1727 they imported 17,508 quarters of wheat at a cost of £100,000. Although things improved, the damage had been done over the previous two years and the combined impact of successive poor harvests along with low imports reduced the supply of food while the prices for oatmeal and wheat soared. Grain retailed at 60-65d a peck, an increase of 140 percent on its 1726 level and the poor resorted to the theft and slaughter of bullocks and sheep to survive. [10]

While many hundreds were dying of hunger in the summer of 1726, bad harvests that year and in the two following years brought serious famine in 1728-9 to large parts of the country.[11] As Charles O'Conor, the great Irish writer, Gaelic historian and antiquarian, who was born in Kilmactranny, Co. Sligo and later settled a few miles south of the Sligo border at Belanagare in Co. Roscommon, noted in his pamphlet, The Protestant Interest of Ireland Considered, 'in the three successive years 1727, 28 and 29, we were visited by the severity of Famine'.[12] Vast numbers of people were unable to pay their rent.

The summer of 1727 was very wet leading to shortages and price increases with large parts of the Connaught reduced to famine. An outbreak of smallpox occurred in the autumn and with a reduced harvest, hardship was assured for 1728. The shortage of other foodstuffs forced the poor to dip into their 'winter subsistence' of potatoes in order to help them get through the winter of 1727-8. However, stocks were nearing exhaustion by February 1728 and with a wet spring, the price of foodstuffs had increased significantly. Thousands in the countryside left their homes to search for food.[13]

Year	Households	Households adjusted 14%	House-holds adjusted 34%	House-hold size	Population lower estimate	Population upper estimate
1700	560	638	750	6	3,816	4,500
1706	5,579	6,360	7,476	6	38,160	44,856
1712	6,837	7,794	9,162	6	46,764	54,972
1718	6,624	7,551	8,876	6	45,306	53,256
1725	6,893	7,858	9,237	6	47,148	55,422
1726	6,927	7,897	9,282	6	47,382	55,692
1732	6,233	7,106	8,352	6	42,636	50,112
1733	6,200	7,068	8,308	6	42,408	49,848
1744	6,382	7,276	8,552	6	43,656	51,312
1746	4,000	4,560	5,360	6	27,360	32,160
1749	4,624	5,271	6,196	6	31,626	37,176
1752	5,694	6,491	7,630	6	38,946	45,780

Population estimates, County Sligo, 1706-1752

By May the price of oatmeal in Connacht was too expensive for the majority of people to afford. Further poor weather in the summer of 1728 followed and while the weather in May was fairly good, the month of June was wet and cold. Astonishingly it was reported in Dublin that frosts actually caused the River Liffey to ice up.[14] The weather in July improved but deteriorated severely over the course of the rest of the year. This was a time when many of the Ulster Scots left for America. In the late 1720s they left the country in great numbers.[15]

In the year 1729, people saw a good harvest and the encouragement of the fishing industry by the Irish Parliament assisted in the alleviation of starvation.[16] There was a fine harvest in 1730 and following the good one in 1729 the people were able to get back on their feet to some extent. However, the country would take time to recover as the 1725 and 1726 subsistence crisis, along with full-blown famine conditions in 1727, 1728 and early 1729, not only halted the growth of population but also caused a decline. In the period from 1726 to 1732 that sequence of calamities resulted in a ten percent reduction in the population of Co. Sligo.

'The Great Frost Famine', Bliain an Áir (year of the slaughter)

The country did not get very long to recover and when a series of volcanic eruptions on the Kamchatka peninsula in eastern Russia, beginning in September 1737, affected weather patterns in northwest Europe, a much greater disaster awaited the country.[17] In 1739 a very wet summer was followed by a stormy autumn and a severe frost, known colloquially as the 'black frost', which lasted for seven weeks and set in on 26 December 'prompting Jonathan Swift to observe anxiously that 'our kingdom is turned to be a Moscovy, or worse'.[18] The rivers froze over so that the corn could not be ground and the price of fuel rose sharply. Cattle died of cold and lack of fodder and potatoes were destroyed. Many became unemployed in Sligo as a result of the severe weather. There was widespread distress and suffering along with high mortality. Most of the deaths occurred at the beginning of the harsh weather and were caused by hypothermia rather than hunger.

The cold weather continued for the year reducing the grain crop. The potato harvest was already depleted by lack of seed from the previous year. By the following spring of 1741 famine was rampant with 'Want and misery in every face; the rich unable, almost as they were willing, to relieve the poor; the roads spread with dead and dying bodies; mankind the colour of the docks and nettles which they fed on; two or three, sometimes more, in a car going to the grave for want of bearers to carry them, and many buried in the fields and ditches where they perished'.[19]

The 'Great Frost' of 1740 marked one of the coldest winters of the eighteenth century and impacted on many countries in Europe.[20] However, Ireland suffered more as a result of the prevailing social inequalities, religious discrimination and great poverty. At the time there was 'no kingdom [experiencing] greater inequality than Ireland: one class of great property who live excessively sumptuous: the second and more numerous class hurting their fortunes by imitation of the first – the third in extreme poverty'. [21]

Those in authority were not interested in the needs of the rural Catholic population and were more interested in making decisions based on exports, imports and price cutting strategies. Health care and relief were just beginning to be established. They were largely based on charitable private investments to treat the sick and poor and mainly located in Dublin. In some towns the private agents or institutions did try to introduce some measures of poor relief, but not before the famine. [22]

Abandoned Village

There was no manufacturing or other industry for people before the famine of the 1740s and most landowners were not proactive in fostering change and improvement or becoming involved in early forms of industrial production in textile and mining.[23]

Exports largely consisted of raw, unprocessed goods and before the 1740s there were only slow efforts to commercialise which increased vulnerability to famine. The development and improvement of the Irish transport infrastructure mostly took place after 1750. Overall trade between Britain and Ireland was conducted on an unfair basis. Free trade with other European countries was entirely prohibited and there were also trade embargoes by towns within Ireland which further harmed commerce.[24]

Appropriate storage of surplus corn in times of good harvest was also absent in Ireland.[25] Farmers did not use the tillage system efficiently enough and some contemporary observers noted that 'It is certain that the tillage of the kingdom does not bear a sufficient proportion to the wants of the inhabitants'.[26] The fishing industry experienced some environmental decline in the early 1700s. It was noted that 'the wasteful system of trailing nets …' causing destruction 'among the seaweed and the spawn is believed to have been the cause of the decline of the fisheries'.[27]

Charles O'Conor described the great famine of the eighteenth century stating that in '… the years 1740 and 1741, a universal one [famine] spread over the face of the Nation, and turned the Counties and Baronies of this Kingdom into Graves: A Dreadful Spectacle this! Wherein the Living, unfit for any other Labour were employed in burying the Dead.[28] Following a thaw in mid February 1740 there was no rain for more than two months followed by cold weather for the rest of the year.[29] The frost destroyed the potato crop, disrupted planting patterns and left large sections of the Irish population with a lack of food. The price of potatoes rose from 3s a barrel in 1738 to 18s a barrel in April 1741.[30] It also resulted in the high mortality of sheep in Sligo and in the period from early February to early April a total of forty thousand sheep died in the province of Connacht.[31]

In April 1740 Dublin Journal recorded that 'there is now a great scarcity of provision all over this kingdom, every kind of food being at vast prices'.[32] In September 1739 the price for one quarter of wheat had been £1 10s while at the height of the famine the price for one quarter of wheat had shot up to more than £3. In autumn 1740 John Rutty a physician and naturalist from Dublin noted in his weather diary that after the potatoes had failed, 'other provisions bore double or treble their usual price'.[33] At the time oats were selling for 14s for one barrel which was 6s on the usual average price of 8s. This only indicates the suffering endured by the sections of society participating in the food markets and does not tell the story of the significant number of people who were mere subsistence farmers.

As Ireland was a food export-orientated country the famine impacted significantly on this trade and exports of cattle and oatmeal were cut drastically. However, important nutritional foods like butter, beef, barley and malt were exported in large amounts.[34] In the period from 1740 to 1741 the export of large quantities of hake continued while people consumed sour milk, nettles, charlock[35] and rotten potatoes. People were eating foods which made their digestive systems sick and weakened them.

Bunch with Cattle

Cabin Funeral

Epidemic diseases such as smallpox and fever gave way during the early winter of 1740 to a deadly 'flux' (dysentery and typhus fever) and 'the universal scarcity was ensued by fluxes and malignant fevers which swept off multitudes of all sorts; whole villages were laid waste by want and sickness and death in various shapes; and scarce a house in the whole island escaped from tears and mourning'.[36] Some private and public relief programs were established in some locations around the country.[37] Monetary assistance was also made available and in January and February 1740 the Church of Ireland contributed financially to the poor with Robert Howard, Bishop of Elphin, making a large donation to assist the poor in the diocese. The Catholic Church eased the requirement to fast during Lent and allowed people to eat meat on four days a week during Lent 'on account of the great scarcity of fish and roots; and reduced the number of fast days to three: Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.[38] In the spring of 1740 Lord Palmerston allocated his agent £100 to spend on famine relief.[39]

The first few months of 1740 were very difficult and there was little relief to be had. There were some efforts to make fuel and food available and importantly an acceptance of delays in payment of rent that took the pressure off tenants, under-tenants and tradesmen. Many absentee landlords did not appreciate the extent or level of distress.[40] The higher food prices reduced the spending power of the population and impacted on other industries. The demand for manufactured products and service declined reducing the income of employees leading to the unemployment of workers and labourers.

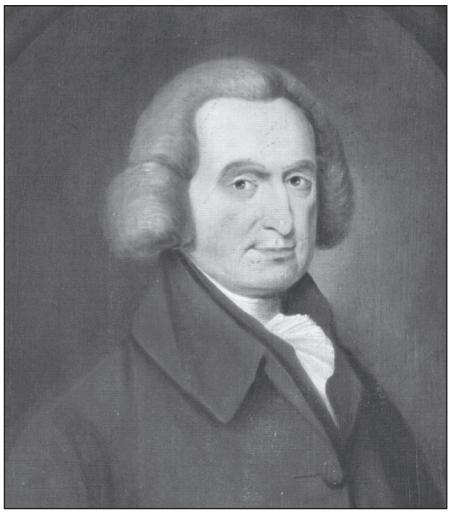
Cabin Man and Dog

At the beginning of 1740 food riots were reported from around the country.[41] To alleviate the suffering and tension in May 1740 Mitchelburne Knox sold 3,000 barrels of barley at below market prices to the poor of Sligo during the early summer while the harvest was awaited and this kept grain prices down in Sligo until mid-June.[42] In August 1740 '… the populace of Galway intervened on 22 August (1740) to prevent the shipping out of the port of 'biscuit', the army was called out and kept on the street until order was restored'[43]. In September, tempests and rain blizzards occurred in Connacht followed by snow in October and by storms and floods as destructive as had occurred in the winter of 1739-40. This prompted the Mayor of Galway in December 1740 to order the owners of malthouses and grain depositories in his jurisdiction to sell all the grain in their possession at 2s 6d a bushel.[44] Galway and Sligo reduced their market tolls in March 1741.[45] In April 1741 a 'mobb' disabled a ship and attacked the house of a local merchant who sought to transport grain out of Sligo port.[46]

A figure between 250,000 and 400,000 died during 'Great Frost Famine', Bliain an Áir (year of the slaughter) representing fifty to seventy people per 1,000 of the population or a mortality rate of between thirteen and twenty percent of a population of 2.4 million and in 'relative terms it was a greater human catastrophe than the Great Famine of the 1840s'[47]. Also the ratio of the population moving within Ireland or leaving the country during the famine of 1740-41 was just as high as it was in 1845-52.[48]

The Famine of 1744-5 - 'not one acre in ten being worth saving'

Following the 1740-1 Famine, stable and predictable weather returned with O'Hara writing in the summer of 1743 that 'there was the greatest plenty



Charles O'Conor

Crowd Scene

of corn ever known and the fairest prospect of a fine harvest'.[49] However, terrible summer weather in 1744 devastated the cereal harvest and the hay crop. The effects on food supply, public health and the rural economy in some north Connacht and west Ulster were just as severe as the earlier crisis across the south.[50] The harvest in the period from 1744 to 1746 was terrible with O'Hara noting that 'not one acre in ten being worth saving'.[51] Following the Famine of 1744-6 Co. Sligo's population decreased by thirty-seven percent, while following the Great Famine of 1845 to 1851 the county's population declined by just over thirty percent.[52]

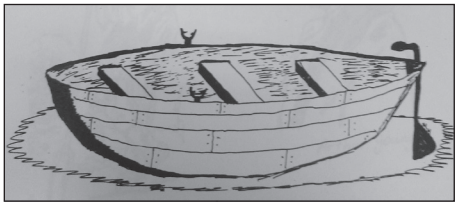
The crisis of 1744-5 that hit Sligo was brought on by incessant rain beginning in August of 1744 and was at least as bad as it had been in 1740. The rain was followed by heavy winter snow and torrential spring rains in 1745 which may have been even more severe than that of 1740-1. The dreadful sequence of weather began on 24 August with a violent rain storm that 'so totally destroyed it [the corn crop] that not one acre in ten was worth reaping ...'.[53] The following January of 1745 'was succeeded by a violent fall of snow which covered the whole face of the country until the latter end of March, so that all kind of fodder being consumed the people fed their cattle with corn'. The corn damaged the cattle's digestive system and in their already weakened condition they died. The people having fed the corn to the cattle were left without anything to eat and in turn they starved with O'Hara noting that in 1745 'There is no misery which famine can induce that did not afflict our country …'. [54]

Charles O'Conor believed that prospects were worse than the hungry summer of 1741 when on 5 June 1745 he wrote in his diary that the 'famine more devilish now than in the summer of 1741, and all Ireland threatened with the same judgement' ('an ghorta níos diabhlaighe anos ná san tsamhradh 1741, agus Ére uile dhá bagairt ris an mbrethamhas gcéadhna').[55/61] On 28 July he recorded: 'famine in steady progress, without a grain of harvest, barley or potato, and without a bite of bread now except for what came from beyond the seas. That is the most astonishing experience in the world'.[56] In August after recording that the price of oatmeal was 13d a peck he lamented that 'of course, Ireland never witnessed such a year previously' ('dár ndóich, ní fhacaidh Éire riamh a samhail sin do bhliadhain').[57]

The crisis of 1744-5 was more severe in the west than had been the famine of 1740-1 and this is supported by an analysis of the number of houses paying the Hearth Tax. The number in Sligo dropped from 6,382 in 1744 to 4,000 in 1746, a decline of 2,382, although by 1749 it had risen to 4,624. O'Hara noted that 'A great number of the inhabitants perished; many went off; so that in the year 1746 the number of houses in this county was not above 4,000'.[58] The price of land plummeted and was 'left untenanted, few bidders, and those at very low prices' and following the famine a good deal of land was up for sale in Co. Sligo in 1746 and 1747.[59]

Despite the failure and evidence from the Hearth Tax, the reductions in the population numbers may not have been entirely down to starvation and death and the migration of people also played a part in reducing the numbers. There were two reasons for this. The first was the fact that unlike those of 1728-9 and 1740-1, the harvests were bountiful elsewhere and at a time when famine would have begun to become really serious in the late spring of 1745, imports of grain began to flood the country. The second reason is the previous two harvests had been good and there were some savings available to the community to purchase food.[60] More food was available than in 1741. There was some imported food, which helped end the distress and on the 10

Crowd Scene



Fishing Boat

and 14 June 1746 two ships arrived in Sligo port to deliver oatmeal and barley, alleviating the terrible conditions.[62]

Conclusion

The image we get of Co. Sligo in the first fifty years of the eighteenth century is one of a population highly vulnerable to poor harvests, fluctuating agricultural prices and famine.[63] However, following the 1745 famine Sligo's economic fortunes began to improve. This was in no small measure down to the expansion of the linen industry in the county. It resulted in a switch from pasture to tillage, providing great employment for all ages and attracting settlers to the county. Their participation in the linen industry allowed cottiers to enter into the commercial economy and for tenants to save money to endure difficult harvests. Sligo was doing well agriculturally with increasing exports of cattle and dairy produce. People could feed themselves and their large families quite easily on a small patch of potato ground. This situation was tolerable as long as the linen industry was doing well, providing substantial employment and insulating against poor potato harvests. However, just after 1815 the industry began to collapse and a large proportion of the population were forced to fall back on offering their labour to large farmers and landlords. When the blight hit the potato crop in the mid-nineteenth century people no longer had a linen industry and the land had been heavily subdivided. The result, almost exactly one hundred years after the terrible famines of the mid-eighteenth century, was the Great Famine of mid-nineteenth century.

*More information on Sligo during the eighteenth century can be found in Pádraig's latest book, '**Sligo in the Eighteenth Century',** available in local bookshops.*

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An Irish Peasant

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Packing up cabin

Peasant Farmer

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54. Ibid.
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Benbulben September 1922

by Michael Farry

This poem from my collection, Troubles, (Revival Press, 2020) is about the shooting of six anti-Treaty soldiers by Free State forces on Benbulben during the civil war. The Free State army was conducting a sweep of north Sligo and the anti-Treaty forces had abandoned their headquarters at Rahelly House, and the armoured car, The Ballinalee, which they had captured from the Free State side in the early days of the war.

The poem has references to the old Irish tale, Tóraigheacht Dhiarmada agus Ghráinne (The Pursuit of Diarmuid and Gráinne) which involved a love triangle between Fionn mac Cumhaill, the princess Gráinne, and her lover Diarmuid Ua Duibhne. In that story Diarmuid died at Benbulben after having being injured by a wild boar. Fionn could have healed him by letting him drink water from his hands, but he let the water slip through his fingers.

The six killed on Benbulben in September 1922 were Seamus Devins, Brian MacNeill, Patrick Carroll, Joseph Banks, Harry Benson and Thomas Langan.

Benbulben, September 1922

The far hill was Maeve's, a warrior peak, war and violence,
straightforward. This was more divisive, Finn or Diarmaid,
Grainne's husband or lover, with that hint of treachery,
the boar and the water.

Our September '22 campaign, that well-planned
cross-country trek, cleared pockets of stubborn resistance
all the way along the mountains to the headquarters of the
Republic of North Sligo.

They were warned, abandoned their temporary barracks,
wrecked their armoured car, retreated on foot to resume
their familiar hit and run, guerrillas living off the land,
the faithful peasants.

But everything was spoiled by high foul weather, our plans
a shambles, shameful deeds in hollows, bitter vengeance,
the worst of human nature, our guns and rifles riddling six,
dumped like dogs.

As life-giving water slipping through hands, the blood
of countrymen soaked into heather, tainting the hill and
history forever. Both sides kept on with little heart for it,
dragging the war out

a sordid struggle in the mud and bogs, all nobility gone,
more shameful acts, cast up for years, until the remnant
dumped their useless guns and tried to fade back into
a forgotten normality.

No-one knew who the real victors were, the winners
felt like losers, lording a land in ruins, among the rubble
of a bad bargain, having given up the whole bright world
for a bitter reality.

CARROWREAGH - School Life In The Past

by Kevin McLoughlin

Throughout the last century and beyond, the 5000-year-old carbon sink bogs of Cloonahinshin and Clooncoose were a rich source of fuel for the local communities. This natural feature of the west of Ireland landscape was a busy place over several months of the year, a time when talk of carbon dioxide emissions and conserving the rich biodiversity of bogs was unheard of. Once the crops were set, the annual back-breaking ritual began in late spring when turf cutting began. The sleán and wheelbarrow were the cutting implements used before the mechanical arm of the Sausage or Hopper made their way towards the end of the last century. The multistep process of saving the turf, scattering, footing, and clamping went on through the summer months. 'Putting out' the turf from the bog onto the roadside took place in autumn before transport of the finished product to homes before the harsh months of winter arrived.

Cawowresgh School today

Carrowreagh National School lies near the Owenmore River at the end of the Bog Road linking the bogs of Cloonahinshin and Clooncoose. Pupils who attended the school were astute observers of all events taking place on the bogs as they sauntered on their way to and from school. As each generation passed along the Bog Road, little had changed in this area since the school had opened in 1901 to the year it closed in 1986. A place of peacefulness and serenity, work on the bogs represented a wholesome community spirit and instilled a work ethic in the youth that complemented their school learning and helped to strengthen and sustain them on their way through life. For the first half of the century, national school education was the last formal education many children received, leaving school aged around thirteen years with many later emigrating in search for a better life in more prosperous lands like England or America.

Just like the work carried out on the bog, little changed in primary school education over the years Carrowreagh school was open, in the school structure itself or the curriculum. It would be another few decades following the closure of the school before chalkboards became whiteboards or copies and textbooks were exchanged for Tablets or iPads. The new school that opened in 1901 replaced an old, thatched roof school and became one of almost nine thousand schools catering for close to 800,000 pupils in every townland across the island. The Catholic Church was involved in the managerial control of the schools, with the parish priest controlling the recruitment and management of the teachers. This 'ownership' increased further and strengthened following the formation of the Free State in 1922. The Catholic Church remains the dominant force in Irish education to this day even though the conservative Catholic country of the 20th century is now hardly recognisable following changes in customs and social mores. The primary school curriculum taught in Carrowreagh was heavily burdened with the Irish language, which was compulsory, alongside the three R's (reading, (w)riting and (a)rithmitic). A typical school day worked through those three R's with a lesser emphasis on geography, history, drawing and singing. Religion was an integral part of the curriculum and studying the Catechism necessitated rote learning of its 107 questions and answers. Springtime heralded the forthcoming sacraments of Communion and Confirmation with great attention in knowing the specific Catechism answers to the questions on Confirmation before the bishop arrived at the school ahead of the Confirmation ceremony. Periodic visits by the Diocesan Examiner also ensured no lack of effort was given to proficiency in the full beliefs of the Catholic faith. A foreign missionary would visit occasionally with information that 'every time the clock ticks, a pagan dies.' He distributed books of tickets for selling with religious items for a raffle for the

sellers when the stubs were returned. The missionary would remind the children to remember to collect the money from neighbouring houses for the Far East, the Messenger and Africa magazines. Medical personnel came to the school with their dreaded vaccination injections and the chilling sound remains in the memory of teeth falling into the metal bucket behind the blackboard when the dentist arrived to carry out the painful extractions. Parent-teacher meetings were in the future as parents rarely visited the school except the occasional father who brought a cart of turf to keep the fire going. The knock on the door followed by "is mise an cigire" gave rise to great alarm as the inspector (invariably he) spoke in Irish asking questions to ascertain standards, followed by inspection of the roll book. The narrow curriculum taught in national schools was demonstrated by the Primary Certificate Examination which testified the completion of sixth class standard, examining Irish, English and Arithmetic only.

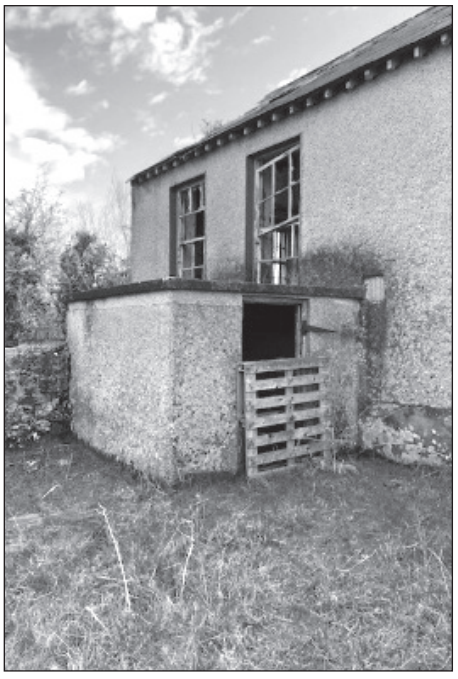
It was only in the latter decades of the century that educational reform took place – changes to the narrow range of subjects with its dominant Irish language and the introduction of a novel approach to child-centred learning with the use of activity and discovery methods. Art and Craft replaced Drawing; History, Geography, Nature Studies and Civics became Social and Environmental Studies, with Music and Physical Education being added - but all arrived too late for pupils in Carrowreagh. Some schools were slow to embrace the new methodologies due to a lack of resources, keeping instead with the old pedagogical style. In time, developments in teacher training resulted in education becoming child centred.

Carrowreagh was a two-teacher school for several years but as numbers declined, it reverted to a one-teacher

Large Classroom

school with the teacher instructing eight different classes at the same time – from infant to seventh class. As a whisper of economic prosperity appeared in the 1970's, the number of one and two-teacher schools in Ireland was reduced by more than one thousand through that decade. With closure of Carrowreagh in sight, there was little motivation for a change in the physical structure of the school and to improve the very meagre facilities available. Today's younger generation would find it difficult to comprehend the effort to get to the school and the physical conditions within the school. Children walked to school barefooted in the early decades of the century and carried sods of turf in their arms for the open fire which was the only source of heating for the building. Those lucky enough might have a bicycle but almost everybody walked to school, which for some was three miles or more and contrasts sharply to today's motorised transport.

The large classroom was a cold and draughty place with the fireplace at the top of the room and a gale force breeze coming under the entrance door. Senior classes down to junior sat from left to right across the room with two large blackboards on easels filling the upper part of the room facing the desks. The board for juniors had permanent white lines while the cane rested on the easel pegs of the other board. The end of corporal punishment - handed out for being late for school or not knowing homework, also arrived too late for Carrowreagh pupils. A large brown cupboard at the bottom left contained pens, nibs, ink, copies and a large white jug used for making up the ink and pouring into the inkwells every Monday morning. A large map of Europe hung above the fireplace and the remaining walls were bedecked with highly revered children's drawings.



Back of School Turf Shed

The school yard was divided by a line from the front door to the school gate, a strict demarcation line with the girls to the right and the boys to the left and a centrally located high wall to the rear ensuring no mixing of genders during breaktime. Handball on the lower gable was always popular despite the swallows' nests creating problems with the butts. Marbles were played on the concrete and catch or tig were the usual games played but building snares to catch the frequent gull visitors had to be done discreetly to avoid the teacher's disapproval. Boys spent the wet rainy days in the turf-house – a soapbox where great and imagined stories were told, while girls stayed in the classroom. Separate toilets were outside at the end of the yard – dry toilets (turf-mould used) as there was no running water in the school. The 'tinker', the term used then, made a yearly call with his horse and cart to sanitise the toilets and collect a paltry fee.

Children in the 1950's

In autumn, the end of the school day brought a rush to the exit for the sloes on the blackthorn trees across the road that might have ripened that day, a little sustenance before the long trek home. An adrenaline-fueled re-routing to McGettrick's apple orchard under fear of a physical attack from the owners was another option often pursued on the homeward journey but a trip across to the 'coillin' by way of dangerous bog holes to gather nuts was a tangible dare. Meeting the Council worker on the road as he trundled along with his horse and cart load of sand, slowly and methodically filling the potholes was a distraction to recollecting the day's events with your friends. Meeting the friendly creamery man coming along the bog road with his long cart loaded with creamery cans was a further diversion for the children as they traipsed along. The structure of Carrowreagh school is now just a derelict shell. The natural order in life is for things to end but for many of its past pupils who could well be entering the age of forgetfulness, photos of the old building and yard can still bring back a profusion of memories from those hazy school days – perhaps a few faded memories of trauma and distress, but mostly the cherished enjoyment of being young, free, and forward-looking – our memory ensuring we hold onto the treasured things we never want to lose.

Separate Toilets

Children from the townlands of Aughris, Ballinaglough, Cartronroe, Carrowreagh, Cloonaghaun, Cloonacleigha, Cloonahinshin, Clooncoose, Deechomade, Drumfarnaughty, Drumrane, Lislea, Farrenmaurice, Knockalough, Oldrock, Rinnarogue and Woodhill now attend Scoil Chroí Náofa in Bunninadden. They enjoy the benefits of a five-teacher school, teamwork with eighty other pupils and a modern school with a clear focus having exacting standards and expectations for all their scholars. They carry on the mantle into a world that is so much better for people than the last century due to scientific advances in knowledge, healthcare and technology. They face a world of opportunities in the new digital age where gene therapy and artificial intelligence with robotic systems will become a big part of their lives. Challenges also lie ahead with global warming and its resultant effect on habitation space for the growing population, regions of political conflict with the ever-prevalent threat of nuclear war, risks from global pandemics due to the movement of people and the pursuit of renewable energy sources to meet the increasing needs of the twenty-first century lifestyle. We wish them well.

NARDONE

by Micheal McRitchie

For more than 15 years my wife and I have searched for a war victim of the Arandora Star tragedy, described in last year's Corran Herald Issue no. 54. At last, a major technology project has brought our long search to a successful conclusion.

Nardone Plaque

On 2nd July 1940, the liner was torpedoed off Malin Head with the loss of 800 lives, of whom 446 were Italian prisoners being taken to Canada for internment as enemy aliens following Italy's declaration of war on 10th June. The bodies of the victims were washed ashore along 600 miles of coastline from the Western Isles of Scotland to Co. Mayo, and reverently interred by the local people.

In County Mayo there was one body for every kilometre along the Erris coastline, and the Board of Health became concerned at the cost of so many funerals with coffins costing £2.10 shillings each. That's around 400 euro in today's money, and these were the poorest areas in Ireland.

With 50 and more British ships being torpedoed each month, the Arandora Star disaster was soon forgotten except for the bereaved families. Like most people, my wife Brenda and I had never heard of the ship until 2006, when we were asked to photograph the grave of victim Giuseppe Capella on Rathlin Island. Afterwards we met Ernesto Nardone of Middlesborough, whose father Antonio had been arrested when Ernesto was only 14, and had met his end on the Arandora Star. His wife Antonia was left alone to run their ice cream shop and to raise Ernesto and his nine siblings.


Donegal Vindicator

(DONEGAL, TYRONE, FERMANAGH, LEITRIM, SLIGO & DERRY).

SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1940.

ONE PENNY

BODIES ON DONEGAL BEACHES

VICTIMS OF ARANDORA STAR SINKING

Raphoe St. Vincent De Paul Society

LORD BISHOP OF RAPHOE'S STIMULATING ADDRESS

IRISH RURAL HOME

WOMEN'S DAY AT MUINTER NA TIRE.

"PRIDE OF OCCUPATION" THE GREAT LACK.

LETTERKENNY URBAN AFFAIRS

HOUSING HOLD UP.

WATER SCHEME DIFFICULTIES

War on dingy Teeth

Donegal Vindic Newspaper cutting

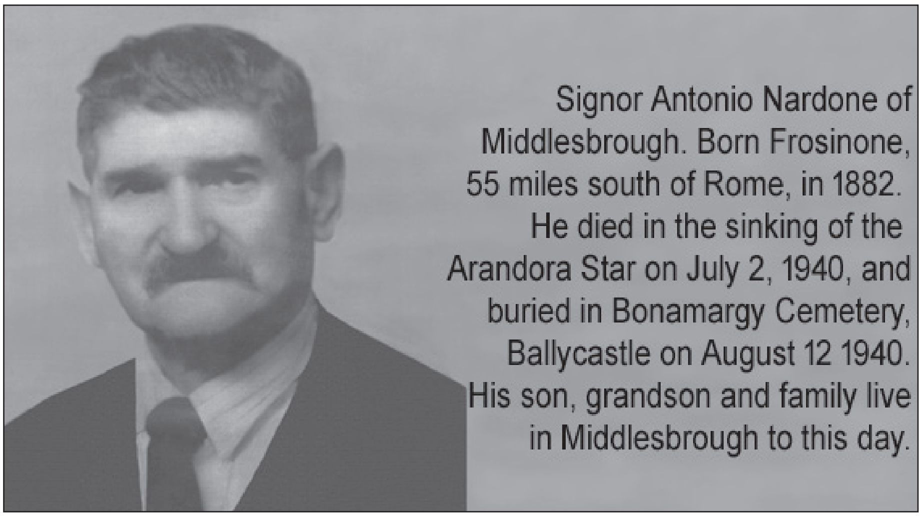
The family was adamant that relatives in Cork had a newspaper cutting stating that the body of Antonio Nardone had been discovered off the Black Rock, identified by a membership card in his pocket, and buried in a local churchyard. The cutting had long been lost, but we thought there would be no difficulty in finding the report in the newspapers which covered the north-west coasts. It would be a pleasure to do so, for Ernesto had told us: "All I want is to pray at my father's grave before I die".

Big mistake. We began reading the 1940 newspapers in Donegal Library, then in Sligo, then in Westport. We could not find the cutting, but from the meticulous, detailed reports on the dusty, yellowing pages we did discover the unmarked graves of 38 Italians in unmarked and long forgotten graves in 29 cemeteries around the Irish coasts. The short video of our visit to Rathlin became a 40-minute documentary which has had thousands of views and which still brings emails from around the world – just Google for YouTube Arandora Ireland Legacy.

Newspaper cuttings can easily be lost, not so a chunk of rock. We then discovered there are at least 27 Black Rocks around the Irish coastline, but none could be linked to the victims we had found in nearby cemeteries. Without that cutting, we sadly told the Nardone family, we could not find Antonio's last resting place.

Fast forward 15 years, and the British Newspaper Archive has digitised many thousands of pages from decades of newspapers, enabling search for individual words. Our

Nardone Rainbow



Signor Antonio Nardone

Signor Antonio Nardone and his wife Antonia

unsuccessful searching over many, many hours was concluded by a few seconds on a computer. There, tucked away in the bottom corner of the Derry Sentinel, was a brief item stating that the body of Antonio Nardone of Middlesborough had been found at the Black Rocks, Portballintrae, and with another victim had been interred 16km away in the ancient cemetery at Bonamargy, Ballycastle.

We could hardly believe our eyes. As well as visiting the libraries we had spent 10 days visiting the cemeteries along the coast as far as Mayo, yet Signor Nardone had been found right under our noses on the North Antrim coast where I have spent holidays since boyhood. The Black Rocks are visible from our holiday home, and Brenda and I must have walked past them hundreds of times on the clifftop walk to the Giant's Causeway.

When Ernesto, now 95 years old, heard the news at his home in Middlesbrough, he burst into tears. And in September 2021 the Nardone family took him on the long journey to Ballycastle, where he found closure in prayer at his father's graveside and placed a memorial plaque on the nearby wall. Our long quest was over at last.

BODIES ON COUNTY ANTRIM COAST.

On Sunday morning a body, believed to be that of a seaman, was washed ashore at Rathlin Island. It was in a very advanced state of decomposition.

Burial took place on the island.

Another body was washed ashore at Whitepark Bay, Ballintoy, on Sunday afternoon. It was clothed in brown trousers and a brown coat and overcoat, but contained no identification marks. It was in an advanced state of decomposition.

The funeral took place later to Bun-na-Margey Burying-ground, Ballycastle.

In a pocket of the civilian clothes covering a body washed ashore on Sunday evening at the Blackrocks, near Portballintrae, a Co-Operative Society card, with the name A. Mondone, Middlesbrough, was found.

The body was interred, together with the one discovered at Whitepark Bay earlier in the day, in Bun-na-Margey Graveyard, Ballycastle.

The coffins were covered with the Union Jack. R.U.C., "B" Specials, and L.D.V. men acted as pallbearers, and there was a large public attendance. There were several floral tributes. Rev. T. C. Topley, rector of Ramoan, officiated at the graveside.

The Derry Sentinel Report

AUGUST 17, 1940. THE WESTERN PEOPLE

The Sea Gives Up Its Dead

More Bodies Washed Ashore

70 MILES FROM WHERE FIRST FROM ARANDORA STAR WAS DISCOVERED

17 BODIES RECOVERED IN ERRIS

PATHETIC RELICS

One grows morbid these days on newspaper work which is largely concerned with what the sea gives up on our Western seaboard. It is a pleasant change when the sea's burden is a boatload of live sailors, as it has been on several occasions. But more numerous are the arrivals of dead and decomposed bodies of victims of this terrible war. Now and then in peace time dead bodies of sailors find their way to our Western coast, victims of storm. The instances are rare, however. The sea in its wildest rage is tame in com-

two discs is that one—the green one—is to be buried with the body, the other being sent to the War Office. The disc buried with the body will never rot, and can be identified at any future time if the body is disinterred. The C.E. on the soldier's disc indicates "Church of England."

A DENTIST?

Giving evidence in relation to the finding of a second body—unidentified—Sergt. Dowling said:—On the same evening I visited the townland of Castletown following a report received, and saw the decomposed body of a man there. It was dressed in a black waistcoat and a grey pullover. That was the only clothing on the body. In an inner pocket of the waistcoat I found a pocket wallet containing a medal and two papers—two deposit receipts and two visiting cards and a religious medal. The deposit receipts were issued to a Mr. M. Fossaluzza by the Wakefield Building Society, Stanhope House, Park Lane, London, W.1. The visiting cards were in the names of "The Art Pavement and Decorations Limited, St. Paul's Crescent, Camden Town, London, N.W.1," and "Mr. Carlo Pratelli, L.D.S., R.C.S., England, 33 Bernard St., Russell Square, W.C.1." The religious medal bore the inscription: "Beatus J. Bosco." Francis Jordan was with me when I examined the body.

The Western People Newspaper cutting

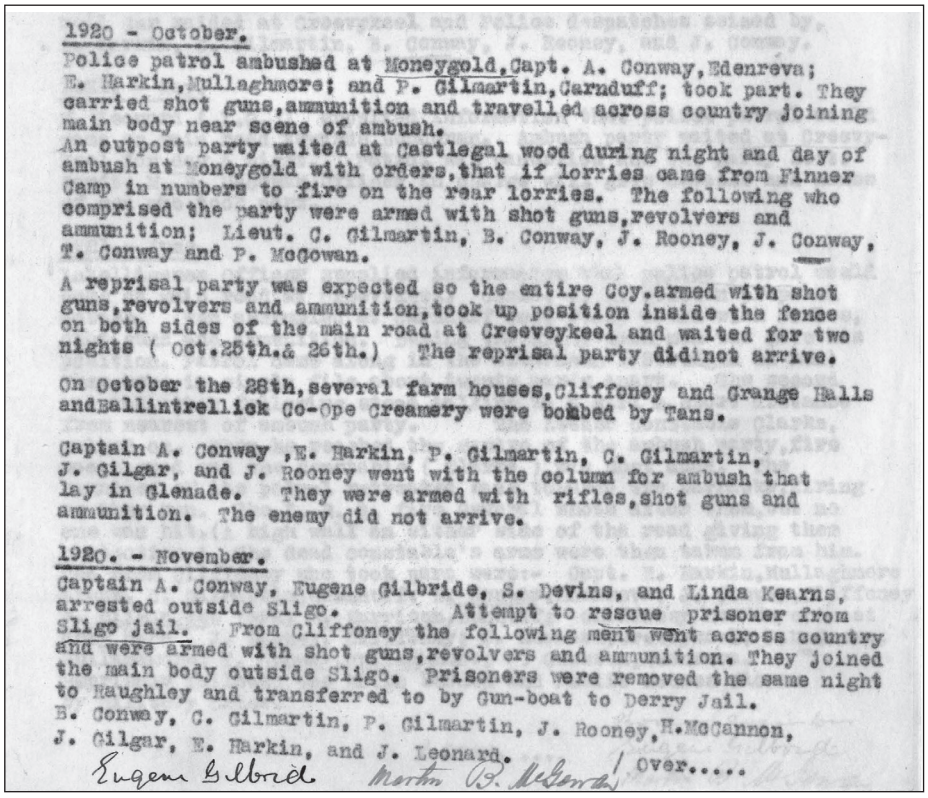
THE MONEYGOLD AMBUSH

by Joe McGowan

The spark flamed to life by Padraig Pearse and his comrades in Easter 1916 had flared wildly in the Dublin skies, and although ferociously quenched had kindled afresh a desire in Irish hearts that would burst forth again with the advent of the War of Independence. The first shot of that war was fired during a confrontation at Soloheadbeg, on January 21st 1919 when a group of men, led by Dan Breen of the Third Tipperary Brigade IRA, attempted to seize a cartload of explosives escorted by a party of RIC. When called on to surrender Constable James McDonnell and Constable Paddy O'Connell, resisted and were shot dead in the exchange of gunfire that followed.

On this day also, following the resounding victory of Sinn Féin in the 1918 General Election, was held the first Dáil Éireann assembly at the Mansion House, Dublin: here was declared the sovereign right of the Irish people to self government. It was not an auspicious start as half of those elected to represent the people, including De Valera and Arthur Griffith, were in jail in England. The proceedings were conducted as Gaeilge in Irish, the 'Declaration of Independence' read and a 'Democratic Programme' adopted, thus establishing a link between the Republic proclaimed in 1916 and this new Dáil Éireann that followed. The opening prayer was delivered in Irish by Fr. Michael O'Flanagan of 'Cliffoney Bog Fight' fame.

No formal oath was administered until the meeting of August 20th 1919 at which members swore to 'support and defend the Irish Republic and the Government of the Irish Republic, which is Dáil Éireann, against all enemies, foreign and domestic.' The oath was also applied to the Irish



1920 - October.
Police patrol ambushed at Moneygold,Capt. A. Conway,Edenreva; E. Harkin,Mullaghmore; and P. Gilmartin,Carnduff; took part. They carried shot guns,ammunition and travelled across country joining main body near scene of ambush.
An outpost party waited at Castlegal wood during night and day of ambush at Moneygold with orders,that if lorries came from Finner Camp in numbers to fire on the rear lorries. The following who comprised the party were armed with shot guns,revolvers and ammunition; Lieut. C. Gilmartin, B. Conway, J. Rooney, J. Conway, T. Conway and P. McGowan.

A reprisal party was expected so the entire Coy.armed with shot guns,revolvers and ammunition,took up position inside the fence on both sides of the main road at Creevykeel and waited for two nights (Oct.25th.& 26th.) The reprisal party didinot arrive.

On October the 28th,several farm houses,Cliffoney and Grange Halls andBallintrellick Co-Ope Creamery were bombed by Tans.

Captain A. Conway ,E. Harkin, P. Gilmartin, C. Gilmartin, J. Gilgar, and J. Rooney went with the column for ambush that lay in Glenade. They were armed with rifles,shot guns and ammunition. The enemy did not arrive.

1920. - November.
Captain A. Conway, Eugene Gilbride, S. Devins, and Linda Kearns, arrested outside Sligo. Attempt to rescue prisoner from Sligo jail. From Cliffoney the following went across country and were armed with shot guns,revolvers and ammunition. They joined the main body outside Sligo. Prisoners were removed the same night to Raughley and transferred to by Gun-boat to Derry Jail.
B. Conway, C. Gilmartin, P. Gilmartin, J. Rooney, H.McCannon, J. Gilgar, E. Harkin, and J. Leonard.
Eugene Gilbride Martin O'Beirne Over.....

Report on Moneygold ambush (Courtesy of Military Archives Cathal Brugha barracks).

Volunteers, now become the Irish Republican Army. The IRA was thus subordinate now to Dáil Éireann; the political as well as the military struggle was unified and the scene set for the War of Independence to follow. The British, as might be expected, opposed each and every move to independence tooth and nail. In addition to banning the new Dáil in September 1919 they immediately initiated a military campaign to reinforce the ban.

As the early months of 1919 wore on Britain's military might was in evidence all over Ireland; Sligo was no exception. On April 5th 1919 the 21st Sussex Yeomanry took up quarters in Sligo; on April 19th a welcome social for the Norfolk Yeomanry was held; in June the military left their quarters in the Barracks and the Workhouse in Sligo and moved to summer quarters on Cartron Hill and Ballincar; also in June a naval destroyer/minesweeper arrived at Rosses Point from which sixty marines came ashore; in September a detachment of the Duke of Cornwallis based in Finner Camp took up duty in Sligo Barracks.

Protesting the death of Sinn Féin MP, Pierce McCann, who had died in Gloucester Prison, the third fatality in a short time in British custody, Sligo

R.I.C. police whistle from Moneygold ambush taken by Vol. Mick Burns.

Fr. Michael O'Flanagan Hall burned out following ambush (Courtesy of Sligo Library) "VACATED HOME OF THE MURDER GANG" daubed on wall by British military.

Sinn Féin T.D, J.J. Clancy declared: 'We are no longer a political party, we are the Irish nation. We stand for the right of Ireland to be mistress of her own destinies and for the flag of a free and independent Irish Republic'.

Police and military barracks were now targeted nationwide with increasing frequency; weapons and ammunition were seized to expand the pitifully small arsenals of the Volunteers. IRA units engaging the enemy with no more than fourteen or fifteen rounds of ammunition, sometimes less, was to be a critical weakness all through the coming fight. The RIC, alarmed at the rise in hostility towards the police, decided to close some of the police stations in the county. Anticipating attacks, Grange barracks was abandoned in November 1919 as were others throughout the county. Numbers of police in remaining barracks were increased so as to better withstand attacks.

The Volunteers, or as they were now known the Irish Republican Army (I.R.A), was structured at the end of 1919 into brigades and battalions. Cliffoney and Grange districts, coming under the leadership of Andrew Conway and Seamus Devins, were attached to the First South Donegal Brigade for a time before eventually becoming integrated with the Sligo Brigade, Third Western Division. Nine companies of Volunteers with a total of six hundred and twenty nine members was the estimated strength of the IRA in Sligo at this time.

Nationwide, attacks and reprisals by police and military continued into 1920. Lloyd George had set store by these attacks, official and unofficial, as a strategy to intimidate the population: burning of creameries, factories, shops, town halls, private houses; destruction of the economic life would cow the people, turn them against Sinn Féin and the IRA!

He was wrong; all his methods did was irritate those who were formerly neutral and made supporters more bitterly staunch. Thurles was ransacked on March 1st, Cork wrecked by troops on March 7th and 12th. Tomás Mac Curtáin's life, Lord Mayor of Cork and Commandant of the Cork Brigade IRA, was continuously under threat. Most Republicans living under this threat were on the run but for Mac Curtáin, a family man with five children, this was impossible. On March 19th men with blackened faces and masks burst into the house; some held Mrs Mac Curtáin while others rushing upstairs shot him dead at the door of his bedroom. A coroner's jury later returned a verdict that the Lord Mayor: 'was wilfully murdered under circumstances of most callous brutality; that the murder was organised and carried out by the Royal Irish Constabulary, officially directed by the British Government.' Steadfast in the face of state terrorism and increasingly repressive laws in Sligo and nationwide the men and women of Ireland stood shoulder to shoulder with a shared vision, a common goal, a Gethsemane that must be endured with fortitude and forbearance.

In Cliffoney, Co. Sligo, RIC Sgt. Perry taunted the local Volunteers: 'Did that hungry bastard Mac Swiney die yet?' he would mock during Terence Mac Swiney's hunger strike. Perry didn't know then that he was shortly to play a central role in an armed action in North Sligo known as the 'Moneygold ambush' and to die on the same day as MacSwiney.

Early in October 1920 local units of the I.R.A. met in a barn in Barnadearg, Grange. With Commdt. Billy Pilkington and Brigadier Seamus Devins in charge they discussed far into the night, in meticulous detail, how the trap was to be sprung.
The night preceding that fateful October 25th the men selected for the fight worked all night with spades, picks and shovels digging trenches, others cleaning and loading weapons. Many years ago one of the ambush party, Willie Devins, told me all about it. It was almost as if a benign deity smiled on their efforts, he said, as the countryside was lit up, almost like day, with a full harvest moon illuminating the scene as they worked with grim determination all through the night. The youngest men in the group were Alfie Lang, seventeen and Jim Feeney eighteen years old.

The trap had been baited by four Maugherow men who had cut the shafts out of a cart belonging to a local

man. They knew he would report the incident to the R.I.C following which they were certain a patrol would be sent from Cliffoney to investigate. The men settled down nervously to a long wait hoping the patrol would indeed show up, anxious for the coming fight and yet fearful of it. These men were not soldiers in the usual sense of the word but small farmers and ordinary members of the community moved by the age old desire to be free. Maybe the patrol would surrender when called upon. But what if they didn't? How will I perform under fire? Hated as these arms of foreign law were can I point a rifle at a man and shoot him if I have to? Their natural instinct was to preserve life, not take it. There would surely be casualties. Will I be one of them? Questions. Doubts. Yet no man wavered. They were steadfast. Determined. Their desire was Ireland free. From the mountain to the sea.

Our eyewitness was moved to outpost duty at the quarry in Cashel to observe traffic on the main road. My father, Petie Mc Gowan, was one of a similar small detachment north of the ambush site with instructions to prevent reinforcements arriving from Finner Army Camp. At eleven o'clock the patrol, consisting of nine men on bicycles, came into view. When called on to surrender: 'the cry, "Hands up" rang out but they jumped off their bikes, grabbed for their weapons and that's when the banging started. They were called on to surrender but instead reached for their weapons and started to fire!'

Rifles kicked into shoulders. A man died, his skull shattered. The sharp crack of rifles and the screams of dying men mingled in the October air. The pungent smell of gunsmoke lingered, stinging the nostrils, rose lazily and drifted into a clear harvest sky. The gun battle seemed to last for hours – in reality it was only fifteen minutes. It was a bright sunny day and the shooting was heard all over North Sligo.

Amidst the mayhem and confusion our eyewitness remembered clearly that, 'when the firing stopped there was eight got out of nine, the only survivor, Const. Spratt, emptied his gun before he threw it down and surrendered.'

The complexities of life in Ireland at that time and its divided loyalties, are no more clearly illustrated than this exchange at the scene of the ambush described for us by Willie Devins of Grange. Frank Rooney from Rosses Point was one of the ambush party. When the shooting was over he took off his mask and Const. Spratt having formerly served with him in the British army recognised him. The men had met before:

'I didn't think I'd meet you here, Frank', he said. 'Frank had been discharged and was getting fifteen bob a week of a pension for a bullet wound in his back. He used to collect his money every week in Sligo but couldn't go back after that; he went on the run with me.'

The ambushers quickly made their escape, some towards the mountain, some towards the sea while others stayed locally in 'safe houses'. Nurse Linda Kearns, who had been standing by, stayed to tend the dead and dying.

It is interesting to note that official figures admit of only four casualties while veterans of the ambush claim eight were killed. The Sligo Champion of Sat. October 30th 1920 in addition to the news that Terence MacSwiney, Lord Mayor of Cork had died in Brixton Prison after seventy four days on hunger strike, carried the headline.

DEADLY AMBUSH
Four Policemen Killed, Two Wounded
Reprisals In Cliffoney And Grange

Fear now gripped the community as reprisals were the norm and expected. There was not long to wait. A Constable Kelly was particularly ruthless in pinpointing homes and businesses for burning. Practically every house was searched, locals were rounded up and prostrated on the ground at Cliffoney RIC barracks, reaping hooks held to their throats with the threat of having their throats cut if they did not give information. The Tans went on a rampage of pillaging and looting. In addition to several homes, Ballintrillick Creamery was burned as was Grange Temperance Hall and the Fr. O'Flanagan Hall in Cliffoney village. 'In many instances people have been made homeless wanderers through reprisals although they have neither hand, act nor part in the occurrence that led to these reprisals,' read the report in The Sligo Champion. 'Splendid discipline was maintained by the Forces,' read the Sligo County Inspector's RIC report, 'but notwithstanding this some reprisals followed.'

An absolute dread pervaded North Sligo as the Auxiliaries in their convoys of lorries raced through the countryside, shooting at will, ransacking and burning.

'People didn't go to bed at all that night or for long after', Thomas Boyce told me, 'we were without at the big hills, that's where we hid. Ye might fall into a doze of sleep but then you'd wake up again and ye'd see a light here and there and we'd be guessing it's such and such a man's house burning.' Up along the mountain areas it was the same: 'People slept out in the fields for a week or ten days afterwards in fear of their lives,' John Gilmartin of Carnamadow recalled.

Less than a month after the ambush, and on the same day that fourteen civilians were killed at Croke Park in Dublin, disaster struck the leadership when Seamus Devins, Andrew Conway and Eugene Gilbride were

View looking across ambush site towards Benbulben

captured near Ballisodare in a car driven by Linda Kearns. The group were moving arms and ammunition most of which was captured at the Moneygold ambush.

Having stayed behind at the ambush site to tend to the wounded Kearns was easily recognised. 'We had with us every rifle and round of ammunition our Column possessed,' she would write later. 'They [the Auxiliaries] pulled us out of the car and when they found the load of stuff in the back our treatment was pretty rough.' She describes the soldiers as being 'wild with drink and started firing all around shouting "shoot them". Orders and counter orders were issued: "line them up, put them in the lorry, shoot them"'.

When the car was stopped, Seamus Devins, who was sitting beside the driver, drew a pistol, but was immediately disarmed and along with the other occupants, badly beaten. The group was questioned and beaten again at Sligo barracks before being lodged in Sligo jail. Eugene Gilbride was beaten unconscious during the arrest and Seamus Devins particularly singled out for beating again at the jail. The prisoners were transferred from Sligo to Raughley from where they were taken by sea to Buncrana and from there to Belfast. Here they were tried and sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment each. Nurse Kearns was the exception getting ten years, a sentence that was at that time the longest ever given to any woman during the War of Independence. Arrested in September 1920 and held in Mountjoy, another Sligo woman and comrade in arms, Constance Markievicz, was sentenced on Christmas Eve 1920 to two years penal servitude for, 'promoting Fianna Éireann for the purpose of committing murder of military and police, drilling men and carrying and using arms and the furnishing and training of Irish Volunteers.'

The ambush and aftermath was a grim affair, but it had an amusing sequel that caused much merriment then. Some time after the ambush the police and Tans paid a visit to their informant who had notified them of the damage to his cart thus causing the patrol to be sent out. He must be one of those Shinners masquerading as a friend; vengeance was on their mind! Despite his protestations of innocence and loyalty they 'kicked him all around the yard' in frustration suspecting that he helped to set up the trap by cutting the shafts out of the cart himself!

Commdt. Billy Pilkington, was instrumental later in the execution of the Const. Kelly mentioned above. Having received news that a contingent of soldiers and RIC were on their way on a train from Dublin, the local unit of the IRA, headed by Pilkington, on Tuesday April 19th 1921, intercepted it at Ballisodare. Kelly along with a Constable Hedrington were singled out, taken from the train and executed: 'They were carrying large envelopes from the Castle which contained descriptions of some of our men who were wanted by the police. These descriptions were very accurate,' Thomas Deignan, a participant in the ambush, was to write later:

Pilkington in later life became a priest of the Redemptorist order, Kelly's daughter a nun. Many years after that, in a strange twist of fate, their paths in life converged yet again: Fr. Pilkington and Sr. Mary Kelly, having met in Dublin by chance, became good friends.

We can only imagine what interesting conversations they must have had!

(*Joe McGowan's most recent book 'Even the Heather Bled' is available in bookshops or online at www.sligoheritage.com/books.htm)*.

THE SAILOR'S DOG (TÍR AN ÓIR)
by Máiread Ni Gráda M.A.

submitted by Mary Kelly-White

One evening as I was strolling by the pier I was watching the currachs lined up beneath me and I was thinking about the big ships that cross the great ocean and those who man them. At a glance, I noticed a huge tanker bobbing towards me, smoke rising from the chimney and the sides. When it reached the middle of the pier it dropped anchor. Slowly it stopped moving except for shaking from side to side.

One of the small boats moved out with five or six men on it and they rowed towards the pier. There was also a dog on the boat. The dog was the first to jump onto the pier and when the sailors came ashore the dog followed the youngest one. This man was about thirty years old, with a big mop of fair hair, and the rugged skin of the sea farer. I stayed sitting on the pier watching them.

When the young sailor was approaching me, the dog ran in front of him and came to me making friends. He licked my hand and I spoke to him. The sailor stood looking at us and he was smiling. The dog ran between us looking at the sailor and then at me, as if he was trying to introduce us. The sailor laughed out loud and it wasn't long until we were chatting as if we were old friends. We talked about dogs and their traits.

"Do you see my dog?" the sailor asked. "His name is Bran. I wouldn't be alive today if it weren't for him."

"It's no wonder that you love him" I said "were you drowning?"

"I might as well tell you the whole story from the start." He said. *"I was about twenty years old when I got involved with a gang who were going to North Canada gathering and buying animal hides/skins. We arrived at Hudson Bay at the end of October and we went ashore at the mouth of a river, at the edge of the bay. The tanker group said goodbye and they took off to sea. The plan was that they would return for us after one year with food, and to collect whatever skins/hides we had gathered. When the tanker left we made shelters for ourselves preparing for winter.*

One evening it began to snow. The next day it took us a full hour to bore through the snow that was against the door. After a few days the snow was sealed with ice/frost. Winter had definitely arrived.

One day a local man and I decided to go hunting for a small animal to kill for food. He was a big strong man who had spent many winters in this part of Canada. He called himself Smith because he could make tools from metal. We took lunch for a week with us. We took six huskies and a sledge and we took off. We hadn't gone far when Bran overtook us. Bran was everybody's pet. No matter where I went Bran followed me, but I didn't want him on this particular day because I was afraid that he would not stand a chance if the hide gang got him."

"We'll bring him" Smith said pulling him on to the sledge. *"We had travelled about twelve miles up hills and down dales when we reached a small lake in late afternoon. There was ice on the lake and snow everywhere. It didn't take long for Smith to make a hut with snow and ice and the remains of a bee-hive for a door. We slept better that night than I often did in a proper bed.*

The next morning after breakfast I grabbed my gun and I told Smith that we would go the other side of the bare-hill that was on the far side of the lake, to see if we could find any hides/skins. We called Bran and off we went. When we reached the top of the bare-hill we saw that the other side was very sheer, sharp and dangerous. I was shocked, and astray. I mistook the snow for a wall and I landed on top of my head at the bottom of the cliff.

Towards evening it dawned on the Smith that I had failed to return. He donned his snow boots but he didn't know which way to face. He remembered that they had reached the hill but he didn't know where after that. While he was standing at the cabin door Bran came running towards him in an agitated state, running rings around him, snorting and barking. He stared at Smith then he raced away in the direction of the hill. He stopped. He looked at Smith and wailed a long sad cry. He ran around Smith again, and again he wailed a long sad cry this time facing towards the mountain, then he dashed off.

It was obvious to Smith that Bran wanted him to follow, so he did. By the time they reached the top of the mountain it was night, bright and starry. They followed the same path that I did. Eventually they reached where I was. There I was stretched on the flat of my back, out for the count unconscious. When Smith saw from where I had fallen he thought I would be smashed to pieces, every bone in my body broken. However, he found a pulse. The next morning, he put me on the sledge and he took me back to the camp. After about a fortnight I was back to myself. "

I tried to thank Smith but he said *"Don't thank me you would be still out there only for Bran."*

The sailor took Bran in his arms and spoke to him as if he was a human, and I believe they understood each other.

DANCE IN THE LOFTUS HALL

by Joan Gleeson

Before the present church of *The Immaculate Conception* was built, the Loftus Hall in Ballymote served as a church for the parish. As documented in *The Sligo Champion,* the new site was donated rent-free by Sir Robert Gore-Booth. Once the new church was finished and consecrated the old hall was abandoned and left unused for years, deteriorating into a dilapidated state. However, it arose from the ashes with tender loving care and became a community hall for dances and other parish activities.

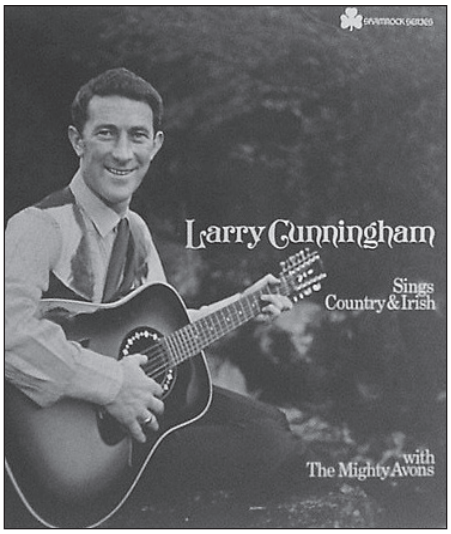
Dance in the Loftus Hall

On a typical Sunday night in July, as t*he west yet glimmers with some streaks of day*, all roads lead to the Loftus Hall. It was the early fifties, hay and turf saved, glad-rags on. Road black with bicycles, two to a bike, bar or carrier. Passengers crammed in the backs of cars; *Hillmans, A40's, Ford Prefects, Morris Minors.* Strains of dance band music tantalisingly audible as we approached the hall. Hot and sultry Sunday nights with corncrakes still croaking away. Cuckoo making ready to fly. One thing on our mind: who will be at the dance tonight.

Ladies in well-laundered frocks, lads in canary yellow or fair isle pullovers and hair glistening with *Brylcrem.* Sweat pouring down well-tanned faces, ladies hair back-combed to double its volume. Flared skirts cut on the bias with open-toed sandals vulnerable to two-left-footed dance partners. Are my seams straight? Constant worry about the then back-seamed stockings. Stiletto heels, nightmare for maple dancefloors. High heels best for ballroom dances.

Enter the dancehall chokingly-filled with cigarette smoke from *Goldflake, Woodbine, John Player Please*. Everybody smoked. Cigarettes poised to set ladies' hair alight, miraculously never happened. Into the cloakroom with raincoats (just in case), handbags, bicycle pumps and flashlamps. Returned emigrants with the latest fashions and dances, doing the twist, jive and rock n' roll, not favoured then in the Loftus Hall. Few bob in their pockets, envy of some of the locals. Ladies on the right, lads on the left along the walls.

Music starts up. Brilliant bands: P*at O'Hara, Larry Cunningham* and the *Mighty Avons* and all playing the top twenties.



Larry Cunningham

Surge for dance partners, dragged out waltzes. Up the tempo, fox trot and quick step. Floor getting sticky, out comes the box of Lux flakes strewn liberally for a graceful glide, regular veterans whizzing 'round the one way system.

Ladies' choice. Who is going to be the lucky guy? Invitation to the supper room. Luke-warm bottle of mineral. Second dance maybe? Last dance announced, slow waltz. Dreams shattered or realised. Fellows with a car give lifts. Bicycles in the boot, wedge them in. Who gets the premium front seat? Wedding bells in the air or at least another date? Curate at the door to dampen passions. Home with stories and laughter, we picked apart the bones of the dance over the carcass of the Sunday lunch chicken 'till the early hours of the morning. A good night was had by all. Hit the pillow and dance in our dreams.

THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

by Lynda Hart

In Ireland, Scotland and parts of western Europe there are creation legends to explain the formation of mountains, large erratics and megalithic monuments. These folklore tales involve a witch or Cailleach (La Vieya and Mari in northern Spain) who flies over the landscape with large rocks in her apron. As she flies, the stones fall from her apron and the mountains, and megaliths such as Carrowmore in Co. Sligo and Loughcrew in Co. Meath were created.

In Cornwall, however, another Celtic nation, the witch is replaced by a giant.

There are many stories to explain the unexplainable, but like the Irish myths, the female giant carries stones in her apron which become the islands and megaliths when they fall from the aprons. The three most famous giants in Cornwall are Cormoran, Bolster and Blunderbore. The story of Cormoran may be the precursor to the fairy tale of Jack and the Beanstalk. Giants and witches are in most of the fairy tales that were written in Europe and it is thought that many of these tales are taken from much older legends.

All the giants in Cornish folklore seem to have a thread running through them; a liking for eating random people, especially children and a penchant for domestic violence.

Here are stories of the Cornish giants.

According to the folklore, Cormoran built St. Michael's Mount, a south coastal island in Mounts Bay near Penzance. It is linked at low tide to the mainland by a causeway. Cormoran brought white granite from the mainland to build the island. His wife Cormelian assisted him by carrying the granite stones in her apron. Cormoran was exhausted and fell asleep leaving Cormelian to finish the task. She was also exhausted, so instead of bringing the white granite she found greenstone at a nearer source. Cormoran awoke and flew into a rage and kicked and beat her, causing her apron strings to break and the offending stones to fall. The greenstone can still be seen and is known as Chapel rock.

Cormoran steals cattle and is generally a nuisance and so a reward is offered to anyone who can slay him. A farmer's son called Jack dug a large pit at the base of the mount and covered it with straw and branches. He summons the giant by blowing on his hunting horn. Cormoran ran down the mount and fell into the pit where Jack strikes him a fatal blow.

Blunderbore (and his brother Rebecks) live in Ludgvan (near Penzance). He kidnaps three lords and their lady wives. He plans to eat the men and make the ladies his wives. The women quite rightly refuse to engage in a feast to eat their husbands and so are locked into a dungeon, hung by their hair and are left to starve. Our hero Jack (The slayer of Cormoran) happens along the road where Blunderbore lives and is recognised by the giants as the killer of his best friend. He imprisons Jack along with the ladies. Jack however, is not to be deterred and while Blunderbore goes to visit his brother Rebeck, to invite him to feast on his prisoners, Jack fashions rope into nooses and when the giant returns he slides nooses over the heads of the giants, slides down the rope and cuts their throats.

Bolster the giant was enormous even by giant standards. He could stand with one foot on Carn Brea (where there are rocky outcrops known as the Giant's Coffin, the Giant's Head and Hand and also a Giant's Wheel and Cradle) and the other on the St. Agnes' Beacon (12 miles apart). Bolster had a wife (known only as Mrs Bolster) who he took out all his bad moods and tempers on. Whenever he was so inclined he made her carry stones to the summit of the beacon in her apron. He also had an inclination for eating people and stealing cattle. He fell deeply in love however, with the beautiful but virtuous St. Agnes. He was so smitten he never gave her a minute's peace. In the end it was so bad that Agnes decided she would have to rid herself of him at any cost. She pretended to be flattered by his attentions and persistence and asked him to carry out one task to prove his love. On the top of the cliffs at Chapel Porth is a large hole. Agnes said if Bolster could fill the hole with his blood she surely would be his. Being such a huge giant he thought that this would be nothing to him, so taking a knife he plunged it into a vein. He watched as the blood flowed into the hole, expecting at any minute to see the hole filled. But the blood kept disappearing. Soon he felt weak and collapsed in a faint from the blood loss, and not long after he died. What Agnes had failed to tell him was that the hole went right down the cliff and opened into the sea, so as rapidly as his blood flowed into the hole it flowed out again into the ocean. There is still a rock on the cliffs which has a red stain to it and is said to be Bolster's blood.

In both Irish and Manx folklores there is a very famous giant, Fionn Mc Cumhail (Finn McCool). He is credited with the building of the Giant's Causeway and while fighting a rival he picked up a piece of Ireland and threw it at the other giant. When it missed and fell into the sea it became the Isle of Man.

Another variation of the stones falling from the apron creation myths

involves the devil. He was flying across Cornwall with a large boulder so he could block the entrance to Hell. He was met and challenged by St. Michael. During an airborne battle the devil dropped the boulder and the place where it landed became Hell's Stone or Helston. Helston is famous for Flora Day, a pagan festival of spring and it is also known from Terry Wogan's version of the song 'The Floral Dance' which another less commercialised version is played at Flora Day (usually 8th May).

The Stripstones are a long jagged ridge of rocks within the moorland region of Shropshire in the UK. The highest ridge is known as the Devil's chair. It is said that one day a giant sat there to rest while transporting stones from Ireland to England in his apron. As he stood to continue his task, the strings of the apron broke and the boulders scattered around the hillside.

Real Giants.

As a race, the Cornish have never been tall. On average two inches shorter than the average in the UK, so men who were unusually tall became known as giants. The most famous of these men was Anthony Payne. He was born in Stratton near Bude in north Cornwall in 1612. He was 7 foot 4 inches (223.5cm) tall, and 32 stone (203kg). He was by all accounts a gentle giant. He was a bodyguard to a local noble, Sir Bevill Grenville and they fought alongside each other during the English Civil War. King Charles was so impressed with his bravery he ordered a portrait to be painted. The portrait still exists and hangs in the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro, Cornwall. Many stories tell of his strength and he often would show this by carrying two people at a time. One under each arm! When he died in 1691 the coffin was too large to fit down the stairs so a hole was cut into the floor and the coffin lowered down.

John Laugherne of Truro who was 7ft 6 inches (228cm) and also 32 stone. Charles Chilcott, born 1742 was 6ft 9 inches (203cm) and over 30 stone. Although not that tall by today's standards he would have been well over a foot taller than the tallest man in his area. It was said that one of his stockings held six gallons of wheat.

Ballymote Handball Court

submitted by Owen M. Duffy

The picture shows a group of helpers who assembled for the redevelopment of the original handball court which was located at the Fairgreen, Ballymote. Included in the photo:

Front (L to R): Johnny Kilcoyne,?,?, Joe Flannery, Paddy Prior, Michael Hannon,?, Gerry Cassidy, Michael Cunnane, Dermot Henry with shovel, Gerry Mattimoe (in front of the wall) Paddy Reynolds, ?, Paddy Egan (with spirit level),

Back (L to R): Anthony Mullen, Michael Berry and Joseph Donegan.

Michael Hannon, who was chairman of Ballymote handball club circa 1955 when this development was undertaken, was a former All-Ireland junior handball champion. One of the sidewalls, which was leaning and dangerous, was knocked down by John Albert Farry with a sledgehammer before this development took place. Due to the committee's efforts, the sidewalls were restored, the backwall

Ballymote Handball Court

was built with a set of dressing rooms and overhead a fine viewing gallery was built for spectators. Development continued with roofing of the handball court.

For years before the restoration took place the sign painted on the front wall read "Vote No 1 M.F.Regan".

The handbal court was responsible for producing several

All-Ireland handball champions.

Thanks to Gerry Cassidy, Neal Farry and Dermot Henry for their help in naming most of those included in this photograph.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY: and its presence in the Ballymote District

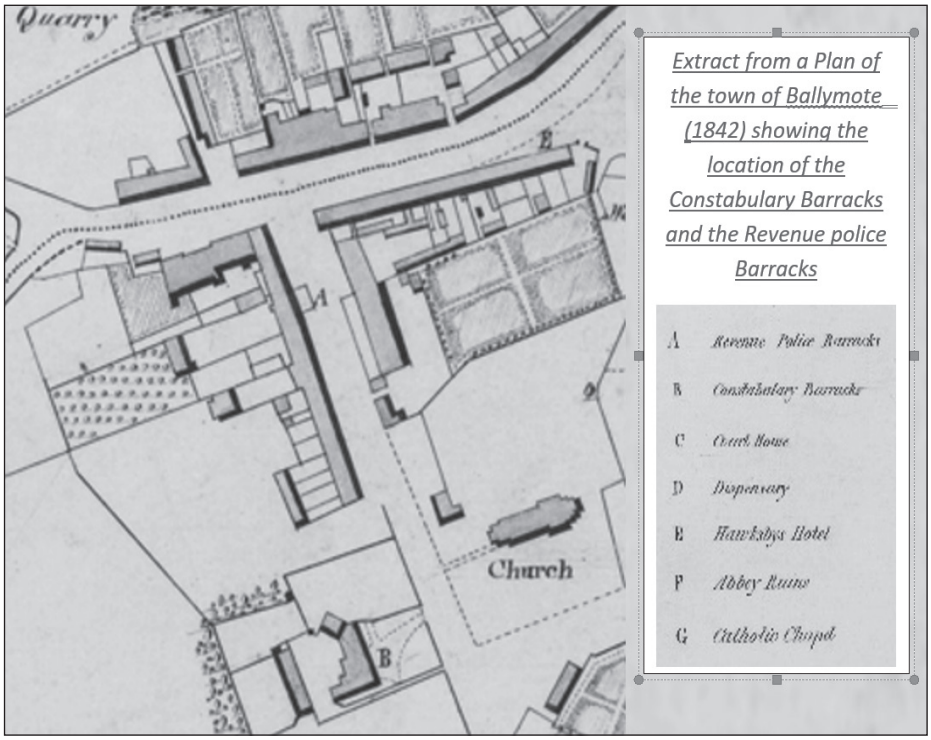
by Owen M. Duffy

This year marks the two hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the Irish Constabulary police force in Ireland and it is the hundredth anniversary since the force was disbanded and withdrawn from existence. Prior to the setting up of the Irish Constabulary force in 1822, executive officers of the law existed, called baronial constables. They were popularly known as "*old Barneys*" and being without uniform, arms or discipline, they presented a complete contrast to the new police force established in 1822.

The development of policing in 1822 is associated with Sir Robert Peel, Chief Secretary in Ireland between 1812 and 1818. On the 5 August 1822, the Constabulary Act was passed and the new police force called '*The Irish Constabulary Police*' was formed. It was developed on a national basis by 1836, when the force had grown to between 5,000 and 6,000 in number with an Inspector General for each province. Each constable was dressed in dark green uniform and armed with flintlock carbines and sword. They became popularly known as the "*peelers*" on account of the founder's name. By 1841 the force had grown to 8,600 men. It was a barracked force and had spread throughout the country with four or five police officers in each barrack being the norm. More than 85,000 men, most of them Irish, served in the force during its century of existence.

The first Ordnance Survey map of Sligo published in 1837 shows the Peace Police Barrack located on the site where the Ulster Bank was later built. A plan of Ballymote town published in 1842 shows a Revenue Police barrack also located close to where McNulty's Furniture Store now stands.

The Peace Police force dealt with general policing, law and order and the Revenue Police dealt with tax related offences, including the searching out of illegal distillation of poteen. The Revenue Police operated mostly west of the Shannon from 1837, with around two thousand serving officers in 26 special barracks. In 1857 they were amalgamated into the general peace police. Brigadier General Michael Corcoran of '*The New York fighting 69th regiment*' fame served initially as a Revenue police officer in Creeslough Co Donegal prior to emigrating to the USA on the ship 'Dromahaire' from Sligo port on 3 October 1849.



The first Ordnance Survey map of Sligo

The Irish Constabulary Police Force was set up as a model for the policing system in the rest of the British Isles and further afield in the developing colonies of the British empire. Training of constables was initially carried out in four provincial centres with the western centre in Ballinrobe. By the year 1842, a new centralised training depot was opened in the Phoenix Park Dublin and this continued as the training headquarters for the thirty-two counties until 1922. Recruits had to be at least 19 years and single and be at least 5 ft 9 ins in height. An exception was made for a recruit whose father was a serving officer. His son was accepted at 5 ft 8 ins and at 18 years of age. The evolution of this police force was characterised by improvement

in rank, structure, training and rules and regulations governing the duties, conduct and discipline expected of the constables.

In 1867, Queen Victoria granted the prefix '*Royal'* to the Irish Constabulary and conferred on it the most illustrious '*Order of Saint Patrick*'. This designation and honour from the Queen was in recognition of services in the suppression of the Fenian rising. From then on, the police force was known as The Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC).

Life in the RIC during the mid-19th century was comfortable and especially where a constable gained promotion. It was the constable's job to acquire a thorough knowledge of his district and have a good relationship with the local community. However, the constant simmering of discontent in relation to the land question and evictions caused rifts. Unrest and confrontations had to be faced during the Tithe war, the Young Ireland rebellion, the Fenian rising and the land war. When tensions increased for constables at the start of the War of Independence, most of them stayed on in the force because they had no economic alternative. With the increase in republican activity, the British government responded by creating two supplementary police forces, '*the Auxiliaries'* and '*the Black and Tans'.* The effect was to further legitimise attacks on anyone wearing a police uniform. The auxiliary force was a para-military unit of the RIC, acting as a counter insurgency corps and was formed of ex-commissioned English officers who had served in the First World War. The auxiliaries were a mobile unit. The 'black and tans' force was formed mostly from World War 1 unemployed ex-British army soldiers. Winston Churchill ordered this force into Ireland on 20th March 1920. In all, 10,936 '*black and tans*' were recruited. During the War of Independence, the RIC constables began to face mass public boycotts and attacks by the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Any association with RIC officers was seen as endangering the IRA and its activities. The auxiliaries and the 'black and tans' became notorious for police brutality and attacks on civilians and property. Reprisals by the auxiliaries' and the 'black and tans' always involved the burning of places of employment and creameries, the income generating support of the rural community.

Constable Jeremiah Mee, who served as constable in Keash, Collooney, Geevagh, Ballinafad and Grange before being transferred to Listowel wrote a wonderful account of life as a constable prior to the War of Independence and the changes that took place when the '*black and tans*' were introduced into Listowel. Mee was originally from Glenamaddy Co Galway. His Memoir was published in 1975. The Memoirs of Constable Jeremiah Mee, RIC, was republished by Mercier Press in 2012. Mee described his six months training programme undertaken in The Police Depot in the Phoenix Park in August 1910. The training programme included foot drill, carbine and revolver exercise, physical culture, swimming, rope climbing, first aid, firefighting, jiu jitsu, criminal law and police duties.

The RIC was characterised by a strict code of discipline. Members were banned from voting at parliamentary elections. There were strict laws laid down concerning standards of conduct and appearance. At one time they were banned from entering a public house socially. Other regulations were designed to maintain the standing of the constable within the community. A Cadet scheme was also introduced whereby members of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy (sons of gentry) were given commands at the rank of district inspector. This practice applied for most of the 1900's. However, by the year 1895 half of the commissioned ranks in the force was filled by men who had risen through the ranks.

Members were forbidden to marry until they had seven years of service and any potential bride had to be vetted by the constabulary authorities to ensure their social suitability. A constable or his wife was forbidden to sell produce, take in lodgers or engage in certain forms of trade. A constable's wife could be a dressmaker but could not employ apprentices. For example, Jane Ward, the wife of a serving constable in Mullaghroe in 1844 was able to take the position of teacher in '*needlework plain and embroidery on net and muslin*' in the national school in Mullaghroe. The RIC constables were active in sporting circles and including Gaelic games. The local handball court, which was built in Ballymote fairgreen, prior to the publishing of the 1837 Ordnance Map, would have provided an excellent fitness facility for young RIC officers. The founding committee of the Gaelic Athletic Association included an RIC district inspector named Thomas St. George McCarthy. However, shortly afterwards he was banned from playing Gaelic football but went on to play Triple Crown rugby for Ireland.
On the 9 September 1887, a dispute arose in relation to the removal of Ballymote RIC barracks from being the district headquarters. The reason put forward by Colonel King Harmon (Parliamentary Under Secretary) was that the terms offered by the Landlord, Sir Henry Gore Booth, were "most exorbitant". He also stated that he was not aware of any considerable protest undertaken by the people of the town with the move. The sum in dispute by Sir Henry Gore Booth and the government was £3 per year. Ballymote, however, remained a District headquarters.

By the year 1901, there were 1,600 barracks scattered around the countryside with over 11,000

constables serving in the thirty-two counties. The RIC was composed of more than 70% Catholic and thus close to the recorded Catholic recorded proportion of the population 1861–1911. In Ballymote RIC barracks in 1901, the Head Constable, John J Dobbin, was Church of Ireland. All the other serving constables were Roman Catholic. In the 1911 census, Head Constable, John Connell, was assisted by one sergeant, two acting sergeants and twelve constables, all were Roman Catholic

The territorial division of the county and district on which the command structure was based since 1836, continued to be reorganised throughout the life of the RIC. By 1900, each county was supervised by a county inspector with the county divided into a number of districts and each headed by a district inspector. The district inspector was in turn assisted by a head constable, on whom rested the main responsibility for operational policing and conduct of the men. In the 1890's, County Sligo was divided into five districts namely: Ballymote, Collooney, Easkey, Sligo town no 1, Sligo town no 2, and Tubbercurry. The Ballymote district was comprised of substations Ballinafad, Castlebaldwin, Clogher, Keash, Mullaghroe, Riverstown and Templehouse, with Ballymote station being the district headquarters. Keash, Templehouse and Clogher RIC barracks were evacuated in November 1919. The authorities adopted a policy of abandoning the small rural RIC police stations in 1919 and consolidating the district headquarters. Keash RIC barracks was attacked and burned by the republican forces on Easter Sunday night in 1920. Templehouse barracks was also attacked and burned. By September 1920 only eight barracks remained occupied in the county, Ballymote, Cliffoney, Coolaney, Easkey, Dromore West and the two-district headquarters in Sligo town.

Mullaghroe RIC barracks with the courthouse on the left-hand side.

Keash RIC barracks which was evacuated in 1919 and was burned down by the republican army on Easter Sunday night 1920

Ballymote RIC Barracks in 1900

By 1900, the RIC barracks in Ballymote was a large three storey building and contained twelve spacious rooms. John Joe Dockry who functioned as intelligence officer with the fourth battalion Sligo brigade of the I.R.B., described the barracks in the statement which he made and was recorded by The Bureau of Military History. *"The RIC Barracks in 1920 was the centre of three in one block. On one side was the market house and on the other a business premises. A plan to take over the market house and bore through the adjoining wall of the barracks, which was estimated to be 3ft in depth, and through the breach, to throw in explosives and then overpower the garrison. In the meantime, the British forces, whether from information received or experience already gained, took over the market house and the business premises and proceeded to have them both demolished and thereby leaving the barracks detached and completely upsetting our plans".*

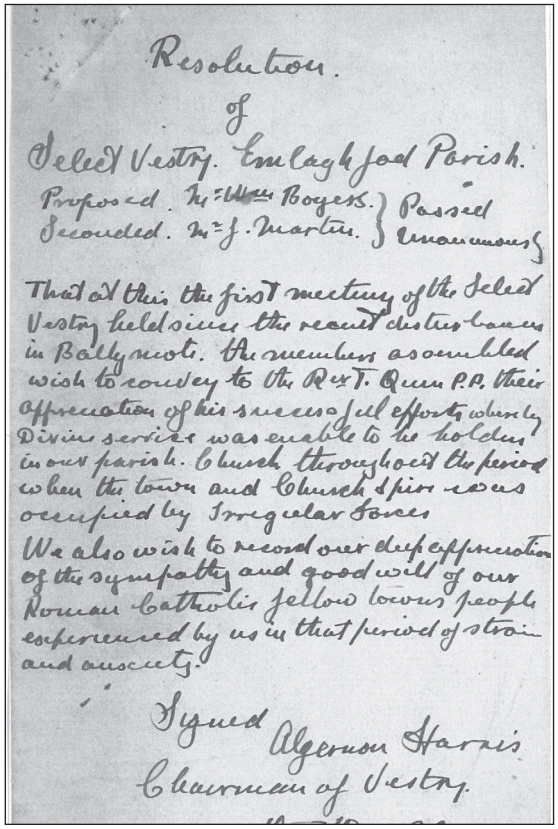
Corpus Christi gathering in front of the Market House following the burning down of the former RIC barracks in Ballymote. Note the ruins of the barrack and its gable end where the Market House was originally attached

Photograph of the RIC barracks clearly shows the markings where the market house was attached to the RIC barrack.

A statement made jointly by Thady McGowan, adjutant of the third battalion and Captain Tom Breheny, Keash company IRB, stated that "*In February 1921 we formed part of a party with Alec McCabe in charge that went into the town of Ballymote for attacking the RIC barracks and courthouse. The RIC barracks was a large building garrisoned by sixty RIC and tans. The plan adopted for the attack was to explode a mine at the courthouse in the hope that the explosion would draw out a party of police or tans from the barrack.*" Most probably through information received by the RIC, no police or tans exited the barracks and after a short exchange of fire, the attack was called off. The War of Independence was fought from 1919 to 1921, between the republican army and the British forces, which included the British army, the quasi-military RIC and the paramilitary force of 'black and tans'. The RIC was caught up in the struggle over this period and were compromised and its character changed. Also, RIC officers had now become arch enemies of the republican forces and were targeted. During the War of Independence, two RIC constables were shot in the Ballymote district. Sergeant Patrick Fallon was executed by two members of the third battalion during the November fair day at the corner of Lord Edward Street and Emmet Street Ballymote. Then at midnight on Saint Patrick's Day in 1921, 26-year-old Constable James O' Brien was shot at the corner of Newtown Street and the Gurteen Road by a group of republicans who were exiting the town. On 2 April 1881, Sergeant Robert Armstrong of Mullaghroe RIC was killed from blows received to the head while on a process serving expedition and two local farmers Joseph Corcoran and Brian Flannery were shot dead not a hundred yards from where the Catholic Church in Monasteraden now stands.

The War of Independence ended on the 11 July 1921, when a truce was agreed by both sides to allow peace negotiations to take place. Then on the 6 December 1921, the Anglo-Irish treaty was agreed by both sides and the Irish Free State formally came into being. The Treaty was welcomed by the country in general. The Dáil was the first organisation to split on account of the Treaty. Dáil debate on the Treaty started on the 19 December 1921 and concluded with a vote on the treaty on 7 January 1922. Sligo TDs, McCabe and O'Donnell voted

Parade inspection of RIC constables in the Depot, Phoenix Park.



Resolution
of
Select Vestry. Emlaghfad Parish.
Proposed. Mr Wm Boyers. } Passed
Seconded. Mr J. Martin. } Unanimously

That at this the first meeting of the Select Vestry held since the recent disturbances in Ballymote. the members assembled wish to convey to the Rev T. Quinn P.P. their appreciation of his successful efforts whereby Divine service was enable to be holden in our parish Church throughout the period when the town and Church spire were occupied by Irregular forces
We also wish to record our deep appreciation of the sympathy and good will of our Roman Catholic fellow towns people experienced by us in that period of strain and anxiety.

Signed Algernon Harris
Chairman of Vestry.

Resolution of the Select Vestry of Emlaghfad Parish expressing their appreciation to Rev Thomas Quinn for his successful efforts whereby services were enabled while the spire of the Church was occupied by the irregular forces in February and March 1922.

The resolution was signed by the chairman, Rev Algernon Harris on 10th October 1922

for ratification of the treaty while Deputies Carty and Devins voted against the ratification. The Dáil vote was as follows: sixty-four votes in favour ratification and fifty-seven votes against.

After the approval of the Treaty in the Dáil by the slender majority on 7 January 1922, the line was drawn for the commencement of a civil war that was to claim more Irish lives than the War of Independence. The majority of Ballymote IRA took the republican anti-treaty side while Alec McCabe and the Culfadda men joined the free state pro-treaty side.

Ballymote barracks was evacuated by the RIC and British troops in mid-February 1922 and handed over to Alec McCabe and the pro-treaty IRA. Immediately the anti-treaty forces commandeered Emlaghfad parish church across the road from the barracks and used the turret of the spire to monitor pro-treaty force movement across the road. They did however allow Sunday services to be held during the occupation of the church. Then on the night of 2 April, all the pro-treaty force including Alec McCabe were attending an election meeting in Castlebar. The anti-treaty IRA stormed the former RIC barracks and took over possession. The courthouse was then taken over by Jim Hunt on behalf of the national army. Sometime later a force of free state soldiers led by Alec McCabe occupied Ballymote and attacked the former RIC barrack which was still held by the anti-treaty republicans. Faced by superior numbers, the irregulars evacuated the building but not before setting fire to it. The fire lasted several days which completely gutted the fine three storey structure.

Then on the 28 April 1923, De Valera issued an order to end the civil war. It finally ended on 24May 1923, a war that left Irish society divided and embittered for generations.

RIC Records

Every man who joined the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) has a service record stored in public records office in Kew, England and is also available on microfilm at the National Archives, Bishop Street, Dublin 8. Men were listed by year of appointment to the force. Information in the service register includes, service number, name, age when appointed, height in feet and inches, native county, previous occupation, religion, date of marriage, name of officer who recommended the person, counties and dates of service, dates of promotions or demotion in rank, rewards /marks of distinction, punishments, when discharged, resigned, total time of service and amount of pension.

Ballymote former RIC barrack's ruin was eventually demolished to make way for the erection of the Munster and Leinster bank. Following the closing down of the bank, An Garda Siochána established itself in the vacated building and remained there until the present Garda Station was erected on the vacated site of Dockry's Bakery.

The Civic Guard.
Following the ratification of the treaty on 7 February 1922, Michael Collins who was Minister for Finance in the first free state government, was responsible for the formation of a new police force to replace the RIC and the Irish republican police (1919–1922). Formed on the 22 February 1922, the name selected for the new force was "The Civic Guard". On 17August 1922, Dublin Castle was handed over to a deputation led by Michael Collins. Following the handover of Dublin Castle, the recently appointed Commissioner Michael Joseph Staines led his newly appointed Civic Guard force in through the gates. Sadly, Michael Collins was assassinated just five days after that significant hand over, at Béal na Bláth on 22August 1922. The Civic Guard was renamed the Garda Síochána na hÉireann on 8 August 1923.

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(6) Compensation Ireland Commission papers
(7) 1842 Town plan of Ballymote. John Coleman
(8) Book published on the re-dedication of St Patricks Church, Gurteen.
(9) Ballymote during the troubles. Neal Farry The Corran Herald 1986
(10) Memoirs of Constable Jeremiah Mee RIC. J Antony Gaugh
Sligo and its surroundings. Tadhg Kilgannon.

Caves of Keash

by Rose Marie Stanley

It wasn't the iconic pillars of the Giant's Causeway,
It wasn't the beauty of the land and seascapes,
It wasn't the accent or the lilt of the people,
It wasn't because my heart said "yes".

It wasn't the invitation,
It wasn't The Gathering,
It wasn't the Ambassador,
It wasn't because my heart said "yes".

It wasn't the cousins,
It wasn't the memories,
It wasn't the rainbows,
It wasn't because my heart said "yes".

It wasn't the music,
It wasn't the food,
It wasn't the the winding roads or the green of the hills,
It wasn't because my heart said "yes".

It was the photo,
It was the background,
It was the Caves of Keash,
It was because my heart said "yes".

Rose Marie Stanley at the Caves of Keash.

Gaeilge í gContae Shligigh

by Maureen Murphy

A map dating from 1926 shows three areas in Sligo where Irish was spoken on a daily basis at least by some of the population. Such areas are described as *breac ghaeltachtaí* or partial *gaeltachtaí*. One of these was a small region around Grange in northwest Sligo, the second was in the Geevagh-Riverstown area of southeast Sligo and the third was a slightly larger area in the Kilmacteige area of the southwest of the county which stretched along the Ox mountains into Co. Mayo. This latter Gaeltacht appears to have survived somewhat longer than the others, spoken Irish could still be heard here into the 1950s especially in the townlands of *Coill Dá Lao,* (Culdaly), *Leitir Brón* (Letterbrone) and *Ceathrú Riabhach* (Carrareagh).

Béaloideas

Recognising the decline in spoken Irish everywhere, the government introduced a scheme in the 1930s whereby a number of "travelling" teachers were sent to various parishes in the west where they gave Irish classes in the schools in the evenings and collected stories and songs and local lore, mostly in Irish. One such teacher was Brighid Ní Chollaráin from Hollymount, Co. Mayo who spent some time in 1935/36 in Killasser parish, adjacent to Kilmacteige. Her extensive collection of folklore from Kilmacteige and Killasser is now available on https://www.duchas.ie/en/cbe/9000191

Among those who provided material to Brighid were Tom Carroll, a prolific story teller, and Pat O'Hara both from Letterbrone as well as Padhraig Neilin from Aclare. Alice Boland also from Letterbrone and Mrs James Judge from Killasser, who was originally Annie O'Hara from Culdaly, each contributed a valuable selection of local songs which no doubt were heard in many a rambling house during the long winter's nights. Other names credited in the manuscripts are Margaret Cunney and John Deasy from Culdaly. It may be as a result of Brighid's work that a delegation from the Irish Folklore Commission visited the Boland home in Letterbrone in 1936 to record some of those songs, stories and local lore onto wax cylinders with an Ediphone machine, the most up to date technology of the time.

The following year in 1937, the boys and girls from Kilmacteige National School were involved in the Schools' Manuscript Collection which is also available on the www.duchas.ie website. Most of the material recorded there is in Irish showing that the language was still very much alive in the area at that time. Other collectors, some working full-time, others part-time, were engaged in collecting folklore as well. In Killasser parish there were three, Áine Ní Ruadháin, Séamus Ó Phiotáin and Peig Ní hÉanacháin, Such collectors received a small monetary reward for their efforts.

Folklore collecting among the diaspora

In addition and almost fifty years beforehand, thousands of miles away from Kilmacteige, a native son of the parish was making a collection of his own in an effort to preserve the Irish language and its oral tradition. Daniel Murphy or Domhnall Ó Morchadha as he preferred, was born in Kilmacteige in 1858. He emigrated to Philadelphia c.1881 and soon afterwards entered the Seminary of St Charles Borromeo where he was ordained a priest in 1888. He spent the rest of his life ministering in the diocese of Philadelphia. In addition to his work as a priest he worked ceaselessly to preserve what he could of the Irish language. He joined a Philo-Celtic Society in Philadelphia and submitted articles to *An Gaodhal,* an Irish language magazine published in New York. Everywhere he worked in Pennsylvania Fr Dan collected as much Irish lore as he could including *dánta, amhráin, seanfhocla, scéalta, etc.* During holidays in Kilmacteige he wrote down songs and stories from his native parish too. In total there are more than 1000 songs, including many versions of the same song, taken from emigrants mainly from Donegal and west Mayo.

In the United States, Fr Dan had purchased a typewriter with the old Gaelic font, believed to be the first of its type to be made. It is likely that this was the first time that Irish as it was spoken in the *Gaeltacht* of west Sligo was published anywhere. Fr Dan also corresponded with such famous people as Douglas Hyde and Eoin McNeill, both of whom were collectors of Irish songs and writings as well as with Fr Michael O'Flanagan, the well known republican priest and Irish language scholar.

Link with Galway University

In 1924 Fr Dan donated all of his copies of *An Gaodhal* to University College Galway where they were received by Tomás Ó Máille*, Ollamh le Gaeilge*. Subsequently Tomás Ó Máille visited Kilmacteige to speak with *Gaeilgeoirí* there. He was responsible for arranging for three of these Irish speakers to travel to Galway in 1930 for a recording by the German linguist, Dr Wilhelm Doegen. The Irish government at the time had invited Dr Doegen to record native Irish speakers from different parts of the country in an effort to preserve the various dialects.

Those who participated from Kilmacteige were:

• Tomás Ó Cearrbhaill (Tom Carroll) aged 70, who told a short story, *Na Cait Fhiáine*,

• Seán Mac an Déise (John Deasy) who sang a song about *Coill Dá Lao* and who recited a poem called *An Bhéarthóg*,

• Patrick O'Hara who told a story about the hare on the mountain and who recited a poem listed as *Muintir Dharachan* (corrected *Muintir Gharrachoill)*

• Also recorded on the same day was Brigid McEvey from Ballincurry, Curry, Co. Sligo, who recited a poem called *Maidin Fhomhair is mé ag triall go hEochail*l and told a short story entitled *An fear beag riabhach rua*.

A transcript accompanies each piece, making it easy to follow the words and appreciate the fluency and the blas of each of the participants. It is a unique connection with the past.

(To listen to the voice recordings of *Gaeilgeoirí Cill Mhic Thaig* visit: www.doegen.ie and click on Co. Sligo on the map).

It is likely that Fr Dan Murphy kept in touch with Tomás Ó Máille and that he was the link with Kilmacteige that prompted its inclusion in the recordings. On his death in 1935 his entire collection of 10 boxes of scripts was bequeathed to University College Galway. Thanks to the staff in the James Hardiman Library at NUIG, the collection has now been catalogued and is available for study in the library, G20-*Bailiúcháin an tAthair Ua Morchadha.* Thanks also to Dr Deirdre Ní Chonghaile who has done much to have the value of the collection recognised.

Is dócha go bhfuil roinnt Gaeilgeoirí ar fud an chontae agus suim acu sna taifeadáin thuasluaite ach go háirithe

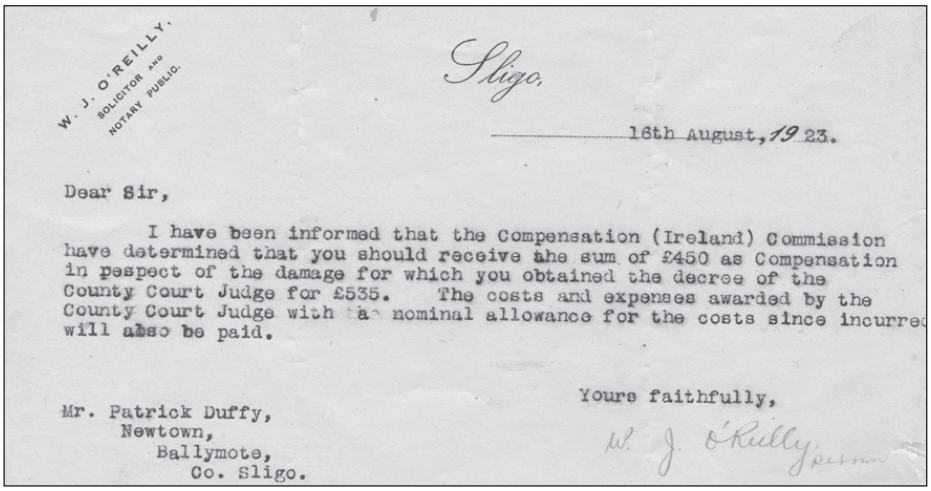
The Compensation Ireland Commission

submitted by Owen M. Duffy

The Compensation Ireland Commission determined compensation for damage caused by the auxiliaries and the 'black and tans' during the War of Independence. Following the truce on 11 July 1921, part of the agreement decided upon in the setting up of the Free State constitution, was admission to the principle of compensation for those who had suffered major loss or damage during action taken by the military / auxiliaries operating under martial law. As a consequence, the Compensation Ireland Commission was established jointly by the two governments in 1922. The commissions terms of reference were confined to considerations of claims in respect of damage or injury incurred between the 21 January 1919 and 11 July 1921.

One of the claims submitted relates to Patrick Duffy, Newtown, Ballymote. On the 3 November 1920 (the Fair Day in Ballymote), Sergeant Patrick Fallon was shot by two members of the local volunteers during the fair. At about 9pm that evening, six lorries of auxiliaries arrived from Ballaghadereen and began a reign of terror in Ballymote and reprisals consisted of burning premises in the town. The local co-operative creamery was set alight and a haybarn belonging to Patrick Meehan was burned. A premises belonging to Dominick Hannon, Newtown Street was set alight. J.A Dockry's bakery and premises belonging to McKenna Bohan and Farry of Newtown Street were badly damaged. The farmyard buildings including cattle sheds, hay shed and turf-shed belonging to Patrick Duffy, Newtown Street were destroyed. Patricks two sons, James and Patrick Jr were active members of the IRA. A claim for the damage caused was submitted to the Compensation Ireland Commission and notice of the compensation awarded arrived through W.J.O'Reilly, Solicitor and Notary Public, Sligo. The notice arrived on 16th August 1923.

Registers of claims were prepared in the conduct of the Commission's business which came to an end in 1925. This series of registers of claims made, are held at the National Archives, Kew, Kent.



W. J. O'REILLY, SOLICITOR AND NOTARY PUBLIC.

Sligo,

16th August, 1923.

Dear Sir,

I have been informed that the Compensation (Ireland) Commission have determined that you should receive the sum of £450 as Compensation in respect of the damage for which you obtained the decree of the County Court Judge for £535. The costs and expenses awarded by the County Court Judge with an nominal allowance for the costs since incurred will also be paid.

Yours faithfully,

W. J. O'Reilly

Mr. Patrick Duffy,
Newtown,
Ballymote,
Co. Sligo.

The letter from W.J. O'Reilly, Solicitors

JOURNEY OF A SLIGO PRIEST 1763-65

by Padraic Feehily

Collegio Urbano de Propaganda Fide, Rome

On 22nd November 1753, James Lyons of the Diocese of Elphin was recommended by the Archbishop of Tuam, Michael Sherritt for a place reserved for students from Connacht in the Collegio Urbano. Father John Baptist Lynch O.P., put the request before Propaganda (the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith) and the pope gave his consent on 18th February 1755. Lyons, then seventeen, entered the College in September of the same year.

Fr. Lyons on his journey

His letters take up the story in May 1763, when he set off for Ireland, and carry forward to September 1765 when he was Canon of Drumcliffe and served as curate to the ageing parish priest of Sligo. He was still alive twenty years later and still Canon of Drumcliffe.

Having made a sad farewell to friends in Rome, Lyon's journey took him north to the City of Ronciglione and an arduous climb over the mountains to Viterbo and Aquapendente, where with companions, they rested having experienced ongoing sickness, the result of the severe weather. Reaching Livorno on the Italian coast and an improving climate they enjoyed the respite staying among religious superiors and made ready for the boat journey to the French city of Marseilles, their travels having taken seven days.

Lyons writes of his financial position at this juncture: "*my small stack of money has dwindled not a little here, for I was forced to buy an overcoat, a small valise, a pair of socks and a pillow to take the place of a mattress [if] I didn't buy these as luxuries: I simply couldn't enter on the voyage."* He records here of his shortage of money which *"won't suffice for half the road."*

Throughout the journey, Lyons corresponded with his superior, Cardinal Mario Marefoschi through an antiquated postal system, the letters are recorded in the Vatican Archives. Planning the forward travel to Avignon, Lyons records his fear of being taken as an imposter as happened to another priest. He requests his superior, *"To send a letter of recommendation in my favour to the rector of Propaganda's College at Avignon."*

Lyons records his impressions of France, "*In this foreign country I see customs and ceremonies, especially ecclesiastical ones which are completely new, but I do not like them at all. To tell the truth they sicken me when I remember those of my Italy."*

Through further correspondence Fr Lyons recorded the effects the travel is having on his, *"wretched state of health"* and fear of falling ill at some inn without any money to sustain him. After nineteen days in Avignon where he suffered diarrhoea and severe bouts of trembling, he prepares to leave for the city of Lyons: forty days into his journey from Ireland.

James Lyons gives an interesting description on the next part of his journey, *"I left Lyons by canal-barge …… in a boat, painted on the outside*

and lined with tapestries within and drawn by four horses. It is divided into two rooms, one for nobles and those going to Paris, and the other for common people and others going to intermediate cities and places. There were in the company more than three hundred people of every kind, sex, sect and condition. At ten o-clock the following morning we arrived at Chalons where we took the stagecoach for Paris."

Arriving in Paris, again his insecurities over money proved difficult as his superior at the Congregation was not forewarned of his needs. The fragility of life in those times is reflected in news from home, *"I received here in Paris the afflicting news of the deaths of my two fellow students and co-diocesans, namely Matthew O'Connor and Hugh O'Rourke. I had hoped to find them safe and sound on my return and took great consolation in the hope that (though a novice) I could attach myself to two experienced veterans. There is now no other alumnus in the whole diocese."*

August 18th 1763 James Lyons is back in Dublin and writing to his superiors of his dire financial position. *"I (have) neither money nor friends"* and has again to borrow from an Irish acquaintance stating further, *"I pervaded on (friend) to give me the money necessary to have clothes made so that I could decently appear in this kingdom as an alumnus of Propaganda. I am in debt to the extent of nine pounds sterling, but at present have no means of paying it back. I trust, however, in the blessings of God and the goodness of your Eminence."*

At this juncture the archdiocese of Dublin (or Parish of Saint Nicholas) is in the process of electing an archbishop and James Lyons records his opinion of one of the nominees, *"at all events, being an alumnus and quietly disinterested (as one who belongs to another province and diocese) I think no less of my obligation to inform your Eminence and the Sacred Congregation of what I have heard about this prelate. He is, in the first place, a man of low birth and that is something which does not pass unnoticed in this country."* Lyons continues, *"I must earnestly beg my name be concealed in this affair and given all the secrecy the circumstances demand. Were it be become known I would instantly acquire great and powerful enemies".*

"*Since the cold of Ireland is beginning to trouble me, even in the present month of August I fear I shall not be able to support the cold of the countryside this winter in my own province of Connacht. I will therefore be obliged to remain in Dublin where I have to study my Moral Theology (and) learning my native language which I forgot in Rome – and in converting my unfortunate relatives, many of whom are heretics."*

Difficulties over money again arose in letters from his superiors early in 1764. They appear unforthcoming to meet his demands for further advances. Lyons replies, *"I can publicly declare that I didn't spend a farthing save for the journey itself and for a hundred things that were necessary before I could appear in this persecuted country."* Warming to his subject James Lyons wrote further that only two other priests either secular or regular, *"have returned to Ireland in the past twenty years from France, Spain, Germany, nor even from Rome itself."* Lyons continues, *"I am convinced the Congregation has no money to throw away and that its revenues, however splendid, are no greater than normal expenses .... I ask only for a little time. Please do not press me."*

James Lyons comments on the state of religious observance at home, *"almost all my kinsfolk are Protestants (including to my eternal regret) my uncle and my brother who publicly apostatized last Saturday .... What does trouble me is that I encounter many who have not approached the Holy Sacraments for three, four, eleven, sixteen and twenty years."* He further appeals to his superiors his wish to stay in Dublin, "*and exercise the mission here for two years. I went to no small expense about ninety miles to see my bishop (Elphin). He had authorised me to return to Dublin, not being able to employ me because of my deficiency in my native language which for the greater part I forgot in College."*

James Lyons to his superior Mario Marefoschi 19th January 1765

"*I left Dublin and all the hopes I had of doing good there and betook myself to my native country and the diocese of Elphin. As soon as I reached home I went to see my bishop James O'Fallon, who welcomed me most affably and, having examined me, assigned me without more ado as assistant and coadjutor to the Parish of Sligo, and named me besides parish priest of a small place about three miles away.*

Sligo is a seaport convenient enough for the commerce it has with England, Scotland, Sweden, Holland, Denmark, France, America and even Italy, to which it often sends vessels laden with salmon, hides and other commodities. The inhabitants are mixed, Catholics, Protestants, Calvinists, Tremblers or Quakers, Swadlers, Masons etc. Ours form the majority, for almost all the people are of our faith. Heresy has raised its head more in these parts than in the rest of Connacht, due to the proximity of Ulster. There is not much hope of great conversions here for the reformers in this area are intensely bigoted because of the cruelty practised towards them on their first appearance here. The Catholics are docile and well-disposed and there would not be better in the world if

Sligo Abbey in the last quarter of 18th Century.

oaths and drunkenness were not their second nature. Not a day passes but I am on horseback. The two stations I serve each Sunday are as far apart as Frascati or Tivoli from Rome (about 15 miles). I work night and day attending to their calls.
PS. I am much occupied in learning the Irish language and almost despair of ever learning it to perfection."

On September 1765, James Lyons received further correspondence from one of his superiors, Cardinal Castelli, apparently pressing him for repayment of monies advanced. He records, *"the letter Cardinal Castelli deigned to write brought me only confusion and fear, because it was outside my power to satisfy the injunction he laid on me."*

Lyons returns to record of his time and duties, *"I am still in the same city of Sligo and can scarcely support the labours of the place. The souls in the borough and in the countryside are exceedingly numerous, but mostly poor and dispersed in various parts very difficult to access. The parish priest is advanced in years and since I am his curate the great weight of the work falls on me. In this part of the diocese both regular and secular priests are very few in number, so much so that if I were sick or otherwise impeded, I would not find another to take my place, although some time ago there used to be six or seven friars in the convent (abbey) here."* Lyons here is an early witness to the decline in the numbers of priests which can be dated from 1742. Five members of the community are listed (abbey) for 1767. In 1735 the abbey had about sixteen members though some were out through the countryside.

"Conversions are not very frequent because of the proximity to Ulster. However, thanks to the blessed God we have some converts and I myself have won over seven since I took up this (office). I hope my fellow pupils (in Rome) will not forget to pray for us poor wretches who are here, sword in hand, fighting day and night with not much time to spend at our prayers apart from reciting the Divine office."

On 26th November 1786, he was the first of eleven signatures to a request that John Flynn, rather than Edmund French, be named coadjutor to the ailing Bishop of Elphin James O'Fallon. When the bishop died a few weeks later, the name of Canon Lyons appeared among those of the diocesan clergy who wished John Flynn to succeed. Someone must have feared that Lyons himself would become bishop for in February 1787 he was the victim of an anonymous poison-pen letter from Co. Roscommon to Propaganda.

Padraic Feehily's latest book ***"Down at Hyde Bridge" i****s now in Sligo book shops..*

THE YEAR OF THE SLAUGHTER

by John McDonagh

Almost everybody in the country is familiar with stories of Ireland's Great Potato Famine, 1845—1850, which caused an estimated two million deaths from starvation and forced another two million people to flee the country. This catastrophic event left the country impoverished and traumatised for many decades. It was however, just one of many famines that Ireland experienced over many centuries, usually caused by war, political upheaval, climatic events and of course, by crop failure.

The earlier but less well-known Irish Famine of 1740 - 1741 is estimated to have been responsible for the deaths of up to 20% of the population which was then around 2.4 million people. This was a proportionately greater death rate than the 1845 - 1850 famine. Climatologists now believe that this particular famine was the result of the last serious cold period towards the end of the Little Ice Age (A 400 year period of severe climate cooling between the fifteenth and the nineteenth centuries) The famine of 1740 was due to extremely dry and cold weather in successive years, resulting in a series of extremely bad grain harvests, very high livestock mortality and frost damage to the already depleted potato crop, even though potatoes had still to become a staple part of the Irish diet.

This cold period extended right across Europe but the mortality was higher in Ireland because apparently, the crop failures were more severe and the services, where they existed, were more disorganised.

The Frost of 1739—1740

Following a decade of relatively mild winters, the whole continent of Europe including Ireland, experienced a cataclysmic climatic event between December 1739 and September 1741. Its cause remains unknown but it sharply illuminates just how vulnerable we all are to weather and climatic events.

In the winter of 1739 Ireland suffered seven weeks of near Arctic conditions, now remembered as the "Great Frost" The very scarce records that survive from that time appear to indicate that temperatures may have dipped as low as minus 32 degrees. According to David Dickson in his book "Arctic Ireland" these conditions were unlike anything Ireland had ever experienced previously.

Throughout this period hardly any snow fell. Ireland was locked into a stable and vast high-pressure system which affected most of Europe "from Scandinavia and Russia to northern Italy." Rivers, lakes and even the sea froze, fish and wild birds died. People, at that time, relied entirely on solid fuel, turf, timber and coal to cook their meals and heat their humble homes. Because of inadequate transport and the intense cold, the supply of these materials suffered huge interruptions. This was more than a century before the establishment of the railways and the road systems that existed were little more than primitive tracks. Indeed, it was reported that the shipping of coal from Cumbria had to be suspended because of icebound ports.

People were desperate, dying of hypothermia in their homes. Because mill wheels froze solid in the mill-races, it meant that all milling operations came to a standstill, as did the many small industries that relied on water to power their primitive machinery. This meant huge disruption to the fledgling industrial enterprises of the eighteenth century, which left many people out of work and without any income, in a period when there was no social welfare.

The Church of Ireland (the then dominant ecclesiastical body as the Penal Laws were still in operation) solicited donations which they used to provide the desperate population with fuel and rations. It is recorded that the Duke of Devonshire (Lord Lieutenant at that time) prohibited the export of grain from the country to any destination other than Britain.

Starvation and Cold

Potatoes at that time, were not the main source of nutrition for the Irish population which relied mainly on grains, oatmeal, porridge, bread, meat, fish and vegetables for their food, but potatoes still formed a substantial part of the diet for poorer people.

The potatoes, when taken out of the ground, were mainly stored in clamps in the fields where they were grown. Typically, the potatoes were graded, with the ones selected for human consumption, being piled into heaps well covered with straw or rushes and then the whole pile covered with a layer of packed soil about 45 centimetres thick. The inferior grades which were mainly used for animal feeding and seed, were usually pitted separately, but covered in a similar manner. This normally protected them from weather, vermin and frost, but in 1740 the frost was so severe that the covering afforded little protection and the crops suffered huge frost damage leaving them inedible and useless for seed and animal feed.

Unlike the terrible cataclysm of the 1840s, the 1740 famine impacted on the livestock as well as the people. Cows, beef cattle and sheep were not usually housed during winter at that time, indeed little if any hay was being saved and consequently when the arctic conditions came the losses were enormous leaving a serious scarcity of milk, butter and mutton.

The spring of 1740 brought more disaster, drought. The frost dissipated but the weather remained cold and dry with biting northerly winds and no rain causing more misery and increasing the already high mortality level among both livestock and people. By the end of April much of the wheat and barley sown the previous autumn had failed, leaving a huge deficit in the national food supply. Potato and grain prices skyrocketed, people could not afford the exorbitant prices being sought by the merchants and just as happened a little over a century later, they began a mass exodus from rural areas to the better supplied towns.

Food Riots and Civil Unrest

The starving people vented their anger and frustration on grain dealers, merchants and bakers in many places throughout the entire country and stormed markets and warehouses in many areas.

The first of these riots occurred at the port of Drogheda when a group of desperate people boarded a vessel laden with oatmeal which was preparing to depart for Scotland. They removed the rudder and sails, thus ensuring that Scotland would receive no more oatmeal from the starving Irish.

A food riot broke out in Dublin towards the end of May. Troops were used to try and restore order and many people were killed. There were subsequent food riots in Limerick, Cork and Sligo, many resulting in fatalities.

In the autumn of 1740, a much depleted harvest was gathered and conditions began to improve for the population. Food prices were reduced and once again cattle and sheep began to thrive, but the crisis was far from over. The hardship and starvation that had been endured by the cows resulted in a significant number of them becoming infertile. This in turn resulted in fewer calves, a massive decline in milk production and consequently a deficit in the amount of butter being produced.

Then, climatic conditions worsened once more. In late October 1740 a series of blizzards and heavy snowfalls swept westwards over the country causing severe disruption and hardship. This was followed by an intense rain storm on December 9th which caused widespread flooding. Following that, a period of extremely low temperatures took hold once again which caused rivers and lakes to freeze solid. When the thaw came after nearly two weeks of this severe frost, temperatures rose so rapidly that according to contemporary reports "huge blocks of ice swept down the River Liffey overturning small craft and causing larger ones to break anchor."

More Food Riots

Once again, the highly unusual weather of the autumn and winter resulted in food scarcity and skyrocketing food prices. Again, the desperate people took to the streets, there were more food riots in several towns all over the country which was by now experiencing a full blown famine. This apparently lasted until the summer of 1741 when five ships loaded with grain arrived in the port of Galway and the price of grain came down to affordable levels.

The famine and hardships finally came to an end. It did not continue for the same lengthy period as the 1840s famine but it was more intense and killed a higher proportion of the population with cold and hunger. The country was more sparsely populated in the eighteenth century and the privations of that period did not result in the same mass emigration that occurred a century later. Neither did this famine have the same effect on the Irish psyche even though 1740 is still remembered in history as "The Year of the Slaughter".

Benbulben and Me

by Andy Hegarty

Come summer sun, or blizzard blast,
In matters not to Benbulben towering high.
With its prow-shaped face of physical character.
Pointing peerless into the northern sky.

I was there, on a July hazy day
beside that massive mountain of splendour
And as I viewed sunlight through vapour clouds,
my train of thought, for reason, turned to wonder.

I thought of the infinity of time
in this mountain of cold, cold stone.
And of foolish fellows, oblivious in mind,
that now is the only time they own.

I thought of a sunset fading into twilight
And of eager men, striving the opulent way.
I thought of the earth at rest in moonlight.
And of the stillness of men in cold clay.

LIFE IN THE LAST CENTURY

A recollection of one's persons life through a difficult period of history

by Kevin McLoughlin

Her photo had a permanent place on the mantlepiece in the sitting room. As a child, he frequently asked his mother who she was, just to hear her soothing voice fondly recalling her beloved sister, Baby. The name of the pretty woman intrigued the young boy and his questions persisted about the mysterious lady who never came to visit. He learned as he grew older that his aunt was christened Margaret, but was affectionally called Baby, customary of the times.

World War 1 had just ended and the struggle to liberate Ireland from English rule in the War of Independence was underway in 1919 when Baby arrived in this world at a place near Ballymote in Co. Sligo. Her parents were married on Easter Monday 1916, the day the Uprising took place in Dublin. Her Dad was one of ten children, and her mother was from a family of six that lived a few miles further towards the Curlew Mountains. Seven of her Dad's family emigrated to America amid the massive emigration to a continent booming with economic prosperity. His youngest sister, the last to leave home, had yearned to meet up with other family members in New York but sadly died in the 1918 flu pandemic shortly after arriving in America.

The poor standard of living in Ireland at that time afforded few career opportunities in life with many people living in poverty. Baby's Dad had inherited the small family holding where he had laboured since his youth. The farm was tillage-intensive and the potato still the staple diet. For the new young family, it was the best of times which soon became the worst of times as they watched one of their children die from diphtheria just after her second birthday. More heartbreak and bereavement for the young mother was to follow as her husband of seven years died of pneumonia at the age of thirty-three leaving three young children. Alone with the young family to rear and unable to manage the farm work, she remarried soon afterwards. She had seven further children over the next ten years, tragedy revisiting when another child died from diphtheria. Two of her older children were sent separately to live with married aunts, one of whom had no children of her own. One of those children recalled to her son some fifty years later how it was the saddest day of her life when she had to leave home, aged ten, on the horse and trap of a relative to travel the few miles to her new home.

Baby, the eldest of the family of eleven, attended school in Ballymote and just after her fifteenth birthday joined the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. She spent two years in the novitiate, undergoing training before making any decision on taking final vows. She grasped the opportunity when it arose of accepting an invitation to the motherhouse in Houston, Texas to enable her to explore her vocation and make a final judgement on her future as a nun. She left Cobh (and Ireland for the first and last time) on the transatlantic steamship, The Washington and stayed in New York for a time before moving on to Houston in 1938. While there and as a novice, she attended the University of Texas and qualified as a nurse in 1940. Having worked in various infirmaries

Baby

in Texas she eventually decided with some trepidation that the isolated life of the cloister and final profession to the sisterhood was not for her and reluctantly left the Order in 1943.

Among the options available to Baby in the Land of the Free, the strong-willed woman joined the American army to the shock and distress of her mother in Ireland as the United States had become involved in World War 11 just two years previously. As a recruit in the army, she was spared from involvement in the combat zone, working instead using her nursing profession in an army hospital caring for those injured military personnel who were fortunate to survive at the front and returned to the homeland

for treatment. Using her considerable skills and abilities she quickly moved up the army ranks, reaching lieutenant level within a relatively short time.

As the World War ended, Baby continued her work on army transports and travelled to places far and wide such as France, Italy, Germany Turkey, Egypt and Australia. By 1950, she was heading to a new battle zone as American troops had entered the Korean war on South Korea's behalf to prevent the expansion of communism in Asia. She started duty in a 60-bed military field hospital right at the front where casualties were mounting and rumours circulating of a World War 3 if both China and Russia became involved. The last letter sent home from Baby to her mother told of the challenging work in the hospital dealing with the horrific injuries, but also of the soldiers succumbing to intestinal diseases from drinking infected water from rice paddy fields due to the record breaking hot and dry weather experienced during the conflict. The Korean civil war became a battle between communism and democracy with superpowers presiding. A truce was eventually signed in 1953, but without a conclusion and at a cost of five million lives. The border barrier that divides the Korean peninsula is exactly half the length of the border dividing Ireland; they remain stubborn obstructions to a lasting peace in both countries to this day.

In the decades that followed, no further communication to relatives in Ireland or elsewhere was received from Baby. Efforts to locate her were without success but with the consolation she was not listed among the fatalities from the war. Speculation about being shell-shocked was abound and with time and space, her letter to home would arrive. The weeks drifted to months, years and decades, but that letter never arrived, just tender and warm memories of a beloved daughter, sister and aunt that might be somewhere out there in this world or had passed on to the next.

The unsolved mystery of Baby journeyed through her family tree into the twenty-first century, even though her parents and most of her siblings were no longer alive. The greater availability of genealogical records and national archives online now allowed the opportunity to search a wide range of civil and military sources. By 2012, an intensive investigative pathway began and soon began yielding results. News arrived that Baby had died just two years previously and her ashes interred in Arlington National cemetery under the Nurses Memorial Cross. The initial disbelief was met with strong emotive feelings, joy tinged with sadness, all those missing years – if her siblings had only known – an incredible dream that could have been fulfilled.

Questions posed more than sixty years previously began to resurface again. What had influenced Baby, what load had been on her shoulders that persuaded her to disappear from a previous part of her life? Why did she decide she no longer belonged or wanted to be part of her family? If she had encountered challenging times, could family not have served as the crutch to lean on and give support? Had she doubts about a return to convent life or was the transition from religious life back to secular life difficult to adapt to? Or did something happen that caused her to feel unwanted, something to do with her leaving the religious order? In an Ireland where so much containment power was exerted by the Catholic Church in such instances, had she received unsupportive letters on leaving the convent which might have made her uncomfortable with an implied sense of discredit coming from home? Did this make her decide to leave that part of her life behind her, finally?

What had become of Baby in the intervening years? Further news arrived that she had a daughter named Mary and within a brief time contact was happily made with her. Mary was astonished with the news of having twenty-seven first cousins and fifty-five second cousins, of whom she had never previously heard. Her mother had told her she had been born in the south of England, had three sisters all of whom died during World War II. When quizzed over time about her youth, her mother would stop and become overcome with a look of sadness. Of the photos exchanged with Mary, one was of her grandparents - a photo she already had but had no idea who the couple were. Baby's mother would have adored the photo of Baby and Mary at Washington zoo from 1956 when Mary was just three years old; another picture from 1976 of both at the British Embassy in DC at a production of the Pirates of Penzance; another of Baby receiving an award from the Girl Scouts for her dedicated work with the group in 1980 and one from 2008 of both at a Seniors Prom. Baby had met her future husband, a university graduate from Austin, during the Korean war and they were married once the war was over. He died tragically in a car accident in New York in 1973.

Following the war and back in America, resignation from the army was compulsory on marriage, which led to Baby becoming employed by the Red Cross. As luck would have it, her work involved looking for displaced persons because of conflict or persecution. Working in the global network enabled refugees in the various stages of their journeys from their country of origin, through transit and on to their final destinations. She later moved back into nursing, working in the Walter Reed National Military Medical Centre, serving active and retired personnel from all branches of the military. Sometime later, she relocated to Walter Reed's

Clinic working in the paediatric oncology unit before retiring in the mid-eighties.

Baby never gave up on her religion and built up a greater relationship with God through the years. Allowing a greater role for women with a lesser adherence to rigid dogma and a more progressive and inclusive Church drew her to the Episcopalian religion. A religion based in the United States, very little distinguishes the Episcopalian religion from Catholicism - it allows women priests, priests may marry, no confessing of sins to a priest (directly to God instead), communion for all irrespective of religion, free will to use birth control and a non-acceptance of the pope as the supreme authority over the Universal Church. With participation in organised religion in decline for several reasons, the narrow bridges dividing the religions are likely to taper further in the years ahead. Religion played a major part in Baby's life and continues in the generation following her. Mary works in a religious university and is married to Michael, a university lecturer and a priest in the Anglican Church.

A life that began at a small homestead near Ballymote at the end of The Great War, later crossed the continents and was lived at the very centre of other catastrophic wars. It was a life filled with hope, happiness, love and loss, always adapting to the difficult and demanding pressures that life hurled across her path. Few people ever experience the challenging decisions she made throughout her lifetime. The determination and courage to stay with those daunting choices defined her individual strength, her valour and her will to succeed, however adverse life may have seemed. She is affectionately remembered by her close and extended family.

In the words of Terry Pratchett; "*no one is actually dead until the ripples they cause in the world die away.*"

Ballymote Boys' National School Circa 1959

Submitted by Derek Davey

Photo taken after Liturgical Festival in the Church of the Immaculate Conception Ballymote.

Back Row L-R: Raymond McAndrew, Vincent Breheny, Derek Davey, Joseph Golden, Eugene Leonard, Andrew Davey, David Berry, Eamon Sreenan, Ignatius Scully, George Brennan, Raymond Galvin, Paddy Hannon, Fergus McArdle and John McArdle.

Mid Row L-R: Val Rogers, "???", Kieran McNulty, Sean Davey, Derek Droughton, Vincent Finn, Paddy McNulty, Sean Duffy, Damien Tansey, Sean Hunt, Jim Hannon, David Corr, Jim Donaghue, Michael Healy, Pat O'Hart and Owen Wims.

Front Row seated L-R: Joseph McGettrick, John McDonagh, Tommie Duffy, Ivan Pettipiece, Tom McNulty, Brian Meehan, Billy Brady, James Flanagan, Michael Mc Gettrick, Joseph Donegan, Michael Duffy, Peter Golden, Patrick Chambers, Sean Donegan and Austin Prior.

Michael Gorman's Poetry

submitted by Derek Davey

Introduction
Michael Gorman was born in Sligo and educated in Summerhill College and National University of Ireland, Galway, where he tutored and taught for many years. Michael is also a brother of Tommie Gorman former Northern editor for R.T.E. News.

The above introduction to Michael Gormans poems was unintentionally omitted from last year's Corran Herald

The poems here are published with the kind permission of Michael Gorman. They are from his book of poems entitled *Fifty Poems* published in 2019 and are an amalgam of new and collected work.

Nor Was I Present
Nor was I present on the morning
you enquired how long you had left.
Later that night we watched
Leeds play Stuttgart together.
When Cantona turned the game on its head
we laughed about your preference
for strikers with raw power
like Malcolm MacDonald and Clyde Best.
After the game was over
you pointed to the red light
on the coin-operated Salora set
at the foot of the hospital bed
and said 'I think that thing
is using up the money
even when turned off.'

The late stab at thrift
was the only clue you gave
and I lacked whatever skill
it takes to tell the difference
between someone who is gravely ill
and another of the worried well.

When we were all together in Sligo,
most of us the same, monochrome,
and the county manager,
Mr. PJ McMahon snaked across the town
in his baby-blue Mercedes,
I did not know then what I know now.
That understated engine conveyed
the noise of low-pitched power
the capacity to hire and fire.

The Rattle
When the troponin proteins were released
and I could go no further,
stuck under the windmill farm
on the Spiddal-Moycullen road,
what was I carrying?

The heat from the red brick in the evenings.
The louder noises of near-empty trains.
The old man who stopped me as a child,
looking for directions to the County Home,
his belongings covered in brown paper
tied with rough twine.
The parallel strips of dust
gathered in the folds of sheets
left hanging on the line overnight
when we lived at Ducane Road.
The cries of seagulls
following a chef's white bucket
as he emptied fish heads
back into the sea
at Inishbofin.

None of these things,
nothing I ever saw or heard.
Only a cold loneliness moving out of reach, a constricted affection
for the passing world.

Seán MacDiarmada Summer School

Submitted by Padraig Doddy

The 14th annual Seán MacDiarmada Summer School was held on the 17th and 18th June 2022 in Kiltyclogher Co. Leitrim. The theme this year was 'Reflections on the Irish Civil War 1922-1923'. Seán Mac Diarmada was executed in Kilmainham Jail in May 1916. There is a statue to his memory in his native Kiltyclogher and a major Dublin street bears his name. His memory will always be associated with the struggle for Irish independence in 1916 and the price he paid in order to contribute to its final achievement.

Website - seanmacdiarmada.ie

Padraig Doddy with Padraig MacDiarmada (grand nephew of Seán MacDiarmada) at the annual Seán Mac Diarmada Summer School June 2022 in Kiltyclogher Co. Leitrim.

WHY I WALK

by Rose Marie Stanley

Caves of Keash

Rose Marie at Famine Monument Sligo

The 4th April, 2022 marked the 175th Anniversary of my great-great-great-grandparents leaving their homeland in Sligo County onboard an old brig named Carricks of Whitehaven, heading for North America.

To commemorate Patrick and Sarah's momentous event, I walked The Famine Trail, retracing their journey from their homestead in Keash to the Sligo Quay. My ancestors, Patrick Kaveney, his wife, Sarah McDonagh and their six children, one son and five daughters aged between one year to twelve years left on Sunday 4th April,1847. It was Easter Sunday, the most important sacred Sunday of the year, symbolizing new life.

Unlike my desperate and courageous ancestors, I didn't walk that route with six young children and a few meagre possessions. I didn't walk barefoot and wearing threadbare clothing. Nor did I walk that long 22-mile trek knowing that I'd never again see any of my beloved family members, my friends, my neighbours, or my community. They left their land, the unique beauty of the Caves of Keash and all they knew. With broken hearts, they bade their final farewell.

Rose Marie with members of Ballymote Heritage Group in Ballymote on the 16th April 2022

Sligo Quay (L to R): Donna O'Neill, Kelly O'Neill, Eugene O'Neill, Rose Marie Stanley, John Mc Keon and Geffrey Lydon

Rose Marie Stanley

On this special 175th Anniversary year, I walked the Famine Trail twice. I walked alone on 4th April, (as it would have been the date they left), with a few more distant cousins of the Kaveney family, we walked on Easter Saturday,16th April.

As I did in 2015 and in 2017, I walked this sad route in humble contemplation. I walked to honour Patrick, Sarah and the thousands of Irish families who also left their homeland with their hearts filled with fear, courage, and hope for a better life. But there were no guarantees of a better life for them or for their children.

I walk to say "Thank You" to Sarah and Patrick for their bravery, their resilience despite being shipwrecked and losing their five young daughters in that tragedy. I remain in awe and am forever thankful for the gifts that their sacrifices have given to me and to thousands of their descendants.

In essence, I hope that these walks can help us remember the past while looking at the world events of today which in many cases, mirror those of 175 years ago. I hope that we are able to learn valuable lessons from the past and present so that our descendants have a future that is peaceful and equal in all respects to all, no matter the colour of their skin or where they live .

I've only walked the Famine Trail, I didn't live it.

At Keash at start of walk (L to R): Padraig Drury, Nora Drury, Rose Marie Stanley, Kelly O'Neill, Donna O'Neill, Eugene O'Neill, John Keaveney, Adrian Regan and Pat Ward

SUMMER THEATRE: 1970-1980

by Michael J. Meehan

A story about beginnings……

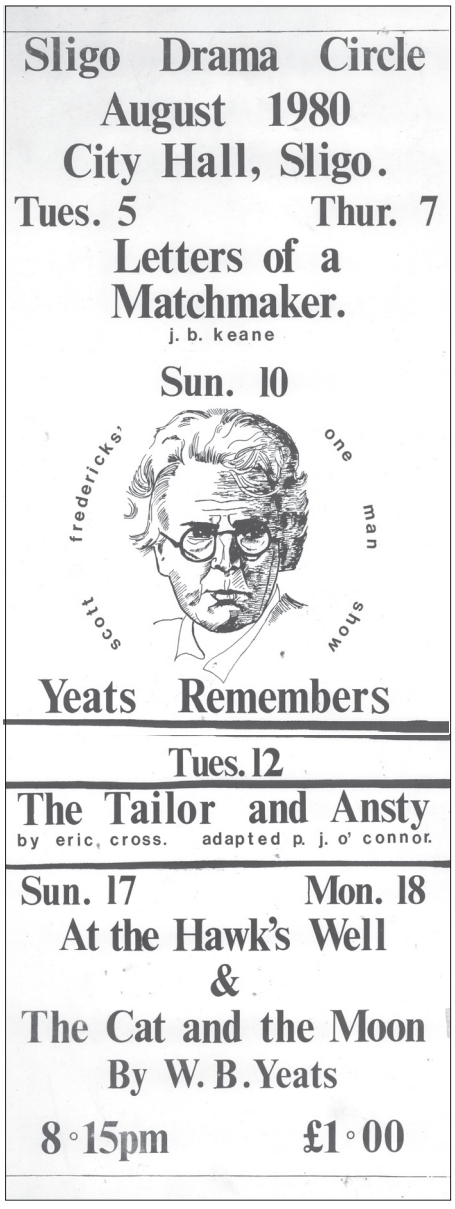
A season of Irish Drama was launched by the Sligo Drama Circle in July 1970 at the Town Hall Assembly Rooms. It ran every summer for eleven years, up to September 1980. The opening of the Hawk's Well Theatre in January 1982 was the end story for 'Summer Theatre' and the end of public entertainment at the Town Hall. Generations of 'townies' had come to concerts, Feiseanna and plays there and in a bygone time, for romance at the Sunday 'Grand Dance'.

The origin of a summer season of plays was an invitation to the Drama Circle in 1966 from the Yeats Society to stage the one act verse plays of W.B. Yeats at the Summer School and a full length play as part of the evening events.

A group was then formed, directed by Walter Mc, to present the verse plays. One 'yeatsean,' when asked did he miss evening golf games said 'he wanted to perform to an international audience!' The Drama Circle was formed in 1956 out of the legendary 'Sligo Unknown Players'. The lack of a permanent base for rehearsals and stage set- construction, bedevilled the group for years.

When I arrived on stage in 1961, (a walk-on, with one line), rehearsals took place at the F.C.A. Hall (the old Poly Hall) in Waste Gardens Lane (now West Gardens).
Then in the mid-sixties, the Circle acquired a home. Eddie Fitz, a scion of an old Sligo thespian family, had, in an emigrant life, been a member of a Little Theatre Society in Australia. He often spoke of such a theatre for Sligo. True to his word, in his year as Chairman, he negotiated the lease of two sheds in the Market Yard from Sligo Corporation, as a base for the Drama Circle. Single storey, red roofed corrugated buildings in need of repair, lighting and heat; the end two of a row built along the east side of the Yard. But it was a home and cheap.

Over a busy summer, the sheds were transformed and made fit for winter rehearsals; some repairs, lighting, heating, seating, even green velour curtains on the metal frame windows and artwork on the outside walls.

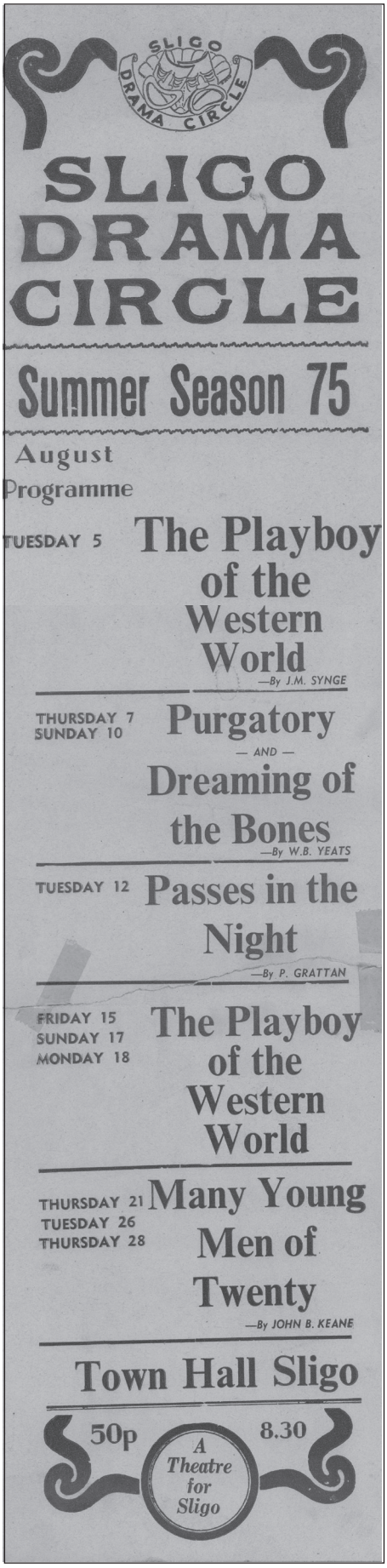


Advertising Poster

Neighbours along the row of sheds, a potter, Country Markets, Corporation weights and measures department, not a 'one-stop-shop,' welcomed that the play-actors might add some colour to the yard. Membership grew, more plays produced, workshops, dramatised play readings and some memorable parties. Not a Melbourne Little Theatre but a Sligo Shed Theatre. But there was to be no long life for the new home.

On a June evening, a few years later, I attended a play reading of a Yeats Verse Play at the shed. The setting sun streamed through the open door; a group was seated in two rows down the centre. W.B. Yeats verses were at a dramatic climax, when I see a large rat slide in through the open door, 'a game old plodder' passed along the readers, as if on its way home. I just stared, but as it passed by Joan (a leading lady of these plays), she spots the rat. With a scream, an almighty yell, she bounds out of the chair and is halfway across the yard before the sound dies. An exit to credit an Olympic sprinter out of the starting blocks. Within minutes the shed was emptied. Out in the yard, confusion, pandemonium, though many had no idea what happened.
But there was no going back inside and that was the end of rehearsals at the Market Yard. Walter Mc (the Director) summed it up in his usual philosophical way, 'Shite' and went home. The sheds became stores for sets and props and the players were back on the road again.

At the time, many of the founder members began to step back and leave the running of the Circle to the 'young Guns' who, as usual, were eager and waiting with new ideas. Liam Mc became the Festival Play Director and in 1970 chose the Tennessee Williams play 'A Streetcar Named Desire'. The



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Circle won many regional festivals and in May, the All-Ireland Drama Award in Athlone, a prize that had eluded the group for many years.

After the celebrations, with enthusiasm high, a plan to extend the summer season of plays was proposed-to present a season of Irish Theatre though July and August, performances on Wednesday and Thursday nights and to incorporate the summer school plays into the programme. The objective was to provide visitor entertainment for growing tourism in Sligo and raise funds for a Drama Centre. The Town Hall was booked for the Wednesday and Thursday nights of July and August. When the plan was presented to Northwest Tourism, the Manager, Eamon Hoy, was enthusiastic and at once sponsored the publicity and marketing. Two programmes were selected and cast, 'Sive' by John B Keane, and 'A Shadow of a Gunman' by Sean O Casey. Walter Mc was the Director of both. A huge recruitment drive was needed for backstage, front of house and publicity. A big 'sell' would be required to get 'bums on seats' through the summer. It was planned to use the Little Theatre idea in the publicity. At the last minute, some thought 'little' sounded 'mean' so it became 'A Theatre for Sligo'. Then the printer's layout turned it into a logo for the season.

The '70 season was officially opened by Eamon Hoy on the first Wednesday in July. There was an invited audience from the tourism sector, the play was 'Sive'. Over the summer, audience numbers were encouraging, up to expectations. That is until the final night at the end of August; again, the play was John B Keane's 'Sive'. Kay, who played 'Nanna' in the play, came from west Limerick and knew John B in her youth. She phoned him at his pub in Listowel and invited him to the final night. He was delighted to accept and come to Sligo. Kay went to "The Sligo Champion" newspaper with the news, who gave it front-page headlines, 'Well known playwright to attend final performance'.

When I turned into Quay St at 8pm that evening (curtain up 8.30pm), there was a queue out the door of the Town Hall and up the long stairs to the ticket desk. At the desk, Angela and Una (front of house Managers) confront me with 'you are the Chairman, you have to do something about the crowd.' My response was 'open the bloody doors and let the people in.' I was told 'look inside.' I looked, the place was packed, all 330 seats occupied, chairs in the passageway, people on the windowsills at the back. We went to the end of the queue with the 'House Full' call and the first to be turned away as they joined, were the Chief Fire Officer and his wife. Through his plays, John B was the voice of rural Ireland in those years. Sad to say, the huge Sligo turnout did not get a chance to greet him. On the night he was a 'no show'.

Kay had a phone call from his wife in the afternoon to say he was not attending that night. Before the start of the play, it was announced that John B was 'indisposed' and unable to travel. No one left the hall. The season ended with a full house. Before the final night party was over, plans for the following years had begun.
The '71 season ran from mid-June to early September. More plays, new Directors, more actors were needed to fill this schedule. The season also saw a significant development. The front of house team of Angela and Una got together a group of women supporters to provide interval refreshments of tea and coffee. They wore maxi skirts, then a new fashion, which added the glamour of an evening party to the flagstone corridors of the Town Hall, with walls painted in standard Board of Works colours. The mingling of visitors and locals brought a social atmosphere to the evening.

From the start, Summer Theatre got huge support from tourism, few visitors left Sligo who were not aware of the Town Hall entertainments.

Local support embraced the goal of a theatre for Sligo and galvanised a mercurial idea into a solid objective. The length of the seasons grew. The '76 one opened in late May and closed in early October. Many well-known names came to Sligo to officially open the Theatre seasons, Brian Friel, Christopher Fitzsimons (Abbey Theatre), Micheál Mac Liammóir, Hilton Edwards and John Mc Gahern. But by the mid-seventies, the theatre plan was a long way from a site or bricks and mortar. Many old buildings and halls were examined and sought but without success. Interest began to waver. Then the theatre committee, more in desperation that hope, wrote to Bishop Conway for a site or building. Many were amused at the naivety of the idea.

The Church was not known to cede property and not for a secular enterprise like a theatre. A prompt response came from Dr Conway for a meeting. A delegation of three went to see him. It left after a half an hour with an offer of a site and to go public at once with the offer. The site was on the corner of Temple St. and The Lungy, in what was once the gardens of the Church of Ireland rectory.

After the jubilation and euphoria, it was realised that this changed the concept of the Theatre. The offer of the best green field site in the town centre, changed the 'Little Theatre' into a Civic Project. And that is what happened; but this is not the story of the twists and turns, ups and downs of building the Theatre. Suffice to record, Northwest Tourism (Summer Theatre's first sponsor), required a regional headquarters and with Sligo Corporation, Sligo County Council and the Arts Council of Ireland, funded the development. Bishop Conway kept on board the interests of local Drama. In a snowbound Sligo on 12 January 1982, the President of Ireland, Dr Patrick Hillery, officially opened the Hawk's Well Theatre. It was the first purpose-built theatre in provincial Ireland. Over the next decade, a network of large and small theatres, Arts Centres, opened around Ireland. The Arts scene had dramatically changed. Was the Sligo effort, great foresight and ambition, or good timing?

What of the sheds moulding away in a corner of the Market Yard? The Circle never found the Pied Piper to march the co-tenant away, but twenty-five years on, a Tiger cut through the Market Yard (the Celtic one), bulldozed the sheds to build apartment blocks. The developers built a two storey fully fitted premises for a Drama Centre, at another location in the yard. The Circle had a home at last! The new next-door neighbours, a French restaurant. That is moving up in the world.

Summer Theatre provided the inspiration for 'A Theatre for Sligo'. Many, many people were a part of that inspiration including the audiences that kept it on the 'boards' at the Town Hall for eleven summers

A JANUARY SNOW

by Andy Hegarty

With the birth of a new day, a beauty began.
When a wintry sunrise glistened a January snow.
But only for a while, this wonderland for man.
Yet so beholding for me, a countrified fellow,
as I admired with wonder, mingled with glee,
the many picturesque impressions to see.
And all artistically shaped and so effectively grand
that would challenge the artistic skills of a master hand.
On the snow-covered sprigs, in heather land there.
Paw-prints were plain to be seen,
of a frisking fleet-footed hare
cut in the snow, in an old pastoral boreen.
There were withered fern-fronds, ornamented to white,
like outstretched feathered wings for soaring in flight.
And all the craggy peaks looked sanctimoniously right,
resembling effigies of angels, clad in veils of lace white.

Now, I captivated by the view, from the tor glistening bright,
seeing my hillside homeland all mantled white,
turned to my God, uttering amazement and delight.
But only for then, knowing frozen-flakes cannot stay
Oh, how pleasing to the eye was the vivid scene on display
before thawing temperature hastened a streamy flow.
And all the virgin white effigies faded away,
ending the wonder and splendour of a January snow.

THE UNION OF BUNINADDEN

submitted by Douglas Doherty

Extract reproduced from ***"The History of Sligo, Town and Country"*** *by T. O'Rorke, D.D., M.R.I.A. Vol.11. published 1890 (as digitised by Brigham Young University)*

Adjoining the parish of Emlaghfad on the south, lies the Roman Catholic union of Cloonoghill, Kilshalvy, and Kilturra, popularly known as the parish of Buninadden. Buninadden Bun-an-fedhain in Irish—the mouth or end of the stream, is so- called from a stream which flows down from a lakelet, named Pulincha, and supposed by the people to be all pure spring, and bottomless.

The old village stood some hundreds of yards to the south of the present one, where may still be seen remains of the old chapel, the pound, some houses, and a fragment forty-two feet long and twenty broad of Bunninadden castle.

This castle, which is mentioned several times in the old annals of the country, belonged to the MacDonoghs of Corran; and after they lost it, it was granted to Sir William Taaffe, and served him for a residence on his first coming to the county Sligo at the close of the sixteenth century; for in a commission of 1596, he is spoken of as " William Taaffe of Buninadden."

In James the First's General Pardon to Donnogh O'Connor Sligo, of Sligo Co., Esq., the amnesty is extended to the following persons belonging to Buninadden, who, no doubt, comprised all, or nearly all, the inhabitants of the place:

Gents of Bonanydanie
Shane Glas McDonnogh,
Hugh Bane McDonnogh,
Connor McDonnogh,
Feriell Oge McDonnogh,
Shane Geare McDonnogh,
Thadeus Carragh McCarbrie

Labourers
Melaghlin Duffe O'Byrne
Brian O'Birne
Brian O'Hayvare (Hevar)
Donald O'Heyvare
Cahell McGeannayne
Feariell McGeannayne (Gannon)
Brian O'Caiglie (Quigley) (mason)
Connoghor McGilligariffe (Kilgarrif) (keard)

Surgeons
Owen McElea, surgeon
Connoghor McElea, surgeon
Edward Keogh McElea, surgeon
Thadeus McElea, surgeon

Owen Duffe McEdward, galloglas
Tirrelagh ^McCahell, horseman;
Dermot Oge O'Brenaine, smith ;
Dermot Glasse O'Mullvihilly, priest
Shane O'Mochane, priest
Shane O'Fearie (Farry), kerne;
Edward Oge O'Fearie, , kerne.

It is to be hoped, however liable the good people of Buninadden were to broken bones, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, owing to the violence of those troubled times, that the demand for "surgeons" was not equal to the supply.

Like the rest of Sligo, Buninadden belonged in the past to O'Connor Sligo, and in 1545[1] we find MacCostello attacking it as his possession, but O'Connor and the MacSweenys hastened to its relief; and as MacCostello retreated on their approach, they pursued him, and coming up with him they slew himself and his son, and put his party to flight at Rooskey, or Ruscaidh-na-gaithe, " the rough pasture of the wind," the well known spot so-called from its bleak and shelterless situation. While the O'Connors were the lords paramount, the MacDonoghs of Corran occupied the castle ; and the Annals of Loch Cé, under the year 1564, state that Brian MacDermot, in the month of March of that year, " went against MacDonough of the Corann to Bun-an-fedhain, and the place was burned to the door by him; and he brought two hundred cows out of it, and committed homicides there." In 1581 several Scotch mercenaries were slain in and around Buninadden, under the strange circumstances which have been already described.

Cloonoghill
Cloonoghill is the most interesting of the three parishes which form the union under consideration. The Gazetteer of Ireland confounds Cloonoghill and Cloonacoole, taking one name to be merely an alias of the other, whereas the two places are quite different, one being in Corran, and the other in Leyney.

The district of Cloonoghill must of old have been covered with yew trees, as the name signifies the recess of the yew tree wood. In Colgan's life of St. Cormac,[2] " it is stated St. Aidan of Tireragh had a religious house in Corran; and McFirbis's Tribes and Customs of Hy Fiachrach, adds the circumstance, that Cloonoghill was the spot where the establishment existed."

This Aidan was descended from Eochy Breac through Cuboirne, and had for mother Fearamhla, who was also the mother of five other saints. He is, no doubt, identical with the "*Saint Aidan of Loch Uamach,"* of whom there is mention in the Tripartite Life of Saint Patrick; and although Colgan takes Lock Uamach to be some lake near the river Bonet in Breffny there is good reason to think that this is Cloonacleigha lake, which joins

Cloonoghill, and which, like Lough Gara and so many other Irish lakes, has changed its name in the course of time. Very probably it had its old name of Loch Uamha, or Cave lake, from a large and remarkable cave in a little hill to the west of the old church of Cloonoghill; and it is equally probable that the actual name of Cloonacleigha, or recess of the stones, comes from the great flags with which the cave was covered.

While the Gazetteer of Ireland confounds Cloonoghill with Cloonacoole, Lewis' Topographical Dictionary is equally at fault in supposing it identical with Cloonymeaghan, though one was a parish church, and the other a Dominican convent.

The convent of Cloonymeaghan was founded in 1488, in virtue of faculties granted that year by Innocent VIII., to erect three new Dominican houses in Ireland—one in Kildare, another in Meath, and the third in Cloonymeaghan, in the diocese of Achonry. The site was granted by Owen MacDonogh, called, in the Constitution of the Pope, Eugenius Macdonchard. Some say that Cloonymeaghan was a cell to the convent of Sligo, but De Burgo J maintains, and seems right in his contention, that it was an independent house, though, owing to the fewness of conventuals of its own, it was ruled for some time by fathers of
the Sligo community.

After the suppression Cloonymeaghan was granted to the Taaffes, from whom, with the rest of their property, it passed to the Earl of Shelburne, except about two acres under and around the ruins, which belonged to the Dodwells, and was transmitted by them to their relative, Mr. Creighton, the present owner. The remains, both of the church and the conventual buildings, are in good preservation. The plan was much the same as that of Sligo, with the conventual buildings to the north; but all the parts were smaller and less ornate, and without any of the elaborate and artistic carving, which forms so conspicuous a feature in the famous cloisters of Sligo.

Cloonymeaghan is the chief burying place of the united parishes of Cloonoghill, Kilshalvey, and Kilturra. Ballinaglogg is another townland of some note in the parish. It is mentioned in the Annals of Loch Cé, under the year 1559, where it is stated, that it was plundered by Brian MacDermot of Moylurg. Later it became one of the residences of the Taaffes; and we find Christopher Taaffe of Ballinaglogg, as a juror of an inquisition sped at Ballinafad in 1627.

Kilshalvey parish has little to interest the antiquarian or the lover of the picturesque. O'Donovan states that the parish has its name from a Saint Selbach,[3] Kilshalvey being a form of Kilsealbach, and signifying the church of Sealbach, but he quotes no authority for his opinion.

There is no Saint Sealbach mentioned in the Martyrologies, or in the works of Colgan, the name Sealbach occurring but once in the Martyrology of Donegal, and once in Colgan, and designating in each case Sealbach, who was secretary to Cormac O'Cuillenain and who had nothing to do with this part of Ireland. This parish is not given in the taxation of 1307, unless it is represented by Kilsenyg, the name in the Taxation which most resembles it. Kilsenyg would be the Church of Senic, and there are several Irish saints of that name in the martyrologies. In the inquisition held at Achonry, in 1585, by the bishop of Kildare, the name is written Killosalven, and, in a Royal Visitation Book of 1633, Killosalnie, either of which is not very unlike Kilsallaghan, or Kil-tsaileachain, the church of the sallows ; so that, as the inhabitants of the district showed themselves so fond of associating their churches with particular trees or plants, designating one (Cloonoghill) from the yew tree, and another (Killavil) from the apple tree, they may have borrowed the name of Kilshalvey, Killoshalaway, or Killosalvan, from the sallows which abound in the place. The grantees at the Restoratioan of this parish were, Earl of Carlingford, Lord Collooney, Edward Cooper, Christopher Fagan, and Thomas Harte.

Passing to Kilturra: the name of this parish is just as great a puzzle as that of Kilshalvey, so that there is ample room for conjecture. As turagh as well as eochail is a name of the yew tree, Kilturra, or, as it is written in the Royal Visitation Book of 1833, Kilturrogh, may signify the church of the yew.[4] In the Taxation of 1307 this church is not given, at least under any recognizable designation, and in the bishop of Kildare's inquisition of 1585, as far as can be made out, it is written Kiltowry.

In the past, at least in post-Reformation times, the Archdeacon of Achonry was Vicar of Kilturra, and owner of the townland of Kilturra, so that the vicarage of the parish and the townland seem to have formed the corps of the archdeaconry. It is likely this arrangement was of long standing, though this is not certain. In the inquisition of 1585 the Archdeacon of Achonry is said to be Vicar of Kiltowry, which would go to show that even then, and, if then, prior, probably, to the Reformation, the vicarage of the parish and the townland, constituted the corps of the dignity; but, on the other hand, in the county Sligo Survey of 1633, etc., Lord Taaffe, and not the archdeacon, is given as owner of Kilturra townland, the entry running thus: -*"Kiltorrow townland. The inheritance of my Lord Taaffe, who sets it to Kedagh O'Banaghan for £12, of which he pays Mr. Sharp (the Protestant minister), £6. It is some part good arable land, it hath good turff, 4 days' mowing; it will graze 40 cows, and is worth*

£12 6s. per annum." In the Book of Distributions, however, of the Down Survey, the Archdeacon reappears, and is set down among the owners of the parish in 1641.

The Phillips of Cloonmore commonly held Kilturra by lease from the archdeacon for the time being. Mr. Simon Phillips built a house on the farm in 1745, and came to reside in it.

The Right Reverend Phillip Phillips, Bishop of Achonry, built a, new residence, which is the thatched house now attached to Mr. John Ormsby Cooke's pretty cottage; and, on his translation as archbishop, to Tuam, in 1785, the prelate made over his right as tenant to his niece, Miss Julia Martin, who, shortly after, married Mr. Timothy MacDermot, of Boyle, thus making that gentleman owner of her interest in Kilturra, where he and she continued, after the marriage, to reside.

The estate being offered for sale, in 1873, by the Church Temporalities Commissioners, it was purchased, to the great gratification of the tenants and neighbours, by Mr. John Ormsby Cooke, who has been always a favourite with high and low, as a grand juror, as a county magistrate, as a benevolent landlord, and as a country gentleman of rare culture and endowments, acquired, in large part, early in life, by education and travel on the Continent.

The old church, which was of little size, is now a mere heap of rubbish. Some think the structure was a Franciscan monastery, but there is no ground whatever for such an opinion. The adjoining graveyard is a small one, and little used of late. The oldest epitaph in the place is inscribed on a headstone erected, in 1771, by Doctor Thomas Irwin, over his father, who died in 1761. The next oldest headstone bears an inscription, which would be the better of some development or explanation—it being uncertain, with the actual words, over whom the stone is erected.[5]

Near Mr. Cooke's cottage is a well dedicated to Saint Attracta, which is popularly called, like her other wells, Toberaraght. On the edge are two crosses—one a good sized Latin cross, inscribed in relief, on a limestone flag, and the other a Celtic cross, incised on a curious block of red sand- stone. As one would expect, from Mr. Cooke's artistic and archaeological tastes, both the well and the crosses are singularly well cared.

It would appear that Cloonoghill, Kilshalvey, and Kilturra were separate parishes in 1704, as we find three different Parish Priests registered for them at the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace held at Sligo on the 11th June, 1704. The Parish Priest of Cloonoghill, at that date, was Teige Brenane, who was then 56 years of age, lived at Ballinrea, had been ordained at Creigin, County Galway, in 1672, by Teige Keogh, or Keoghy, Titular Bishop of Clonfert, and had for sureties of his good behaviour, Thomas Corcoran, Sligo, and Patrick Duany (Devany), also of Sligo.

The Parish Priest of Kilshalvy, at the same date, was Teige Davey, who was 33 years of age, lived 'at Coolany, had been ordained by Dr. Donellan, Titular Bishop of Clonfert, in 1697, and had for sureties of good behaviour, George Enerist, Ballymote, and Bryan McDonogh, Carrowhobid.

And the then Parish Priest of Kilturra, called, in the Record, Kiltoruffe, was Teige McDonnagh, who was 52 years of age, resided at Knockrany, had been ordained in 1768 (1668?), at Clonfert, by Teige Keoghy, Titular Bishop of Clonfert, and had for his sureties Miles Philips, Ballindune, and Morgan McDonogh, Roscrib.
The next Parish Priest we meet with is Rev. Mark Rush, who was a clergyman of note in his day, and is said to have been Dean and Vicar-General of Achonry diocese, as well as incumbent of the three parishes, Cloonoghill, Kilshalvy, and Kilturra, which formed then, as they form now, the Union of Buninadden.

Father Rush was born at Kilturra, in 1740, of highly-respectable parents, received his classical education in Buninadden, and passed through his ecclesiastical studies in Tours in France, where, too, he was ordained priest in 1765. A vacancy in the incumbency of Buninadden Union occurring soon after the young priest's return from France, he was appointed Parish Priest, and held the living down to his decease on the 1st April, 1817, in the 77th year of his age, and the 50th of his sacred ministry. This good man was buried in Kilturra ; and his friends love to tell how his coffin was carried to the grave by eight pall bearers of social standing—the five McDermots of Kilturra, Joseph McDonell of Doocastle, and Daniel O'Connor and Charles O'Connor, father and son, both of Roadstown;

Like other priests of the period, the pastor of Buninadden, had much trouble with the Thrashers ; labouring, first, to keep his parishioners away from these misguided men, and, next, to save from the penal consequences of their acts, such of them as, deaf to his advice, entangled themselves in the meshes of the law. An anecdote is told of Father Rush, which throws a strong side light on the kind of people he, and, no doubt, other priests of those rude times, had sometimes to deal with

As he was making a pastoral round through the parish, attended by his dog, "*Bunty,*" a companion that he had generally with him in his walks, the dog playfully leaped into a "*clutch,*" or brood of young ducks, injuring one of them; and, next minute, the priest felt himself seized, as in a vice, in the arms of a coarse hulk of a fellow, who called on him to stand, and pay for the

damage done—the brutal proceeding reminding one of the unjust steward in the Gospel, who, "*laying hold of his debtor, throttled him, saying, Pay what thou owes*t".

Father Rush did not know his assailant, but, on being told that he was a parishioner, who knew nothing and cared nothing about religion, the good priest turned to the dog, and said, "*Blessing on you, Bunty, as you have made me acquainted with this unfortunate being, whom I must now try to make both a man and a Christian.*" Such incidents bring home to us the immense social progress that has been made within a century or so.

Reverend John Coleman, afterwards Parish Priest of Swineford and Archdeacon of the diocese, was Parish Priest of Buninadden, about the beginning of the century. Father Coleman was a native of the parish of Ballysadare, and member of a family which has lived in the neighbourhood for more than seven hundred years.

This excellent priest was succeeded by Father John Doddy, who got into conflict, first, with the civil authorities, by officiating at a prohibited marriage and, next, with the ecclesiastical authorities, by disregarding and resisting their injunctions. This resistance to his superiors, occasioned deplorable tumults in the parish, and involved his abettors and followers, who were numerous, in the guilt of disobedience and schism. It is pleasant to be able to add that, after a time, he and his partizans had the grace of returning to their duty.

Reverend Bernard O'Kane, so well remembered for his learning and accomplishments, was the next incumbent. Though his pastorate was troubled by the agitation kept up in the parish in connexion with Father Doddy, he found time and means to build the handsome and commodious parish church of Buninadden previously to his promotion to the parish of Emlaghfad or Ballymote, where he succeeded Dr. Durcan in1832.

The Rev. John Corley was the next Parish Priest of Buninadden.

To Father Corley succeeded Rev. James Henry; and on Father Henry's quitting the parish, from ill health, in 1852, Reverend John Browne was appointed to his place. Father Henry's health having been re-established, he resumed the incumbency of Buninadden, on Mr. Browne's death, in 1858, and administered this charge up to 1876, when he died after a short illness, full of years and virtues—he and his uncle, Very Rev. James Henry, Parish Priest of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet and his grand-uncle, Rev. Walter Henry, Parish Priest, also, of Ballysadare and Kilvarnet; being three priests of whom the diocese of Achonry has good reason to be proud.

Very Rev. James MacDermot was the next Parish Priest of the union, having taken charge in 1877. It is a loss to religion that Canon Mac Dermot's health began to give way soon after his settling in Buninadden, for, with his talents, learning, and virtues, he was sure to exercise an influence which would be felt far beyond the limits of his parish, and even of his diocese. It is well known to his friends, that he was engaged, during the last years of his life, in preparing a theologic canonical dissertation, on a subject of great concernment to the Irish church, and more especially, to the portion of it that lies in Lower Connaught.

This amiable and accomplished ecclesiastic died in 1881, and is buried outside the rails of the high altar in the parish church of Buninadden, by the side of his predecessors, Canon Henry and Father Browne. It is matter of regret to have to add,that all three lie in uninscribed graves, and that there is no memorial of any kind, within or without the church, to preserve the memory of men who deserved very different treatment.

Very Reverend Canon Owen Stenson succeeded Canon MacDermot, in 1881, as Parish Priest of Buninadden, and is the actual incumbent.

REFERENCES:

[1.] *Annals of Loch Ce, 1545*

[2] It is stated that St. Aidan of Tireragh had a religious house in Corran and McFirbis's Tribes and Customs of Hy Fiachrach, adds the circumstance, that Cloonoghill was the spot where the establishment existed.

[3] *"The church of Saint Sealbach, now Kilshalvey, a parish in the barony of Corran, in the county of Sligo."—Tribes and Customs of Hy Fiachrach, p. 486*

[4.] Joyce's Irish Names of Places.—First series.—p. 28.

[5]. The words are :
"Erected by- Rev. Patrick Henry dated. Sep. 9, 1806."

LAND OF MY FOREFATHERS

by Rose Marie Stanley

I am certain that I have been here as
I am now a thousand times before,
and I hope to return a thousand times.
Goethe

Oh, how I long to visit
The land of my forefathers.
To see their birthplace,
To touch the earth,
To breathe the air,
To feel the rain,
To walk the pathways,
To feel their spirit within me,
And to hear their voices whispering
my name.

A LOSSET FROM CARROWREAGH (COOPER), Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo

by Martin A. Timoney

A Co. Sligo Discovery

A boat found by a young man, Mr. Commons, of Carrowrea Cooper, Tubbercurry, when cutting turf. It is 4ft. 6in. long, 22 inches wide, and 20 inches deep. At each end there is a projecting "lug," bored, one of the holes being marked by friction as of a rope.

Original notice of the Carrowreagh (Cooper) vessel.

A Request for Help!

In 1985 Dr. William Nolan, lecturer in Geography, UCD, published *Tipperary, History and Society,* the first volume in the *Irish County History & Society Series* of books, written by multiple authors covering all periods from the landscape of each county to the present. Very few counties of the series are still to be produced. There have been rumblings about the *Sligo H&S* volume on occasion over the last twenty-five years; Galway was in 1996, Mayo in 2014, Roscommon in 2018 and Leitrim in 2019. Dr. Kieran D. O'Conor is now editing the Sligo volume. Frequently the Timoney household is consulted on Sligo matters.

One such, on 11th February, 2022, by Dr. Anne O'Dowd, formerly of the Folklife Division of the National Museum of Ireland (NMI), has led to this article. She is contributing on finds delivered to NMI.

O'Dowd's challenge to us was - What was the large sub-rectangular wooden trough found, not long before 5th April, 1934, by Mr. Martin Commins in Carrowreagh (Cooper) bog, southeast of Tubbercurry. Given a Folklife number, F1934:16, in 1934 it has been in the Irish Antiquities Division (IAD), before being transferred very recently to Collins Barracks for conservation.

Description

The newspaper report gives the measurement of the large sub-rectangular wooden trough as 4 ft. 6 in. (137 cm) long by 22 ins. (56 cm) wide by 20 ins. (51 cm) deep. Patrick Boyle, wood conservator, NMI, kindly took measurements of this unwieldy piece, which I have not seen. The maximum internal length is about 110 cm and internal width about 50 cm. The approximate thickness of the base is 8 cm.

It has a flat bottom and lugs at both ends. It was made out of a long solid block of wood, well over half a metre in thickness. The wood has yet to be identified. Details are from NMI files provided by their Clodagh Doyle and Anne O'Dowd.

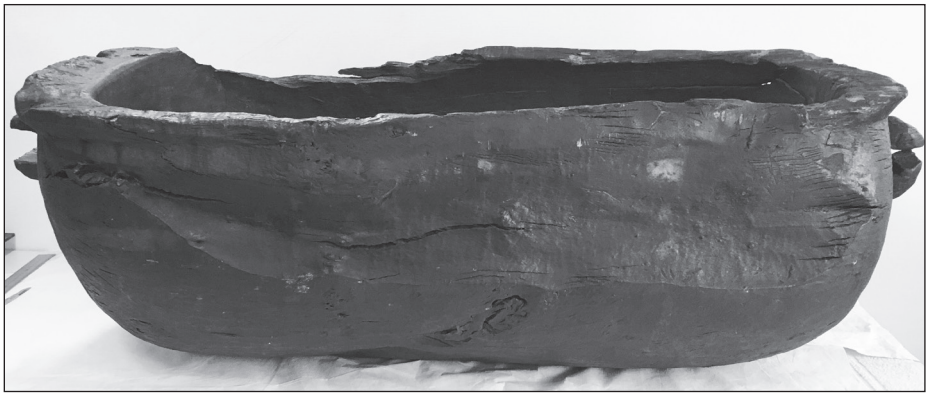
Find Place

The trough was found in Carrowreagh (Cooper) bog in 1934; the townland has 953 A, 1 R, 22 P; OS Sligo 1:2,500, sheet 38:9. Mr. John Haran,[1] the key man in pinpointing the location of the Moylough cist grave, lives in Carrowreagh (Cooper) townland. He told me that Martin Commins had died years ago; Mr. Dermot Gordon now owns the 50 m wide strip of bog. This plot is directly south of and within metres of the south end of Lovers Lane which leads south from Mountain View Road, Tubbercurry. The fields north of the east-west bog road slope down to it. The find spot, for us and for them, is almost on the line of Lovers' Lane; this may be significant - this road leads to a bog close to O'Hara medieval territory (Timoney 2021). The bog is part of a bog complex on the boundary between the ancient territories, now baronies, of Luigne and Corann. This is probably significant as indicating an important place for votive offerings to be made.

Parts of this northern side of the bog have been machined over and drains run south for about 120 metres on either side of Gordon's plot. From the north, the underlying grey sandy marl surface drops a little before rising to a maximum at about 78 m south of the east-west bog road. It then drops again considerably and at the south end the sandy marl is deeper than the dug-out bog, where there is at least 3 m depth of peat. From there southwards the

deep bog remains 'intact'.

On 28th April, 2022, I visited the find place with Dr. Susann Stolze, palaeobotanist, Dr. Thomas Monecke, geologist, and Mr. Johnny Haran. With the NMI copy of the OS map extract, and using the alignment of two trees from a former field fence on dry land to the north, we concluded that the find place was about 21 m east of the western drain of Mr. Gordon's plot at a distance of between 70 m and 90 m south of the drain along the northern bog road. It may have been buried in the bog to preserve it but close to a recognised route for ease of recovery.



The Carrowreagh (Cooper) losset - pre-conservation photo by Patrick Boyle - copyright National Museum of Ireland. It is 137 cm long, 56 cm wide and 51 cm deep.

What is it? - The Speculative Committee

The Speculative Committee, so named by Albert Siggins, formerly of NMI Folklife Division, have had their say. The debate by email and by phone hovered on two things, use and name. Initial thoughts were that it was a bog butter container, but it did not contain butter – in fact there is no mention of it containing anything, presumably only peat.[2]

Thoughts of a small boat were floated on the basis of its length. The squarish, rather than pointed, ends, together with lugs at the ends, argue against that.

O'Dowd further discussed the find with me in May 2022 and directed me to an article by Dr. A.T. Lucas (1965), then Director of NMI; dealing with washing and bathing. The size of the trough is sufficient for someone to sit in while washing. The robustness of the trough and the 8 cm thick base allows for that.

Eamonn P. Kelly, archaeologist and former Keeper, NMI, IAD, in May 2022, said it was a losset, a large wooden trough for making large quantities of bread on the occasions of tribal or ritual feasting. In date he is hazarding Early Iron Age, i.e. the period before the arrival of Christianity. He informed me of lossets from the Boyne at Drogheda, near Croghan Hill, Co. Offaly, Co. Kerry and one excavated in north Co. Mayo. He is not aware of others, so these are rare and special.

However, for me the clincher as to what this was came with the image of a losset Kelly sent me in early June 2022 – it may have had a Breton background, though it was originally acquired in Kent. Though made of planks this large rectangular losset, with supporting legs, with flat base, vertical ends and sloping sides, measures 25.5 cm high, base 124 cm x 46 cm, top 124 cm x 58 cm, has the capacity of 163 litres = 38 gals. It was presented to archaeologist Erin Gibbons by Kate O'Toole. It belonged to Kate's Welsh granny and Kate has memories of her granny making bread in it when she was a child in the 20th century, further confirmation that it was then known as a losset, and that it was used for making bread. Kelly sent me several images of other French and Spanish losset made of planks. They are big, very big, and I wonder how many have been used for storing clothes after their original use had been long forgotten. The Carrowreagh (Cooper) losset could hold 230 litres, 51 gals.

On the word 'losset' Kelly sent me the following.

The first citation of a kneading-trough in the Oxford English Dictionary is Chaucer, 'The Miller's Tale', 1386 A.D. Kneading-troughs in 'The Miller's Tale' are big enough for people to sleep in and may be used as floating rafts.

The word "losset" is derived from the Irish word losad for which Dinneen (1904), gives the following entry: "losad, g. loiste, f., a kneading-trough, a "losset" (in Co. Cavan the farmer calls his well laid-out field his fine losset); also a table spread with food." MacBain (1911) looks back further into the antiquity of the word in which he provides an entry showing the term to be at least as old as Early Irish (1000-1200AD) and having an Indo-European root. "[S.G]. losaid, a kneading trough, Ir. losad, E. Ir. lossat: *lossantâ, *lok-s-, root lok, lek; Gr. λέκος, a dish, pot; Lit lekmenė, a puddle; Lat. lanx, dish."

As an early form of Gaelic was likely to have been spoken in Ireland during the Iron Age, to which this type of losset has been dated by C14, then the use of the term losset for the Carrowreagh (Cooper) find, seems appropriate to Kelly.

Other Mentions of Lossets

Sir William Wilde compiled catalogues of the collections of the Royal Irish Academy. In his one on organic materials, he illustrates a losset found in 1832 in Drumcree, Co. Armagh (Wilde 1857, 209, Fig. 143, No. 25). Seán Treacy, Ballinturley, Athleague, Co. Roscommon, instantly told me in May 2022 of a losset he had seen in his youth. It was much

shallower, as little as 3 ins (8 cm). O'Neill (1977, 58) noted "Wooden kneading troughs called losset were used in medieval Ireland and are still in use in the midland counties, ". Mr. Matthew Seaver, NMI, IAD, informed me of a large trough or kneading board from Corlea, Co. Longford, recorded by Prof. Barry Raftery. Kelly also told me of a stone font in Tallaght graveyard that the locals referred to as 'Moll Rooney's Losset'. This is a corruption of the name of the esteemed St. Maelruain who underwent a sex change in the process. It is likely that it was so-named by country people because of its similarity in shape to the wooden troughs they used for kneading dough. Nearby are 'Moll Rooney's loaf and griddle', consisting of a stone cross fixed in a granite base, which resembles a millstone.[3]

Bog, Pollen and Future Research

The bog surface near where the object was found is now flat with stumps of several pine trees (See O'Connell, Molloy and Jennings 2020; O'Connell 2022) to be seen in its surface layer at the northern end. My purpose in bringing Dr. Susann Stolze was to interest her in researching the palaeobotany of this part of the bog with a view to learning more of the context of the trough. Prof. Knud Jensen, the Danish palaeobotanist, visited the site in August 1935, and briefly reported (notes on NMI file) that it was found under two feet of peat and is of 'a late date'.

Conclusion

Kelly's input proves that the Carrowreagh (Cooper) large wooden trough was a losset. Radiocarbon dating through NMI and pollen analysis of a peat profile from levels where the wooden trough was found can provide information on when the trough was made and time of deposition.[4] It deserves to be the subject of a more detailed article following conservation, but this brief one shows that this bog and its losset are important. Kelly's comment to me puts the losset into a major context, and begs a question: "Lossets are important votive objects that relate to bog butter and the votive deposition of such things as spades, ploughs, ards, querns, grain, reaping hooks; all of which are related to the production of bread and milk (products) - a primary sacral function of ancient kings in their intercession with the forces of the Otherworld." Considering its findplace, could this losset be from the O'Hara dynasty? – we await a Carbon 14 date.

The Speculative Committee

I thank the Speculative Committee, that was Albert Siggins' term, Albert himself, Dr. Daniel Curley, Geraldine Brennan, Johnny Haran, Clodagh Doyle, Dr. Niamh Curtin, Dr. Susann Stolze and Dr. Thomas Monecke, Dr. Conchobhair Ó Crualaoich, Dr. Paul Mullarkey, Erin Gibbons, Rosa Kelly and Mary B. Timoney for various inputs; Patrick Boyle took the basic measurements for me. I thank Dr. Ann O'Dowd for prompting me to research this large wooden trough and particularly Eamonn P. Kelly for thorough detailed debate and references which opened my eyes to lossets of which this seems to be the first recognised for the county.

Further Reading

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1. See Timoney (2020, 24-25) for how Johnny Haran's personal knowledge pinpointed the location of the Early Bronze Age cist grave found in Moylough in 1928, the townland to the east of Carrowreagh (Cooper), only six years before the losset find. Presumably the cist was talked about by the fireside and that may have led Martin Commins to report his discovery to NMI.

2. Bog butter was found in the southern part of this bog by Patrick Leonard, Cashel South, Tubbercurry, in 1977. It was in a 38 cm high by 25 cm diameter wicker container. NMI registration number 1977:2170.

3. Many townland names across the island have *Losset* in either primary or secondary position. Many are across the Drumlin belt. Dr. Conchobhair Ó Crualaoich, Placenames Officer, pointed out the following: "The word *losaid* occurs as *loiste* (genitive singular) and losad (genitive plural) as well as loiste (nominative plural) in a number of place-names. It may often refer to something bowl-like rather than an actual bowl, referring to some topographical feature rather than an archaeological one. The regular genitive plural form of losaid (see *DIL* losat), has a number of meanings including a "kneading-trough", "a shallow trough, tray" or "a shallow depression". A shallow depression is probably the sense intended in most place-names, although "fertile fields" is also plausible (see logainm.ie)".

4. Irrespective of legal requirements, finds should be reported to the National Museum of Ireland, 01-6777444, and kept in the environment that they were found in.

BUSINESS BEFORE PLEASURE - CORRAN PARK 1949/50

by Neal Farry

When I opened my 5th Class geography book in September 1955 I was downhearted to observe that Ballymote had no factory. Sligo had bacon-curing, an iron foundry and textiles. Collooney manufactured woollens and Tubbercurry sported a joinery factory. In my own home I located the souvenir match programmes for the Official Opening of Corran Park on May 1st 1949 and for the Anniversary match on May 7th 1950. Mayo played Louth in the 1949 game and Roscommon provided a challenge to Mayo in the 1950 friendly game.

The advertising pages of both programmes informed me that the business people of Ballymote were indeed enterprising and competitive and I was convinced that such people would soon attract industries to Ballymote to reduce the haemorrhage of young men and women who were emigrating in vast numbers due to the 1950s recession. Indeed, by lobbying their political parties, Ballymote voters did eventually acquire two factories, through the agency of the Industrial Development Authority after intensive campaigning by all our public representatives.

The Ballymote match programme advertisements are presented here street by street and as far as possible in consecutive order. Sixty Ballymote businesses advertised in the 1949/50 programmes. Approximately ten more Ballymote businesses did not opt to advertise in this manner. To observe this fact is not to suggest that the people concerned had no interest in the development of Corran Park. Nothing could be further from the truth. Under the inspirational leadership of the Park Committee's Chairman, Rev. Fr. Denis O'Hara C.C., virtually every household in the parish provided voluntary manpower to develop the pitch. Furthermore, all local businesses provided items for spot-prizes free of charge to be distributed at dances and concerts that were held in aid of the development fund. It is interesting to note that Ballymote had more that seventy dynamic business houses at the start of the 1950's.

O'CONNELL ST. (from the roundabout to the top of Rock).
Right side:

(1): IF YOU VALUE SMARTNESS. LET **McGETTRICK'S** Ballymote, THE DRAPERS OF TASTE, DRESS YOU. **Complete Ladies', Children's and Gents' Outfitters.** 'Phone - 5.

(2): McGETTRICK'S, ROGERS & McGETTRICK'S M.I.A.A. AUCTIONEERS, VALUERS & ESTATE AGENTS - Over a Quarter of a Century Established. 'Phone 5, Ballymote.

(3): SUSAN P. HANNON. DRAPER, COSTUME & MANTLEMAKER. LADIES' GENTS' & CHILDRENS' UNDERWEAR. **Woollen Slipovers, Cardigans & Hosiery, Men's Shirts & Pyjamas. Ladies' Jerkins & Nylons a Speciality.** O'CONNELL ST.

(4): ML. J. McGLYNN. GENERAL DRAPER, BOOT & SHOE WAREHOUSE. OFFICIAL AGENT FOR UNITED STATES SHIPPING LINES. O'CONNELL ST.

(5): HOGG'S GROCERY, STATIONERY, CONFECTIONERY & FANCY GOODS. O'CONNELL ST.

(6): JACK EGAN. HIGH-CLASS GROCER, PROVISION MERCHANT, AND HOUSE FURNISHER. **Furniture Made to All Specified Requirements.** LOWER O'CONNELL ST.

(7): HENRY'S. Licensed to sell BEER, WINE & SPIRITS. **Best Brands Always in Stock.** O'CONNELL ST.

(8): COLEMAN'S. 7-DAY LICENSED PREMISES - **Select Bar** - TEA, WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT. **High Class Catering.** O'CONNELL ST.

O'CONNELL ST.
Left side:

(9): PATRICK ROGERS - FAMILY GROCER & HARDWARE MERCHANT - **Bamford, Deering & Star Machinery in Stock. Also Seed Potatoes, Asbestos, Aluminium & Corrugated Iron.** 'Phone 18. BALLYMOTE.

(10): THOS. McDONAGH. GENERAL GROCER, HARDWARE & PROVISION MERCHANT. VAN SERVICE DAILY. O'CONNELL ST.

(11): JOHN A. DOCKRY. BAKER, CONFECTIONER, FAMILY GROCER. Telephone: No. 7. O'CONNELL ST.

Football fans approaching Corran Park on the day of its official opening, 1st May 1949.

(12): VINCENT McDONAGH M.I.M.T. AUTOMOBILE ENGINEER. CYCLE AGENT & REPAIRS. **All Makes of Cars Supplied. Groceries, Provisions, Tobacconist & Confectioner. Choicest Cream Ices & Fruit.** O'CONNELL ST.

(13): FRANCIS McDONAGH. **Cycle, Radio & Motor Agent. Wine & Spirit Merchant.** O'CONNELL ST.

(14): LAVIN'S. LEADING NEWSAGENCY - STATIONERY & SCHOOL REQUISITES. **Noted for High-Class Confectionery & Delicious Ice-cream.** O'CONNELL ST.

(15): JOSEPH F. CRYAN. GROCER, LEATHER & PROVISION MERCHANT. O'CONNELL ST.

(16): KILLORAN BROS. VICTUALLERS. **Best Heifer Beef. Wether Mutton. Lamb as in Season. Beer, Wine & Spirits.** Quality is our leading Feature. O'CONNELL ST.

(17): R. EGAN. BUILDER, CONTRACTOR & CARPENTRY. **All Trade Requisites Always in Stock.** O'CONNELL ST.

(18): T.A. CAWLEY (Batty). TEA, WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT. O'CONNELL ST.

(19): G. A HARRISON. BUILDER & CONTRACTOR. **Hardware Merchant. Timber, Slates & Cement Stores. Cart Builder & Cabinet Maker. Repairs Carried Out Promptly & Satisfactorily. Satisfaction Guaranteed.** O'CONNELL ST.

(20): THOMAS SCULLY. WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT. All Drinks of Best Quality. MOTOR GARAGE. CARS FOR HIRE. COMPLETE FUNERAL UNDERTAKER. ROCK HOUSE, O'CONNELL ST.

WOLFE TONE ST. (from the roundabout to the bridge on the Keenaghan Road.

Right Side:

(21): P.J. HUNT. GROCERY, TOBACCONIST, HARDWARE & DELPH. RESTAURANT - **Breakfasts, Dinners & Teas. BOARD RESIDENCE - moderate terms**.

WOLFE TONE ST., BALLYMOTE.

Left Side:

(22): FARRY'S - FOR BEST DRINKS. WOLFE TONE ST.

(23): ML. F. BREHENY. High-Class Family Grocer, & Fancy Goods Merchant. SELECT FISH & CHIP SALOON. Late Suppers Served Nightly. WOLFE TONE ST.

CREAMERY ROAD:
(from the roundabout towards Gurteen).
Right Side:

(24): JOHN GARDINER - GROCER & CONFECTIONER. **Only Finest Quality Goods Stocked. Fruit a Speciality**. CREAMERY ROAD. 'Phone: Ballymote 19.

(25): BREHENY'S GENERAL GROCER, HARDWARE & PROVISION MERCHANT. BACON & HAMS. **Choicest Cream Ices & Cordials.** CREAMERY ROAD.

MARKET ST. i.e. LORD EDWARD ST.. (from the top of the Rock to Cassidy's Corner).
Right Side:

(26): C.H. KANE. GENERAL GROCER, PROVISION & HARDWARE MERCHANT. 'Phone: Ballymote 15. 'Grams: "Kane, Ballymote" MARKET ST.

(27): SALLY MULHERN. LADIES' HAIRDRESSING, Permanent Waving, Tinting, Setting, Trimming, Eyebrow Shaping & WELLA WAVING. MARKET ST.

(28): R. MOLLOY. DRAPERY & BOOT WAREHOUSE. WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT. **Men's Suitings, Shirts, Hats, Ladies' & Children's Underwear, Hosiery, Frocks etc**. Best Brands Wines & Spirits. MARKET ST.

(29): P. TORSNEY. BOOT, SHOE, LEATHER & LIGHT HARDWARE MERCHANT, MARKET ST.
Left Side:

(30): JAS. McGETTRICK . CENTRAL BAR . GROCER & SPIRIT MERCHANT. LORD EDWARD ST.

Fr. Denis O'Hara C. C. Chairman of the Corran Park Committee, blessing Corran Park at its official opening. Also in the picture are Keenan Johnson and Eddie McGettrick, Secretary of the Park Committee.

(31): P. CAWLEY. LADIES' GENTS' & CHILDREN'S OUTFITTER. **Boots, Shoes & Leather Goods. Best Quality Fresh Fruit Always in Stock.** TEAS, MINERALS, SANDWICHES, H.B. CREAM ICES. **Compare Our Prices Before Buying Elsewhere.** MARKET ST.

(32): McANDREW & CO. GENERAL DRAPERY & FANCY MILLINERY WAREHOUSE. **Agents for Celebrated "DRYFOOT" Brand of Boots & Shoes. Gents' Outfitting & Suitings a Speciality.** MARKET ST.

(33): DAWSON'S, the old firm with a new name, MRS B. ROGERS. Best Pint Over the Bar and Best Wines & Spirits. CIVILITY & COURTESY. MARKET ST.

(34): JOHNSON & CO. (R. Molloy M.P.S.I.). DISPENSING & VETERINARY CHEMIST. **Photographic goods & Toilet Requisites Stocked. Newsagents & Radio Dealers.** MARKET ST.

(35): J.J. BENSON. DRAPERY, MILLINERY, BOOT & SHOE WAREHOUSE. **Agent for CLOVER Brand Footwear.** MARKET ST.

(36): KEENAN BROS. SELECT FAMILY GROCER, TEA, WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANTS. **Good Value Commands Trade**. MARKET ST.

(37): DESMOND JOHNSON. GROCER, HARDWARE & SPIRIT MERCHANT. **Pigs Bought Every Monday. Confectionery & Ice Cream Always Stocked. COMMERCIAL HOTEL. 'Phone Ballymote 26.** LORD EDWARD ST.

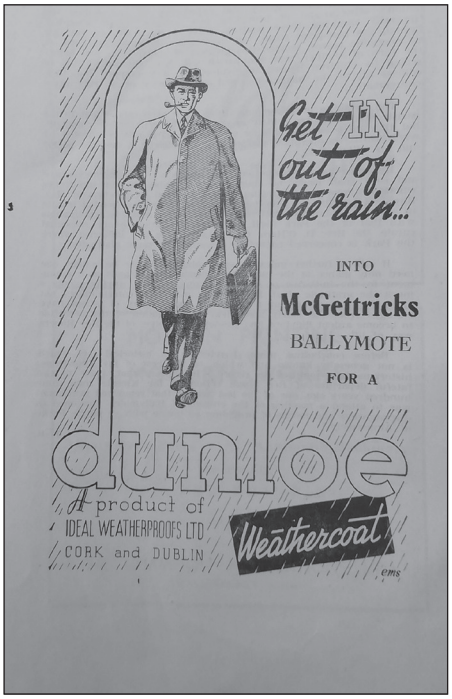
(38): Go To HANNAN & CO. for Best Value in Boys', Youths' & Mens' Readymade Clothing and for Caps, Boots & Shoes. MARKET ST.

(39): O'DOWD'S TOBACCO, STATIONERY & FANCY WAREHOUSE. LORD EDWARD ST.

MAIN STREET. (From Cassidy's Corner to the Loftus Hall).
Right Side:

(40): JOHN R. GORMAN (C.C. Smith). GROCER, IRONMONGER, HARDWARE, CHINA & DELPH MERCHANT. **Farm implements, seeds & manure.** PREPARE FOR THE HARVEST. **Farmers who wish to purchase mowing machines on the Department Loan Scheme should** APPLY EARLY AND AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT. **Full particulars from John R. Gorman. Agent for PIERCE'S** WEXFORD, **Ireland's Best Machines.** ROCK BOTTOM PRICES. MAIN ST., BALLYMOTE.

(41): PATRICK J. WIMS. DRAPER & OUTFITTER. **Always the Best Brand of Suiting in Stock at Keenest Prices. Hats, Caps, Ties, Socks, Pullovers etc. etc.** MAIN STREET.



(42): GILLESPIE'S. BOOTS & SHOES. LADIES', GENTS' & CHILDREN'S OUTFITTERS. **Prompt Attention, Personal Supervision**. MAIN ST.

(43): M. J. KEANEY. BUILDER & CONTRACTOR, GROCER & HARDWARE MERCHANT. **High-Class Catering.** MAIN ST.

(44): T. TIGHE. WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT. MAIN ST.

TEELING STREET: (From Cassidy's Corner to the Courthouse). **Right Side:**

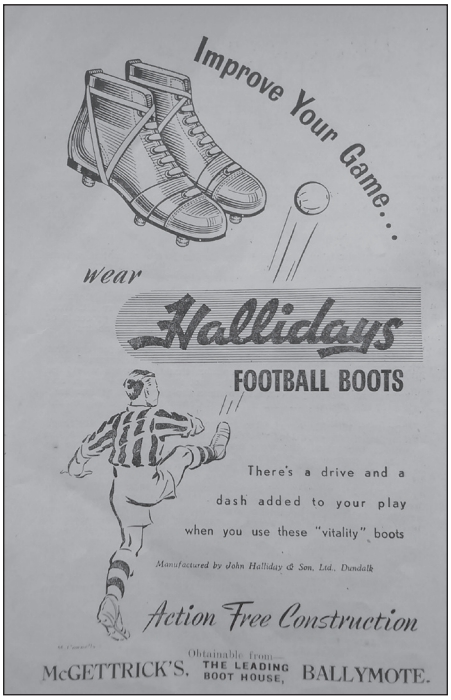
(45): THE ARK (Proprietress Mrs K. O'Gara). DRAPERY, HOSIERY & UNDERWEAR. **Gloves, Blouses, Skirts & Frocks, Scarves, Corsets etc.** THE HOUSE FOR VALUE.

CORNER HOUSE, TEELING ST., BALLYMOTE.

(46): BARTHOLOMEW CRYAN. THE MODERN GROCER. **CRYAN, BRENNAN, KANE**. AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS. BALLYMOTE & TUBBERCURRY. Telephone No. 16. Teeling St. Ballymote for Head Office.

(47): FUREY'S, VICTUALLERS. **Choicest Beef & Mutton.** TEELING ST. also Main St, Collooney.

(48): WILLIAM J. LIPSETT. WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT. **Tobacco & Cigarettes.** TEELING ST.
Left Side:



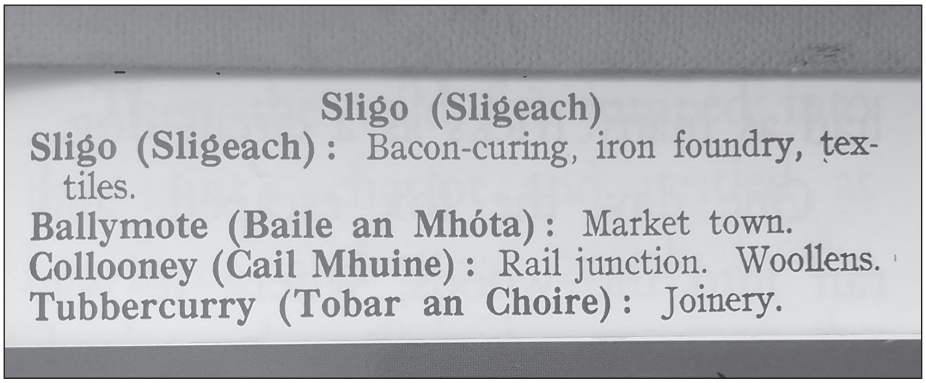
(49): DWYER BROS. VICTUALLERS. B**est Beef & Mutton. Choicest Lamb in Season. BRIAN DWYER,** TEELING ST.

(50): M.J. MATTIMOE. GROCER, WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT. TEELING ST.

(51): P.F.O'DOWD. GENERAL DRAPERS & OUTFITTERS. **The One Price Warehouse. Boots & Shoes, Coats, Frocks, Jumpers, Blouses, Woollens, Underwear etc. SHIPPING & INSURANCE AGENTS**. TEELING ST.

(52): BALLYMOTE CEMENT PRODUCTS. Works - Ardnaglass, Ballymote. ENQUIRIES TO P.F. BEGLEY, TEELING ST. Telephone No. 36.

(53): BEGLEY'S LADIES' HAIRDRESSING SALON (Lynda). **Come and have your choice of a EUGENE CALLINAN or WELLA** PERMANENT WAVE. **Razor Cut a Speciality. SETTING in All Up-To-Date Styles. Hair Re-conditioned and Dandruff Treated. Tinting. HILTONA Bleach. Trimming, Face Massage & Manicure etc.. All Work Carried Out and Supervised by** SKILLED HAIRDRESSER. TEELING ST.


Sligo (Sligeach)
Sligo (Sligeach): Bacon-curing, iron foundry, textiles.
Ballymote (Baile an Mhóta): Market town.
Collooney (Cail Mhuine): Rail junction. Woollens.
Tubbercurry (Tobar an Choire): Joinery.

(54): BEGLEY'S. THE SELECT BAR (Mimi). **Tobacconist & Newsagent. Best Brands of Whiskies and Wines Always in Stock.** TEELING ST.

ABBEY TERRACE: (From the Loftus Hall to the Sligo Road Bend). **Right Side:**

(55): On Your Way to Corran Park Call at BREE'S for CONFECTIONERY, FRUIT & ICES. **Fancy Goods & Tobacco.** ABBEY TERRACE, BALLYMOTE.

(56): MICHL. SCANLON & SONS. BUILDERS & CONTRACTORS, ABBEY TERRACE.
Left Side:

(57): P.F. BEGLEY M.I.M.T. Any Make of Car or Lorry Supplied. Authorised Ford Dealers. Wireless Dealer. All Makes Supplied. 'Phone Ballymote 17. THE GARAGE. ABBEY TERRACE.

EMMET STREET: (From the Church of Ireland to Classic Cleaners). **Left Side:**

(58): THOMAS REGAN (T.J. Regan Prop.) HARDWARE & IRONMONGERY. BUILDERS' PROVIDER. UNDERTAKER. **House Furnisher. Poultry Appliances.** PLANKS SUPPLIED **to Parks etc**. EMMET ST., BALLYMOTE.

GRATTAN STREET: (From Classic Cleaners to the Castlebaldwin Road). **Right Side:**

(59): McMANUS'S BAKERY. **General Grocers, Confectionery & Fancy Goods. Ice-Cream & Soda Fountain.** TEAS A SPECIALITY. **Highest Market Prices for Eggs.**

GRATTAN ST. BALLYMOTE.
Left Side:

(60): HANNON'S FOR BREAD & CONFECTIONERY. **Baker, Confectioner, Grocer & General Hardware Merchant,** GRATTAN ST.

Two additional advertisements are included in the programme that were of special interest to South Sligo and Mayo people, respectively.

(A): M. JOHNSON'S MEDICAL HALL. **Dispensing Chemist & Photographic Dealer. Veterinary Medicines a Speciality. 'Grams: Johnson's Chemist. GURTEEN, CO. SLIGO.**

(B): PROVIDENCE WOOLLEN MILLS: Manufacturers of all Kinds of Pure Wool Cloths Suitable for Ladies' & Mens' Wear. Pure Wool Blankets. Travelling & Motor Rugs in Check & Plain Colours. Specialists in Goods Suitable for Religious Orders & Institutions. Enquiries Solicited. 'Phone FOXFORD 4, CO. MAYO.

I believe the above-stated ads express the concerns and reflect the personalities of the business owners of the locality.

Advertisers from other parts of Co. Sligo and from many towns and cities of Ireland sought purchasers for their wares in our football programmes. These were as follows: Woods of Castle St., Sligo; Denny's Bacon Factory, Sligo; Champion Publications, Sligo; McGowan's Knitwear, Sligo; Buttermilk Toilet Soap, Cork; Chivers' Jellies, Dublin; Crosco Cattle Medicines, Tipperary; Thwaites' Soda Water, Dublin; Clover Beef Cubes, Waterford; Murray's Yachtsman Plug Tobacco, Dublin; Automac Weathercoats, Dublin; Fox's Corks, Bottles & Glasses, Dublin; Maltevina Tonic Wine; Faulet Shirts: Dunloe Weathercoats, Cork & Dublin; White's Porridge Oats, Dublin; Varian's Brushes, Dublin; Maguire & Paterson's Matches, Dublin; Philip's Radios; Monson & Robinson's Printing Equipment, Dublin; Fry's Cocoa; McKenzie's Veterinary Medicines; Halliday's Football Boots, Dundalk and finally, Rinso Clothes Detergent by Lever Bros. of Liverpool.

During the first two weeks of June 1949, Stewart's Star Amusements, in collaboration with the Corran Park Committee, held a Carnival in the Fairgreen in aid of the Park Development Fund. Five dances to raise funds for the Park were also held in the Loftus Hall during that festive fortnight.

Three footballing counties provided the footballing contests in Corran Park, i.e. Mayo v Louth on May 1st, 1949 and Mayo v Roscommon on

May 7th 1950. All the squads were preparing for the Connacht and Leinster championships and these challenge matches were serious encounters. The spectators attended in their thousands to view the exploits of Roscommon's All-Ireland winners from 1943 & 1944. These heroes were Bill Jackson, Brendan Lynch, Eamon Boland, John Joe Nerney of Boyle and Dr. Donal Keenan. The Mayo team that played twice in Ballymote, annexed the Sam Maguire Cup in 1950 and 1951. The Sligo and Mayo fans were particularly interested in Sean Flanagan, Eamon Mongey and Padraig Carney. Jim Quigley, who lined out for Louth against Mayo was the trainer and selector of the Louth team that defeated Cork in the All-Ireland Senior Final of 1957.

In June 1950, as a result of the extraordinary efforts by the Ballymote Parish clergy to assist the people of Ballymote with the establishment of Corran Park before May 1949, the members of the Park Committee returned the compliment by helping to organise an Amusement Carnival in the Fairgreen, in conjunction with Page's of Bundoran, and a Dancing Programme in the Loftus Hall, all in aid of parochial funds. In 1949 the Loftus Hall programme consisted of five dances and in 1950 there were six dances open to the public. The dancing hours were normally from 10 p.m. until 3 a.m. except on the nights before the first working day of the week when dancing ceased at 2 a.m. Admission was 5/- (shillings) for the longer dances and 4/- (shillings) for the shorter dances. Listed among the Dance Bands that provided the music for the dancers on the new sprung maple floor of the Loftus Hall were Charlie Dunne's Dublin Orchestra, Paddy Sweeney's Orchestra, Barney McCormack and his Augmented Orchestra, Frank Murray's Dance Band, Jack Ruane's Orchestra and Pat O'Hara's Dance Band. We were informed that Page's Carnival Amusements in the Fairgreen included the New American Glider, Noah's Ark, Bronco Bicycles, Football Kicker and numerous other games of Skill and Amusement.

T.J. Regan's advertisement in the programme displayed the following bizarre declaration: "Planks Supplied to Parks". Over 10,000 spectators attended the official opening match in Corran Park in 1949. The rows of surrounding permanent concrete seating were insufficient to accommodate those attending so further temporary seats were constructed in locations surrounding the pitch, consisting of Regan's planks and concrete blocks. Modern insurance companies would surely frown on that practice.

The people of Ballymote developed Corran Park in hard times. The commercial aspects of the 1949/50 match programmes provide evidence of a superlative economic community endeavour. The facility was progressively developed until Corran Park became free of debt in 1980. During the recession of the 1980s Brother Walfrid Park was constructed and was debt-free within two years of its official opening. In recent years Ballymote Community Parks (Corran & Bro. Walfrid) Committee has acquired fourteen adjoining acres of land. Surely the time is ripe for the present generation of local sportspeople and the supporting Ballymote community to upgrade this valuable twenty-five acre facility that is now unencumbered with debt and possesses great potential.

Famine in Ireland

by Andy Hegarty

Gone are the mud huts and the rush candlelight.
Likewise the poor man's gruel grub, never food for the elite.
But if by chance you should stray along a boreen serene
where the Ox Mountain heather-bells and the dog grasses meet,
there positive patterns of famine times are still to be seen.
Where the curse of bane blight spreads where potato stalks grew
on man-made raised ridges, loyed from furrows between.
A relatively undisturbed example of drudgery and rue.
In little walled fields, that passing time has not erased;
and where no man's loy has turned a green scraw
since the echoing hunger cries of the abased.
Imagine a disheartened little fellow, in winter winds cold and raw,
Oh how despairing the scene, of innocence in dire need.
And at sunset time, perhaps one less mouth there to feed.
Where man's suffering struggle was now beyond pain
in this place that has claimed many young hearts to clay.
And where a baby in arms suckles a mother's breast in vain
and reverts to sad sobbing in harrowing hunger dismay.
Yet from all that famine doom came a purpose of destiny,
as many a youth in tall ships sailed the ocean deep,
forlorn in thought, from a last parting wish and the clasp of a hand.
But, alas, many a cadaverous youth, took his last sleep
in the famine year of eighteen forty-five in Ireland.

MEETING PEOPLE by Jim Farrelly, the Irish Independent (circa 1970)

Submitted by Kate Hoare

WOMEN IN THE GAP: Brigid and Ellen Beirne are on call for a 168 hour week for 10/- (shilllings). Their job is to open and close the railway gates at Ardree crossing just outside Ballymote. Trains go by their home after midnight and as early as 7 a.m. They are "on call" to open the gates 24 hours a day. "The pay used to be 2/8 (2 shillings & 8 pence) but we got a rise to 10/- about twelve months ago", they said.

Note: *The 1911 census identifies the father and mother, Thomas and Bridget Beirne and three daughter, Katie (15), Ellen (14) and Bridget (13), all residents in Ardree. We learn from the death certificate of Thomas that he had worked as a Ganger with the railway company. (Owen M.Duffy)*

BUGGY RIDES: Blacksmith Pat Gaffney from Rathmullen, Ballymote did not like cycling so he decided to put the wheels of his bicycle to good use. He built a small light cart about the size of a wheelbarrow and attached the wheels. A donkey provided the pedal power. People think it is a toy. Bank officials Brenda Gunn, Clogheen, Tipperary and Margot O'Shea, Carrickmacross, too, were able to ride in style. (Brenda later married Owen Duffy, a frequent contributor to *The Corran Herald*). Brenda died in 2019

BERNIE McDONAGH OF GURTEEN: Meet the man who shot a trout. Mr. Bernie McDonagh from Gurteen, Co. Sligo went out shooting foxes one day but came home with a 9 lb. trout. Nobody believed that the 38 year old bachelor had shot one of the largest trout ever taken from the Owenmore river. But Bernie held to his story. He was hunting foxes along the river bank when he saw a wave in the water. Thinking it was an otter he fired and found he had shot a fish. His next ambition? To hook a bird, of course.

SOUTH SLIGO SOLDIERS IN THE GREAT WAR 1914 – 1918

submitted by Padraig Doddy

Over 5,000 Sligomen enlisted in the Great War 1914–1918. Records to date, show six hundred and fourteen of these were either killed or died of wounds. This article features some of the South Sligo men and women from the Ballymote, Bunninadden, Collooney and Tubbercurry areas who were involved in WW1.

Bunninadden - Joe King
April 1915

I received your parcel of 200 Woodbines, and all I can do at present is thank you on paper. I may tell you from my heart that there are no words which can convey to you how grateful I am to you for sending them. I hope you are in good health. I am myself very well and have great hopes of being in Bunninadden in or about Christmas. It is very poor to be a prisoner of war. You hear nothing of the outside world. Up to 23rd December we were in tents in Senninlager, but we are in huts now. They put all the Irishmen together and sent them here. I have a good deal to tell you about Mons, Soissons and Ardennes, and my time as a prisoner in Germany. I was in the maxim gun section. We were in the firing line from 6 am to 9 pm, and in my opinion outnumbered by 20 to 1. The enemy got around behind us and had us in the middle of their fire. Two of our three officers and ten men out of nineteen were killed, and four were wounded. The five who remained became prisoners of war.

Some of our fellows have taken sick and died. We lost six men last month. In camp we have a grand priest who is a native of Westport. He was sent by the Pope, and is, I think, a walking saint.

Before finishing up, I wish to be remembered to all the boys round there. I hope the people are doing well and that Home Rule will be ours when we get back. I had a parcel from Mrs Graham and one from Hugh Gildea of Moyrush. God bless them and you, too. If you could send more woodbines, I would be more than grateful to you. There is no way of getting them. Do not put stamps on them, as the postage is free for prisoners of war.

God bless you all in Bunninadden.

Joe King

Bunninadden - Patrick Benson

When Patrick Benson, Bunninadden, sat the Civil Service examination in Dublin he took first place in the British Isles. On the outbreak of war, he volunteered for active service taking a break from his safe pensionable job. Although he came through the war without serious injury and resumed his Civil Service job he never enjoyed good health afterwards as he suffered from the effects of the war. He was uncle of John Kilcoyne, Carnagopple, Tubbercurry. Also, great uncle to the Perry family in Ballymote.

Collooney - Miss Ginnie Burke

Miss Ginnie Burke, S.R.N., Kinagrelly, Collooney, who volunteered to work in the field hospitals in France and Flanders. She selflessly cared for the wounded in dreadful conditions close to the front from October 1914 to November 1918. After the war she emigrated to America and continued with her nursing career there. On retirement she returned to Ireland. She died in November 1959 and is buried in Collooney. Her brother, Fr. Felix Burke, served as Chaplain to the forces in WW1.

Miss Ginnie Burke

Collooney - Fr. Felix Burke
Achonry Diocese

Fr. Felix Burke was born at Kinnagrelly, Collooney in 1880. He was educated at Camphill National School, Ballaghaderreen Diocesan College and he studied for the priesthood in St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

Money was always scarce and when returning home on holidays from Maynooth, he often travelled to Mullingar by train and from there walked to Carrick on Shannon or Boyle and then took the train for the last leg of the journey home to Collooney.

After his ordination, he served as curate in Kilmactigue and Keash before going as chaplain to the war.

Fr Felix Burke

Fr. Felix Burke served as chaplain to the forces in WW1. After the war, he served in Tubbercurry-Cloonacool, Bohola, Foxford, Straide and finally Kilmovee where he died on the 12th January 1951.

Fr. Burke seldom spoke about the war to family members apart from saying on one occasion that "it was terrible to see all the fine young men lying dead in Flanders". He himself was a changed man when he returned. One story is told that when hostilities ended on the 11th November 1918, Fr. Burke was called on to say a mass of celebration. "Celebration of what?" he is reputed to have said with a stern look on his face. "Do you mean to tell me that we can celebrate and all the young Irishmen that have been killed?", he said

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Ballymote – Fr. Michael Henry

Fr. Michael Henry was a curate in the Achonry Diocese when he volunteered in 1914 to serve as war chaplain. Born in Ballymote, he was the son of Batt Henry, N.T., Emlaghnaghton. Fr. Henry's brother, Bertie, also volunteered for army duties and fought in the trenches.

Fr. Henry was educated in the local national school and Ballaghaderreen Diocesan College, An outstanding student, he studied for the priesthood and was awarded doctorates in both Divinity and Philosophy and was known affectionately as "the Doc Henry".

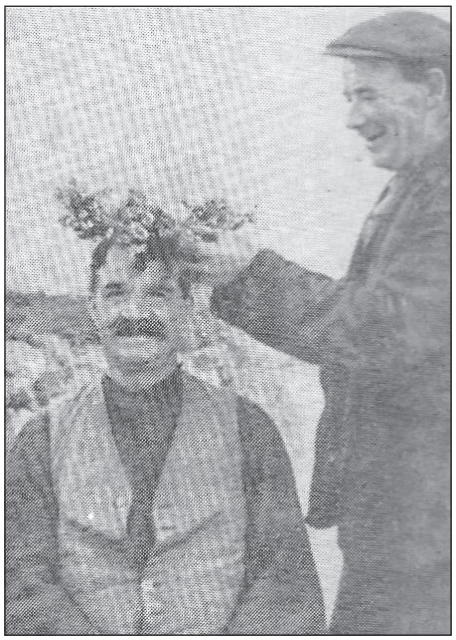
After ordination he served on the teaching staff of Ballaghaderreen College and he was the chaplain in Kiltimagh when he volunteered to serve in the war. After the war, he was curate in Curry; this was the time when the War of Independence was in full swing.

He later served as curate in Bohola, Keash, Kilkelly and finally was parish priest in Straide, Co. Mayo where he was instrumental in organising the Michael Davitt centenary celebrations. Fr. Michael Henry died in Straide in 1945.

Tubbercurry – Peter Brennan

Peter Brennan, Tubbercurry, fought in World War 1 and on his return he travelled the locality with sticks for sweeping and cleaning chimneys. Once, when cleaning a chimney in the Achonry area, the woman of the house returned home and instantly flew into a rage. "Look at the state of me house… tables, chairs, dresser, curtains all destroyed with soot", she said. "Arra, me dear woman", said Peter, "if you were at the Somme you could talk of things destroyed, with men groaning in their death here and men gasping for breath there and me up to my ankles in blood trying to defend myself against the Germans". Peter, from Carrowreagh Cooper, was one of thirteen men to leave Tubbercurry on the same day in August 1914 for the war; he was the only one of the group to ever return

Peter Brennan



Martin Ward being crowned King of the Tinkers in 1946

Co. Sligo - Martin Ward- King of the Tinkers

One man who never regretted joining up to fight for the freedom of Catholic Belgium was the well-known tinker Martin Ward. When he enlisted, he boasted that he was the best 'scrapper' in Ireland. He was itching to get a scrap with the Germans. However, he was much disappointed with the trench warfare. "Only cowards stuff", he told a friend afterwards, "with rows of barbed wire to keep us apart".

Martin's proudest moment came when he marched with the victorious

Staff at Ballaghaderreen College 1909.
Front row (l. to r.) : Fr. Ambrose Blaine and Fr. Michael 'Doc' Henry. Back row unidentified.
The college is known as St. Nathy's since 1911.

Tubbercurry – Sergeant John McGuinn

Sergeant John McGuinn (1893-1916) from Cashel, Tubbercurry, was killed at Ypres on March 27th, 1916. His nephew, James McGuinn, published a book in 1994 - *Sligo Men in the Great War 1914 – 1918.*

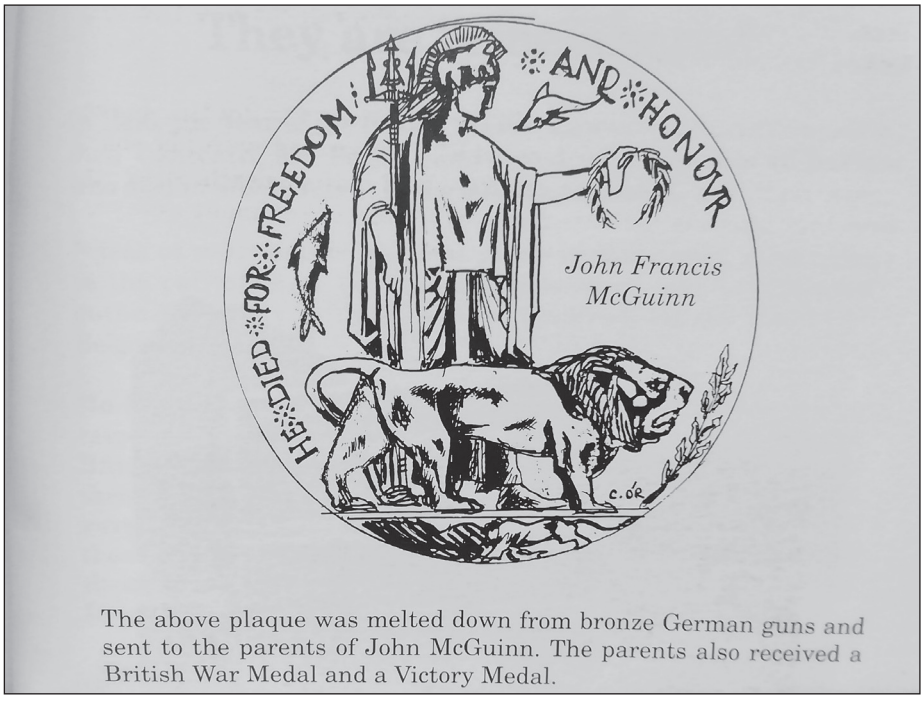
All excerpts and photographs courtesy of James McGuinn.

REFERENCES:

McGuinn, James, ***Sligo Men in the Great War 1914 – 1918,*** Naughan Press, Belturbet, Co. Cavan. 1994
http://www.irishidentity.com/extras/hidden/stories/greatwar.htm
https://lestsligoforgets.org/

Allied forces into the Rhineland in 1918. He returned home and once again travelled the roads of Ireland, living by tin and solder, happy in the knowledge that the Belgian people were again free.

He plied his trade, not only in County Sligo, but all over Connacht and indeed Ireland. In 1946, Martin was elected King of the Tinkers. When the heather crown was placed on his head he declared, "From now on, the first man I see beating a donkey or a pony on the roads of Ireland, I'll break every bone in his arm".



The above plaque was melted down from bronze German guns and sent to the parents of John McGuinn. The parents also received a British War Medal and a Victory Medal.

The John Mc Guinn Plaque

CAST & CREW 1972, "SIVE" BALLYMOTE DRAMATIC SOCIETY

Submitted by Derek Davey

Back Row L-R: Dermot Henry, Paddy Mullen, Úna Connolly, John Kilcoyne, Derek Davey, John Joe Kielty.

Seated: Anne Johnson

Back Row L-R: Dermot Henry, Producer Michael Ingoldsby, Francis Flannery, Derek Davey, John Kilcoyne.

Front Row Seated L-R: Una Connolly, Anne Johnson, Paddy Mullen, Martina Breheny, Kathleen O'Connell.

A HOLY WATER STOUP AT CARROWNREE, SKREEN, CO. SLIGO

by Martin A. Timoney

Discovery

Some years ago, I was dealing with the archaeological condition of a planning permission for a new sewage system at a converted two-storey farm building in the very northern tip of Carrownree townland, Ardabrone, Parish of Skreen, Co. Sligo. The development works involved ground openings for the pipeline, the septic tank and the percolation area for the converted building and presented no archaeology.

The occupants of the converted farm building told me of a stone bowl at the base of the wall of the adjacent small lawn. Stagnant water in it has given the bowl its present dark colour. Its later use was probably as a bowl for feeding fowl at the farmyard.

Description

The geology is sandstone or related rock while the underlying bedrock of this area is limestone. MacDermot *et al.* (1996, 5, Fig. 4, and 66, Fig. 4) show four areas of so-called Mullaghmore sandstone close to Carrownree, two either side; the source of the stone is probably in one of these areas.

The stone is secure in the ground and in the base of the lawn wall, with a small section of it concealed. The stone (Figs. 1-3) is a substantial sub-cylindrical block of stone, at least 50 cm high, and 73 cm in diameter at the rim and slightly less at the base. The outside has been roughly pocked though one area looks as if there was a slight attempt to make it flat.

The inverted sub-conical sub-circular bowl measures 49 cm across at the top and the sides slope almost perfectly at an angle of 40° to the 3 cm wide round-bottomed base, 28 cm below the rim. There would be about 20 cm between the base of the bowl and the base of the stone. The surface of the bowl is smooth to the touch. The rough rim is 13 cm to 15 cm wide and is slightly domed except for a length of 25 cm along what is now the west side. That length has been smoothed down to a maximum of 4 cm, as would be a lip for a saucepan, though in this case the sheer weight of the block would not allow for tilting it over! There is no draining hole in the base.

Recent site history

All the locals are long gone, so there is no source of tradition. The First Ordnance Survey 6" map, Sligo sheet 13, 1837, shows essentially the present arrangement of buildings, a two-storey building, now converted to a dwelling house, with a long single story shed to the east. Across the road is a long single-storey dwelling. To the west the adjacent bungalow is probably mid-20th century.

The early 17th century *Books of Survey and Distribution* in the Royal Irish Academy, lists *Skreine:* Ardabrone – Andrew French, 109a-2r-0p, and Carrownefree ½ qr., 98a-0r-0p. The Griffith *Valuation* for The Union of Dromore West for 1857, 80, lists for Carrownree No. 2, with No. 3, John Armstrong as having this property, consisting of Land, House and Offices, 9 A 2 R 30 P, value £8, while across the road No. 4, with No. 5, was in the name of James Clarke (Hugh), consisting of Land, House and Offices, 11 A 3 R 20 P, value £12; the Reps. Charles T. Webber was the Immediate Lessor in each case; Webber is mentioned again below.

What was it?

To the best of my recollection, I have not seen a similar stone bowl. Speculating as to use there are objects of this size that have a bowl or depression in them, viz., a bullaun, a baptismal basin, a holy water font or a holy water stoup. A bullaun stone was for crushing metal ore and the quality of workmanship here seems too elaborate for that. Dr. David McGuinness, whose PhD was on bullaun stones, advised me that this was not a bullaun stone.

To me, the attribution of it being a baptismal basin or baptismal font

Fig 1. Holy Water Stoup

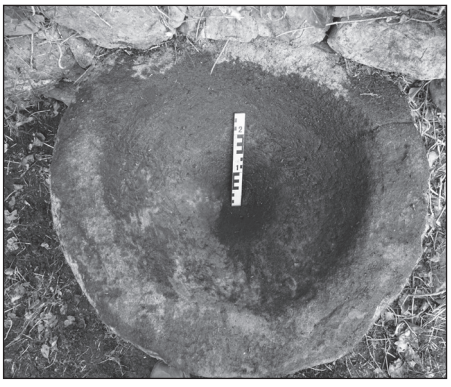


Fig 2. Holy Water Stoup Top View

Fig 3. Holy Water Stoup Side View

seemed for a while to be the much more likely option. The workmanship of the bowl and the 25 cm long section of the rim smoothed down to a maximum of 4 cm, suggests a convenience for a baby being baptised.

However, Eamonn P. Kelly and Mary Cahill, both former Keepers, Irish Antiquities Division, National Museum of Ireland, stress that it is part of the ritual that the baptismal water is allowed to flow out through a hole in the base. The inverted cone-shaped interior of the Carrownree bowl object and the lack of a drain hole suggests to Kelly that it is a stoup; though a very large one. The pecking of the surface of the stone is a feature regularly found on late medieval architectural stonework (especially on tower houses) and suggests to him a date in the 14th-16th centuries. Mary Cahill is tending towards the stoup interpretation rather than a font. A stoup would be in a wall while a font would be freestanding on a pedestal. The stone is too secure in the ground and in the wall to examine the base.

Where did it come from?

There are no churches within a reasonable distance, the nearest, Skreen and Corcoran's Acres, are all at a distance, though both would have the status for such a holy water stoup. However, in Ardabrone townland, 170 metres to the north of the wall where the stone was found, is Ardabrone castle, aka Ardnaglass Castle SL013-048001 (Fig 4).

Fig 4. Ardnaglass Castle, Ardabrone, Skreen Co. Sligo from north

Two substantial sections of this rectangular castle, int. dims. c. 32m NW-SE; 21m W-E (Fig. 4; Kilgannon 1926, 292-293; MacHale 2020, 112, Fig. 10; Patrick F. O'Donovan, archaeology.ie) still stand on the east side of what was a fair green and there is a High Medieval moated site across the road. It was apparently built by O'Dowd, Lords of Tireragh. A bas-relief sculpture of a dog killing a wolf from the castle is now in the National Museum of Ireland – it had been presented to the Royal Irish Academy by Charles T. Webber in 1841. It was published in the second volume of the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy,* Vol. 2, No. 28, in 1841, 65-66. Wood-Martin (1889, 57, fig. 5A) and Kilgannon (1926, 293) copied the illustration. Sir William Wilde, in his *Catalogue of Stone, etc.,* (1857, 143), gives some details of the dog chase from Leitrim until the wolf was killed in a pinewood in Tireragh. There are several large blocks of sandstone incorporated in the fabric of the castle. The source of the stone of the dwelling and farm sheds could well be the castle but none show any sign of dressing or sculpting. Likewise, the adjacent field walls, as far as they could be were examined, but nothing of interest was to be seen.

Was the Carrownree stone bowl a holy water stoup from a chapel in the castle or from a church in or near the castle precincts? Kelly's suggested dating of 14th to 16th centuries gives solace to this suggestion.

Maynooth, Trim, Ferns, Coonagh, Lea, Carrickfergus and Castleisland are among the major Irish castles that had a chapel incorporated in their structure. Tadhg O'Keefe's 2021 book on castles lists works on castles by Leask, McNeill, O'Conor and Sweetman. Geophysics suggests that Ballintober, Co. Roscommon, had a free-standing church within the bawn. So much of what was the massive Ardabrone castle is gone for generations – two sections still stand, but the rest of the masonry is not there or thereabouts, making it impossible to say for certain. The rediscovery of the stone bowl opens up more questions for research into this prominent, but almost forgotten, castle.

Credits:

I thank John Smith for employing me on his development, Mel Casserly for arranging that, and Lorna McLoughlin for telling me of the stone. Also, Phoebe Dick, Prof. Tadhg O'Keeffe, Brendan O'Neill, Eamonn P. Kelly, Dr. David McGuinness, Konstantin Ermolin, Mary Cahill, Tom Clarke and Mary B. Timoney for a variety of inputs and debate.

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RUGGED SCHOOLING IN 19th CENTURY SLIGO-LEITRIM

by Garreth Byrne

Until 1782 the penal laws suppressed basic schooling among the Catholic population in counties Sligo and Leitrim. Hedge schools existed furtively in country areas and were held by travelling hedge schoolmasters who had come from Dublin and elsewhere to scrape a living among the impoverished peasantry. After the relaxation of the penal laws 'pay schools' still persisted in remote places until parish national schools were built and partly supported from diocesan funds. As indicated in sources quoted in this article, in rural areas there were many poor rural Protestant families that availed of the services of legal nomadic hedge schoolmasters. I have made occasional minor punctuation corrections to make the sense clear.

An estimate published in 1824 stated that there were 11,000 schools in Ireland with about 500,000 children attending. Most of these were hedge schools or private paying schools, the latter mainly in towns.

Towns like Sligo, Ballymote, Manorhamilton and Carrick were among the first places to have denominational parish schools built in them. At the same time, in a port town like Sligo, private tutors operated from their own homes giving lessons to children of parents who could afford the fees and had ambitions for their young ones. These private tutors were often women who in childhood had benefited from private tuition and second level feepaying schooling.

I have searched the online 1937 UCD folklore survey, available at dúchas.ie and found snippets of information about legal hedge schools and the names of some of the masters. (Hedge school mistresses were not plentiful in remote places until the 1830s onwards.)

Here is a brief reference to a spartan school in Skreen:

Farraniharpy, Skreen, Co. Sligo
Old Schools | dúchas.ie (dúchas.ie)

"I could only find out about two schools in this locality, both were in Farraniharpy. One was in a barn and taught by a man named Mr. John Coulter, a protestant. The place now belongs to Mrs. Morrison. This teacher afterwards taught in an old barn belonging to a man named Davis;
(Grandfather to the present owner).

He had very few pupils in his own school although the two places were scarcely a quarter of a mile apart. A man named Michael Boland succeeded him and taught until Doonflin School was built in 1865." – Informant Patrick Finnegan, Farranharpy, Skreen, Co. Sligo.

It is interesting that in some localities, when the Ascendancy was popularly associated with reformed Protestant religion, some country children were taught by Catholic and Protestant teachers. Many country Protestant children experienced the same peasant poverty as the majority population. Take this account from... as an illustration:

Carrowreilly School | (dúchas.ie)

"*After many long years subsequent to the relaxation to the penal laws the people of this area had a very poor chance of education. There was no schools except Protestant schools. One was in* **Templehouse demesne** *the Principal teacher who was a* **Mr. Egan.** *There was a large number of Catholics attending the school, one of the conditions was that they had to learn the Protestant Bible. There was another one on the top of* **Blaragh** *along the road in charge of a lady named, Miss Sprole, there also a large number of Catholics attended this school. There were a few occasional schools for short periods, one in Rinbane in an old barn, the teacher of whom was a Mr. Mannion, one at Ropefield by a Mr. Henry. One at Tullyhugh by a Mr. Byrne and one at Carrowrile crossroads by a Mr. Oates. The latter school was the best of them all, as the name of* **Larry Oates** *as a teacher was a household word everywhere one went in them days. Some of the pupils attending his school travelled 5 miles to and from school. As well as the ordinary lessons he also taught Latin and fully prepared students for entry to the ecclesiastical colleges. This was the system, that succeeded the hedge schools of the penal days and was continued in this district down to about 1870 when Carrowrile school was built. The first teachers Mr. Pat Murray and a Miss Bourke after a few years he resigned and was replaced by a Mr. Pat O' Donnell who got married built a residence and before it was completed resigned also. Then came Mr. Waldron who completed the teacher's residence and carried on for a long number of years."*

We can note the denominational tension concerning the teaching of what the informant describes as 'the Protestant Bible'. As teachers

trained by the Kildare Place society moved into country places, imbued by a strong evangelizing motive, such tensions increased from the 1830s onwards.
Informant Pat Gilmartin, Rinbane, Ballinacarrow, Ballymote.

Just one more Schools' Collection extract, from Grellagh in North Sligo, can reveal to us the physical conditions endured by teacher and pupils:

"About 1850 Paddy McNulty was going around here teaching. He was a hedge schoolmaster. He had no school, no home whatever but depended on those he taught for his food, clothes etc.
He was a complete stranger, not a native. He used to teach in sheltery places but kept moving around through the whole district. He had a hedge school for a while in **Grellagh,** another while in **Bunduff**, in **Cliffoney** etc.
If the day came wet he went to some one of his pupils' houses. Here the pupils gathered and he generally stopped a few days, or a week in the house. The people of the house fed him and clothed him, if necessary. In some cases they gave him a few pennies. This depended on the circumstances of the pupil's father - if fairly well off he gave money, otherwise food or clothes…

The subjects taught were; reading, arithmetic and writing.
The reader used was called a "Goff". The Noster was both an arithmetic and a dictionary. Great care was given to this and it was wonderful how many words the people knew the explanations.
The writing was done on slates and by quills on paper. Each pupil had to bring his quill and the teacher supplied the paper. Little writing was done on paper, mostly all on slates."
The informant adds that landlord Lord Palmerston – later Prime Minister of the United Kingdom - built a school at Cliffoney where the first teacher named Clarke declined to teach Irish openly as he was forbidden to do so. (He taught some lessons furtively.) Pupils had to wear the despised tally stick.

LEITRIM SCHOOLING CONDITIONS

Ballinaglera on the north-eastern shore of Lough Allen, including a catchment area of Dowra, Inismagrath and a slice of west Cavan, had many hedge schoolmasters, some of them active or retired as late as the 1870s. Based on the book '***Ballinaglera and Inishmagrath: The History and Traditions of two Leitrim Parishes',*** by Maura Clancy, derived from research by Peter Clancy N.T., the following facts are abstracted on a special website:

"The pre-Famine population of the parish was between 8,000 and 9,000, with 1,000 children attending schools.

Limited education was available through the "hedge-schools". The Commissioners report of 1826/27 lists 8 hedge schools in the parish. The report states the location of the school, the name and religion of the teacher, the number of pupils in the school and it comments on the condition of the school building. Most schools were attended by a mixture of Protestant and Catholic pupils".

A few details from a list as set out below:

Pupils of Saint Hugh's National School compiled a local history of Ballinaglera Parish entitled ***'Fire on The Mountain'*** (2019). The book chronicles the key events, controversies and personalities of the Newbridge, Doobally, Dowra Villlage and Ballinaglera areas, dating back to the eighteenth century and gives information about hedge schools during and after penal times.
The Ballinaglera-Dowra area in 1826 had Sliabh an Iarainn (the Iron Mountain) overlooking Lough Allen. It was a long walk to Drumkeeran or Drumshanbo and few people could afford horse-drawn transport. Yet freelancing hedge schoolmasters took their chances and eked out a living of sorts in eight known legal hedge schools long before parish schools were built. It is remarkable that denominational intermixing occurred in an atmosphere of shared communal poverty.

Some information is available about a hedge school in Greenawn adjacent to

Townland	Teacher	Religion	Pupils	Building
Derrinweir	Thomas Maguire	Protestant	32	Stone and Lime
Coolegrane	Peter Cassidy	Catholic	99	A miserable building
Killydiskert	Brian Kealeher		70	A building of clay and rushes
Drumkeerin	Mary Ovens	Protestant	48	Lime and stone cabin
Muddurah	Michael Christy	Catholic	61	A wretched cabin

Link: http://www.inishmagrath.com/hist_1800s.html

Moneyduff townland a few kilometres from Dromahair. Informant Francis Timoney of Moneyduff gave these details: *"The old school in Greenawn, Dromahair, Co Leitrim, was a barn belonging to a man the name of Michael McDaniel. It was the school for the district until Moneyduff school; the present one, was built in 1865. It was a lady teacher who taught in it [with] the name of Miss Mc Laughlin. She lived in the school and had a press bed that could be folded up during the day. Thirty children used attend ... My Grandfather attended it when he was about ten years old. The school is now used by a man living there…"*

A parish school replaced it in the Moneyduff area in 1865. Miss McLaughlin was the teacher from 1865 and her living circumstances were simple indeed. Dromahair had to wait until the end of the 19th century for the building of a Catholic primary school on land provided by Yorkshire-based landlord George Lane-Fox Junior.

The contributor to this ***Dúchas*** schools collection continues with attention to conditions as experienced by the pupils.

"…When this [parish] school of Moneyduff was built the pupils left Greenawn and came to school here. Every pupil had to be in at ten in the morning and the rolls were marked at half ten. The subjects were English reading, Geography, Grammar, Dictation and Arithmetic. No Irish was allowed nor did the teacher know it. First class book was called Sequel No.1. It was two pence and second class was ***Sequel No. 2*** *it was three pence. Third class book was sixpence and it was very difficult and the pupils used to be three years in third class. Grammars and Geographies were fourpence each. Each subject was taught daily…There was no religious instruction taught. They got home at three o'clock in the evening and they had home work also. Sums were also taught simple and compound addition. The school room was about 12 feet wide and 26 feet long. Fourth standard was the highest the average pupils reached but some went as far as fifth standard.*

*There was a fire in the Winter and each child had to take in two [pieces of] turf daily. An Inspector the name of Browne used to come twice a year. He examined all the children one by one. The teacher was never notified before his coming." Teachers were afraid of unheralded visits by inspector called the '***cigire'***."*

SOCIAL IMPACT OF HEDGE SCHOOLS

Foreign travellers commented with surprised amazement about hedge schools they encountered. William Reed toured Ireland in 1810 and noted: *"A desire for education manifests itself, and very generally, among the lower orders of the people. In my wandering through the country, I found several very humble seminaries, called Hedge Schools ...the scholars are taught reading, writing etc., in the open air. There are also itinerant teachers, who become inmates of a cabin for several weeks together, and who receive only a temporary lodging and a few potatoes for instructing juvenile inhabitants".*

Lord Palmerston, later a British prime minister, wrote about his impoverished North Sligo tenants in 1808: *"There are now three or four schools upon the estate. The people join in engaging some itinerant master; they run him up a miserable mud hut on the road side, and the boys pay him half-a-crown, or some five shillings a quarter. They are taught reading, writing and arithmetic, and ... Latin and even Greek."*

Palmerston later gave funds for the construction of better school buildings in North Sligo, near Mullaghmore. Details about this and his attitude to the Great Famine are given in the book "Lord Palmerston: An Absentee Landlord," by John McKeon (2018). (*See also Lord Palmerston's Ballymote Estate Issue 52 of The Corran Herald*)

The 19th century peasantry and town dwellers had a thirst for the rudiments of learning and were glad to have itinerant teachers operating in physically difficult conditions.

Some hedge schoolmasters were inspirational teachers. Others, in several parts of Ireland, were undisciplined. Fortified in the evenings with locally distilled poteen, they might spout foul language and revolutionary talk. Some tried to bamboozle peasant parents with pompous Latin and Greek quotations and grandiloquent English. Collectively they brought simple schooling and culture to the peasantry. We can admire their local achievements without overlooking coarse individual shortcomings.

Denominational schools were supplied with trained teachers, so this was welcomed as the 19th century proceeded. The freelancers – many of whom were sincere individuals – did not teach according to defined standards.

Modern school buildings are better than the barns, shacks, outhouses, derelict cottages and tree-canopied groves of former times. Nevertheless it is still a common sight to see crowded primary schools with prefabricated classrooms.

Garreth Byrne has had varied teaching experience in Ireland, Africa and China. He lives in retirement and takes an active interest in Dromahair local development and heritage matters.

AN UNUSUAL LEGACY

by Pat McCarrick

On an ordinary afternoon in the spring of 1974, a man arrived at my home in Cloonbaniff near Knocknashee in south Sligo. He was a representative of a law firm in Dublin and he was looking for one James McCarrick. The James McCarrick he was looking for was my grandfather who had passed away in 1941.

The man, who was treated with a fair degree of scepticism by my father, was following a lead in trying to trace relatives of a man named Leon Gagne. Gagne had died the previous year in San Francisco. A letter found in his possessions was one exchanged between his mother and her brother, my grandfather. This was the only piece of evidence linking Gagne to his relatives, all of whom he had never met and likely had no knowledge of. All Gagne's cousins were duly traced and a reasonable legacy was divided among them all, my father included. From then until now, little thought was given to Gagne and nothing was known about his life. Having a little time on hand in recent months, I donned my research hat and with the tools of internet and newspaper archives, I started investigations.

Mary Anne was the second child born to Connor McCarrick and Catherine Henry. She was born in the townland of Cloonbaniff in 1866. Mary Anne went to America as a young woman and while no definite records of her travel could be found, it seems that she may in fact have gone, not to America but to Canada. A further hunch is that it could have been there the she met her future husband, Gustave Gagne, who was born in France.

The first official records detailing Mary Anne's new life appear in the 1900 US census. She is listed as Marian, living in San Francisco and by then married to Gustave. They had a son, Leon, who was born in 1894. Gustave is described as a florist. In 1904, the couple acquire a property on Lombard Street. This remains their permanent address for many years. Gustave is described in census reports thereafter as a nursery man (1910), and nursery man working together with his son Leon (1920). Gustave appears to have passed away by 1930 as just Mary Anne and her son are listed in the US census for that year. By this time, Leon is described as a gardener working in landscaping.

Leon was actually quite a bit more than a gardener. His description in a newspaper report in March 1945 is actually quite impressive; "*Leon Gagne of San Francisco, one of the leading landscape gardeners of California.*"

Mary Anne is not listed in the 1940 census but her son Leon is and he is still living at their Lombard Street address. He is described as the owner of the nursery at this time. No death or burial records have been found for Mary Anne.

Leon, born 11th November 1894, became quite well known in California as a gardening specialist. His life and times featured in many newspaper articles and event notices. He was greatly in demand in the wider Californian region as a specialist landscape gardener, an expert advisor and guest speaker; sought out by gardening societies and ladies' retirement clubs. He was obviously a very interesting and artistic individual but despite his reputation, he seems to have ended his days as a recluse. Articles about him, published at the time of his death make for sad reading; he died alone in the last days of 1973 and his death went undetected for many days. His relative wealth came principally from his collection of Bonsai trees which he had collected and cultivated over many years. These items were liquidated at a grand auction in an effort to establish the value of his estate; the estate that

Dead gardener leaves bonsais

SAN RAFAEL (UPI) — Someone may inherit $200,000 in rare Japanese bonsai trees.

But Marin County Superior Court officials said Wednesday that they could not find any heirs to the estate of Leon Gagne, 79, a retired gardener who died of a heart attack last month.

Gagne left no will, and his home surrounded by hundreds of the dwarf trees was in the hands of probate officers.

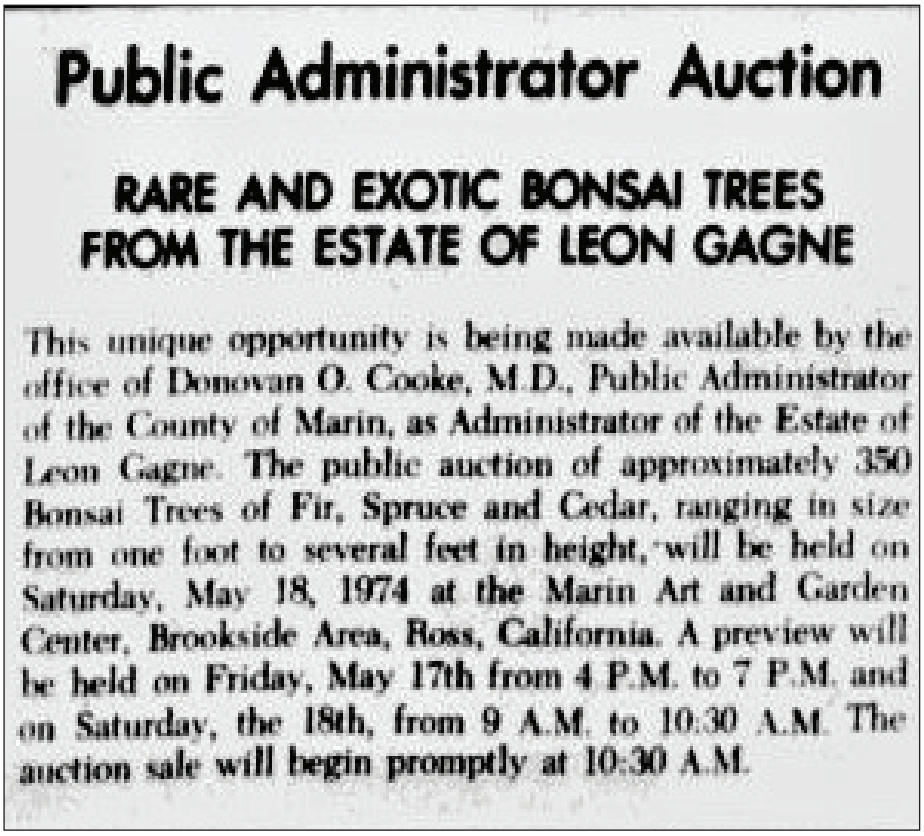
Fuchsia Society Meets Tomorrow

Sound color movies of home gardens will be the feature of a meeting of the Redwood Fuchsia Society at 8 p. m. tomorrow at Tiburoner's Hall in Tiburon.

Leon Gagne of Mill Valley, nurseryman, will speak and furnish the motion pictures.

Phil Reedstrom, president, said the meeting will mark the first anniversary of the club, which now has more than 100 members.

San Rafael Daily Independent Journal 9 October 1958



Public Administrator Auction

RARE AND EXOTIC BONSAI TREES FROM THE ESTATE OF LEON GAGNE

This unique opportunity is being made available by the office of Donovan O. Cooke, M.D., Public Administrator of the County of Marin, as Administrator of the Estate of Leon Gagne. The public auction of approximately 350 Bonsai Trees of Fir, Spruce and Cedar, ranging in size from one foot to several feet in height, will be held on Saturday, May 18, 1974 at the Marin Art and Garden Center, Brookside Area, Ross, California. A preview will be held on Friday, May 17th from 4 P.M. to 7 P.M. and on Saturday, the 18th, from 9 A.M. to 10:30 A.M. The auction sale will begin promptly at 10:30 A.M.

San Rafael Daily Independent Journal 14th May 1974

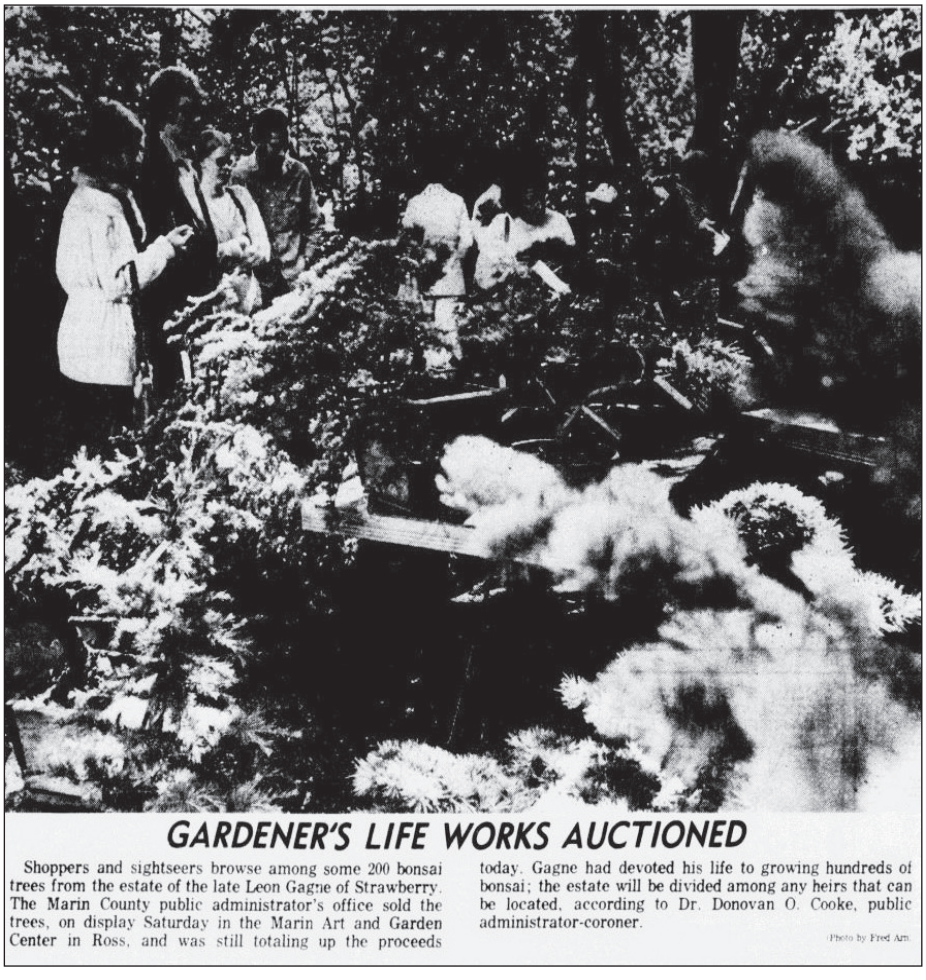
was subsequently divided among his Irish cousins. Leon Gagne was subsequently laid to rest in Mount Tamalpais Cemetery, San Rafael, Marin County in California.

The following short newspapers reports appeared after his death. Combined, they give a short profile of his interesting life and sad death.

*Funeral for Leon Gagne, Bay Area bonsai expert of Strawberry, is Friday at 1 pm, at Russell and Gooch Funeral Home in Mill Valley. Gagne, 79, was found dead last Friday at his home at 50 Rancho Drive. A native of San Francisco, he lived in Marin County for 19 years. In San Francisco he had owned a nursery founded by his father and had studied bonsai under a Japanese tutor. When he closed the nursery in 1955, he moved to Marin and began devoting most of his time to a bonsai business in his hom*e.

His trees and landscaping can be seen in many Marin homes and yards. Gagne was a member of the San Francisco Camera Club, the California Nurserymen's Association and the Historical Railroad Society. He attended the First Church of Christian Science in Belvedere. No closely related family members survive him. Friends may also call at the funeral chapel after 9 a.m. Thursday. - **Daily Independent Journal, Wednesday, December 19th 1973**

Back in 1974, my father, his siblings and his first cousins, who all benefited from the distribution of Gagne's estate, were all dotted around Ireland and England, on small farms, in convents and running small-town businesses. In all likelihood none of them knew the first thing about bonsai trees and they certainly knew nothing about the exotic life, the artistic endeavours and tragic death of Leon Gagne.



GARDENER'S LIFE WORKS AUCTIONED

Shoppers and sightseers browse among some 200 bonsai trees from the estate of the late Leon Gagne of Strawberry. The Marin County public administrator's office sold the trees, on display Saturday in the Marin Art and Garden Center in Ross, and was still totaling up the proceeds today. Gagne had devoted his life to growing hundreds of bonsai; the estate will be divided among any heirs that can be located, according to Dr. Donovan O. Cooke, public administrator-coroner.

(Photo by Fred Am

San Rafael Daily Independent Journal 20th May 1974

An Empty Suitcase

by Michael J Meehan

It was hot that summer's day in the 1960s. At the time, I was a shop-boy at a drapery store in the west of Ireland. The heat had left the town's footpaths near deserted, business was slow, we had hardly seen a customer all day, when a young man came through the shop door, scruffy clothes, torn boots that revealed bare feet. At a glance, you would say a 'Knight of the Road' on a lookout for a handout.

He carried a large cardboard suitcase, a set of keys dangling from the handle. The case had the polished look of new, definitely not as well travelled as the bearer. He was clean shaven, well cut Brylecreemed hair, a whiff of fresh after-shave that failed to rid the odour of stale booze. We later learned he had come to us from Paddy, the barber across the road.

Senior staff withdrew in the hope of more promising customers. I was left to serve the young man. He approached the shop counter and mumbled, as in confidence, 'do you sell socks here'? The first precept of a salesman is to 'size up the customer.' So, I whipped out the heavy 'Blarney' work socks from under the counter. As though he had had enough of them, he stressed 'the lighter ones for the shoes. 'I showed him the fine wool 'Sunbeam' socks, the best in the shop. Without asking the price, he selected four pair. Enthusiasm for a sale rose.

After the socks, he got into a shopping stride. In quick time, he bought shirts, underwear, jumpers, a tie, even pyjamas. He put them in a pile on the counter, then got fitted with sports jacket and trousers. Shopping country style! Start with a cheap purchase, then build up to the expensive ones, which was what you came in to buy. A means of establishing confidence between buyer and seller.

He was not yet a well-dressed man, he needed shoes. I recommended a nearby shoe shop. By now there were lurking eyes with thoughts of a 'rescue' if I bungled the sale. But there was caution. Where would the money come from?

At the time, all sales ended with money on the counter and this one did too. He dug out of several pockets, bundles of English £20 notes, rolled up like sheets of loo paper. He peeled off the purchase money without any of the bargain 'haggle.' He told me that he had been working on the 'buildings' in the English Midlands for the past year. He had drawn savings and holiday money, fell in with a few lads on the Holyhead boat, went on a drinking spree that ended in a Dublin pub, slept somewhere, lost his travel bag and then got the morning train to the west.

He was, of course, 'one of the boys' back from England with money to blow, return ticket in the hip-pocket.

MV Hibernia served Holyhead to Dún Laoghaire route

There were many of them in those years. A journey home every Summer to see family and friends and to leave English money in the tills of pubs and country shops.

He left the purchases and suitcase and went to get the shoes. I had made the sale of the day and would have a few bob more in commission. Later he came back in his new shoes, a second pair wrapped in brown paper. The boots gone to a rubbish bin.

He asked could he change into the new clothes and clean-up a bit, so I brought him upstairs to a staff bathroom. He came down a new man. A young girl assistant later admiringly remarked 'didn't he tat-up well.' He opened the empty bag, piled in old clothes, packed the new neatly on top. He said he was getting a bus to his home in a well-known townland, near the coast, made up of small farms, big families and high emigration.

As he left, I noticed the keys still dangling from the handle of the case. I suggested he should lock the case and pocket the keys. While doing this, he said, 'you know, down our way, if you don't get off the bus carrying a big bag, they'll say, you're not doing well.'

While watching T.V. coverage of the State Visit to England by President Higgins, I thought of that afternoon. Could the young man with the empty case have made it into that line of successful Irish diaspora at Windsor Castle. Next day the President went to a Hostel to meet with another part of the diaspora.

Ballymote Boys' National School 1959/1960

Submitted by Derek Davey

Front Row L to R: Michael Mc Gettrick, Joseph Donegan, Vincent Finn, Tommie Duffy, Kieran Mc Nulty, Michael Duffy, Billy Brady, Jimmy Coen
Middle Row L to R: Paddy Mc Nulty, Donald Berry, Joseph Mc Gettrick, Pat O'Hart, Austin Prior, Tom Mc Nulty, James Flanagen, George Brennan, Damien Tansey, Raymond Galvin, John Mc Ardle
Back Row L to R: Derek Davey, Paddy Hannon, Michael Rafferty, Jim Hannon, Michael Hever, Michael Healy, Raymond Mc Andrew

Easter Sunday...Stored to Memory

by Rose Marie Stanley

To the caves on the hill I looked and looked,
Closed my eyes and stored it to memory.

To the homestead, I looked, touched the stones,
Closed my eyes and stored it to memory.

To the tiny church I looked, said a prayer,
Closed my eyes and stored it to memory.

To the daffodils still in bloom, I looked and smelled
Closed my eyes and stored it to memory.

To the people gathered, I looked though tears obscured my view
I chokingly whispered, "Día duit, Slán agat".
I closed my eyes, heard their reply, "Dia is Muire duit, Slán leat, and stored it to memory.

It is almost time to leave
When tomorrow dawns, we'll be on our way.

Leaving with only what is stored to memory

Visit to Guinness Brewery

Submitted by Carmel Mullen.

Ballymote & Sligo Publican families on a visit to the Guinness Brewery, St Jame's Gate, Dublin, during the mid 1960's.

Farewell

by Rose Marie Stanley

Time: Easter Monday, 5th April 1847 Pre-dawn
Place: Homestead in Keash (Cross)

We leave. The rain is falling. It's damp. It's cold. It's dark. I'm cold. I'm dark. My heart feels cold. My heart feels dark. I feel no warmth. I feel no light, only coldness and darkness of body and soul.

Patrick tries once again to reassure me that this is all for the best.
I cannot feel the hope that he does. I am not the one who takes dares and risks as he does. I whisper a prayer. I get no consolation, no hope, no response.
Like the rain, my tears flow involuntarily.

Our children, Martin the eldest and our five daughters Mary, Margaret, Bridget-Elizabeth, Catherine and Sarah are huddled together. They move closer and gather around us. Their faces mirror and betray our thoughts and emotions. Their fears, their anxieties, the unknown, their unasked and unanswered questions, our fears, our anxieties, the unknown, our unasked and unanswered questions all remain frozen and locked in time and space.

There are a few people standing near the road and others beside their homes to wish us well. I can barely hear their farewell. I can barely see their faces and their expressions. Our voices are barely whispers, and through tears, our eyes can barely see. The cold and dark reflect our gaunt and wretched appearance. How do you say goodbye? How can we believe this exodus will help everyone? We know, only too well that this is final- one final word, one final whisper, one final look, one final touch.
Our hearts feel only grief, despair, and abandonment. Our hearts are breaking. Our hearts are broken. And so, with submissive resignation, our walk to the unknown begins

Ballymote 1959 Gaelic Football Team

Submitted by Joe McNulty

Back Row L to R: Sean Hannon, Des Kilkenny (Hib. Bank), Gda Noel Gallagher, Eamonn Hannon, Matt Scanlon, Mark Henry, Paddy McGuinness, John King.

Front Row L to R: Anthony Mullen, Padraig Dockry, Joe Flannery, Paddy Mullen, Aidan Fox, Michael Bree, Berchmans Scully.

Group of Keenaghan hurlers in mid 1950s

Submitted by Owen M.Duffy

Photograph was taken in Regans field, Keenaghan.
Front Row L to R: Neal Farry, Owen Duffy, Michael Hoey, Brian Meehan.

Middle Row (standing): Val Rogers, Martin Meehan, Joey Hannon.

Back Row L to R: Michael Hannon RIP, Andrew Rogers, Jim Sreenan, John Cassidy Jim Hannon and Vincent Breheny RIP

Corpus Christi Procession in mid 1950s

Submitted by Owen M.Duffy

Group of Altar boys at The Church of the Immaculate Conception following the Corpus Christi procession in 1957.

Front Row L to R: Joe McGovern, Fintan Molloy, Pat Rogers.
Back Row L to R: John Mc Andrew RIP, James Duffy RIP, Hubert McDermott.

Centenary of 1916 Rising

Submitted by Padraig Doddy

On Easter Monday 2016 a wreath was laid at the Markievicz memorial in Rathcormac. The guest speaker was Padraig MacLochlainn - a grandnephew of Padraig Pearse. The Markievicz memorial was unveiled in 2003. Countess Markievicz was born Constance Gore-Booth in 1868 and spent her childhood living in Lissadell House, Co. Sligo.

Padraig Doddy with Padraig MacLochlainn - grandnephew of Padraig Pearse at the Markievicz memorial in Rathcormac.

Dallas Actor visits Mayo

Submitted by Padraig Doddy

American actor Patrick Duffy (Dallas TV Star, Bobby Ewing) visited his ancestral home in Kilmovee, Co. Mayo in July, 2022 to trace his roots and also met several second cousins. Patrick's grandfather, Patrick J Duffy, left the townland of Skeheen, Kilmovee and emigrated to the United States in 1919.

Padraig Doddy with Patrick Duffy during his visit to Kilmovee in July 2022.

Unveiling of the Brother Walfrid Monument

Submitted by Neal Farry

Unveiling of the Brother Walfrid monument in Ballymote Park, October 2004.
L to R: Sean Fallon (Irish International & former Celtic F. C. Manager) Sean Cunningham, Eugene McHale,
Brian Quinn (Chairman of Celtic F. C.), Jim Sheridan,
Paddy Doherty (Founder of the monument Committee),
Cllr. Pat McGrath.

Sean Fallon and Brian Quinn unveiled the monument. Jim Sheridan and Eugene McHale walked from Ballymote to Glasgow to raise funds to defray the costs of the monument.

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