

# THE CORRAN HERALD

A Ballymote Heritage Group Production.

Issue No. 20

Summer 1991

Price £1.00

## 'Survey of the Megalithic Tombs of Ireland: Vol. V. County Sligo'

DR. SEÁN Ó NUALLÁIN

A review article by Martin A. Timoney

Recently the Ordnance Survey of Ireland published 'Survey of the Megalithic Tombs of Ireland: Vol. V. County Sligo'. It costs £40 and is available from the Government Publications Office, Hurley in Ballymote or Keohanes in Sligo. The author is Dr. Seán Ó Nualláin, Archaeological Officer with the Ordnance Survey. He was made an Honorary Life Member of Sligo Field Club in recognition of this work.

This volume is certainly no bedtime reading; it measures 13 by 9 by 2 inches and is 6lbs. in weight! This large format allows for large size plans at a scale of one hundredth, excellent maps and quality reproduction of four photographs to a page. There are orientation diagrams for the court, portal and wedge tombs. The volume is fully cross-indexed. The introduction details the history of megalithic studies in Co. Sligo which began with Edward Lhuyd in 1699 and continues today with the work of Bergh and others.

Megalithic tombs are tombs built of big rocks. Archaeologists classify them into four main types, portal tombs, court tombs, passage tombs

and wedge tombs; there are also several tombs which do not fall into any of these classes.

In Part 3 of this volume there are lists of the 1,448 tombs known up to the end of 1988. This is the first list of Irish megalithic tombs, north and south, made this century. Distribution maps, as of 1988, of each type are given as well as location details and the more important references. This in itself makes the volume worth having.

The bulk of the volume, Part 1, is devoted to descriptions, plans and photographs of 128 megalithic tombs of Co. Sligo. As in previous volumes, details of the passage tombs are omitted; that inventory will be published as a separate volume. In Part 2 there is a discussion of the Sligo tombs in the local and national setting and the first list this century of all megalithic tombs in the 32 counties. Eleven (6%) of the 174 Irish portal tombs are in Co. Sligo, with excellent ones being at Tawnatruffan, near Dromore West, and Carrickglass, near Highwood. The Carrickglass portal tomb consists of a burial chamber formed by

## Where's That?

The indication of a long vowel on the first part of Keash Hill, a famed hill of Co. Sligo, directed those attempting to find its original Irish towards céis rather than ceis, this latter being (1) a small harp or (2) a young sow. This second meaning ties it in with 'a very singular legend', found in the Dinnshechus, where it is related that Ceis was the name of a lady, who, with five others, were, by a charm compounded with the nut-fruit, metamorphosed into pigs, the unhappy Ceis herself being subsequently slain. Ceis Chorainn, in the Sligo barony of Corran, now anglicised as Keshcorran, is the site of the Fenian Tale of Bruidean Cheise Corran, the enchanted fort of Keshcorran'. Some antiquarians saw a similarity with the lengthening sizes of 'caves' here, with the increasing length of harp strings; thereby ceis (1). A very important battle called the Battle of Ceis Chorainn was fought at the foot of the Hill of Keash in 971, between the men of Ulster and those of Connaught, the dead including Serrach O Flaherty, king of Kenelown (Cineal Eoghain), Donough, son of Donnell Roydamna; Teighe, son of Mortagh, and Cathal, son of Teige, King of Connaught. From an inquisition held at Ballymote 22nd May 1611, before Nicholas Brady, we learn of a denomination of land, then called Tryne of Cloncagh, the trian (a third, a good portion, a 'quarter' of area) of Cluain Catha, 'the meadow of the battle' or more simply 'battlefield'. This lay between Toomour and the crest of Bricklieve, and there is a strong belief that this was the site of the battle. This

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two side stones and a backstone. There is a blocking stone between the two massive entrance stones. This monument is capped by a single huge capstone, reputed to weigh seventy tons, measuring 4.4 metres by 3.4 metres by 1.6 metres. (1 metre = 3ft. 3ins.) It looks as if the capstone has driven the chamber stones down into the ground. One can only marvel at the sheer size of this capstone and how it was got up into position.

Fifty-nine (15%) of the 391 Irish court tombs are in Co. Sligo, with excellent ones being at Creevykeel, near Cliffooney, and Deerpark, near Calry. The Sessuecommon court tomb, east of Aclare, is in a mound seventeen metres by eight metres. There is a round court with a burial chamber at its west end. One stone at the east end may indicate the original entrance to the court, thus giving the monument an eastern orientation. Court tombs normally face into the rising sun. The Creevykeel court tomb was excavated in 1935 and was subsequently restored to the extent that today it is possibly the best displayed of all Irish court tombs.

Thirty-five (8%) of the 465 Irish wedge tombs are in Co. Sligo with excellent ones being at Gortakeeran and Cabragh, west of Coollaney, and Culdaly bear Kilmacteige. The Cabragh tomb has the characteristic burial gallery with a small chamber marked off in front of it, outer walling which gives the wedge shape to the tomb, and a few capstones. It faces north west. Wedge tombs normally face into the setting sun. It is eleven metres long and seven metres wide at the west front. Wedge tombs were the last type of megalithic tomb to be built.

Twenty three (12%) of the 189 Irish megalithic tombs which do not fit into any of these classes are in Sligo. An example is that at Knock-

adoo, south of Coolaney, where one of the two groups of large stones clearly form a chamber. What survives is insufficient to tell us what type of tomb it was.

Furthermore they reject twenty nine previously suggested Sligo tombs; rejection does not mean that they are not monuments, only that they are not megalithic tombs.

At least sixty seven (29%) of the 229 Irish passage tombs are in Co. Sligo, with major cemeteries at Carrowkeel, near Castlebaldwin, and Carrowmore and Knocknarea, near Sligo. Details and plans of these will be presented in a later volume. Besides being listed, these sites are not further considered in the book nor in this review article.

Since this volume went to press two more Sligo tombs, one at Skreen and one at Aghannagh, near Ballinadad, were discovered by Tom Condit of the Sites and Monuments Record Office using high powered magnification of the vertical aerial photographs. There may be others that have not come to archaeological notice as yet.

Two real oddities, the monuments at Achonry and Knocka-tootaun, east of Knocknashee, are included. The Achonry monument consists of three huge round boulders, averaging 2 metres by 2 metres by 1 metre, supporting an even larger one. It looks as if it is a collapsed tomb but the presence of a deliberately placed small stone between the capstone and one of the supports rules this out. If this was a tomb then the burial space between the three supporting boulders was very small. The Knocka-tootaun monument has a roofslab 3 metres by 2.7 metres supported by seven irregularly placed uprights. Neither of these monuments fit into any of the standard classes but then there are 187 other unclassifiables.

Despite all these superb megalithic structures, many of them excellently photogenic, the logo for

the 'Sligo is Surprising' campaign is not based on any Sligo megalith but on one of the glories of Co. Clare, the Poul nabrone portal tomb. Why Tawnatruffaun or Carrickglass portal tombs or Carrowmore No. 7 passage tomb or the distinctive profile of Knocknarea crowned by the great cairn called 'Miosgán Mave' were not used is beyond logical reasoning! Both Tawnatruffaun and Carrickglass are extremely photogenic; likewise Carrowmore no. 7 which is part of the largest complex of megalithic tombs in these islands; Knocknarea, now sadly being defaced by American sidewalk style graffiti, is already known because of Yeats' poetry. Perhaps someone will present a copy of The Megalithic Survey to the "Sligo is Surprising" people.

The detailed modern survey of these tombs has been going on for several decades now under Prof. Ruaidhri de Valera and Dr. Sean Ó Nualláin. Five volumes, covering sixteen counties and the greater portion of the country, have been published. Two further volumes, Donegal and east Leinster and east Munster, are in preparation to complete the country. An eighth volume will detail tombs discovered since the various county volumes were published. It was a Sligo man, Col. W. G. Wood-Martin, who published "*Rude Stone Monuments of Ireland; County Sligo and the Island of Achill*" as what was intended as the beginnings of a similar survey in 1888. That scheme does not seem to have got any further and it was not until 1961 that the first volume of the present survey was published.

The field work for such a survey is enormous. Only some of the tombs are marked on the Ordnance Survey maps. They are marked as rock-outcrops, some as ringforts and several not at all. The survey of Sligo was greatly assisted by the



*Tawnatruffan Portal Tomb - Photo Seán Ó Nualláin*

fieldwalking of many members of Sligo Field Club, some of whom may be well known to our readers. The late Pat Kitchin of Newpark and the late Michael Cahalane, (my predecessor as Secretary of Sligo Field Club), assisted by Dr. Paddy Heraughty and Des Smith, were extremely successful in finding tombs in the sixties and early seventies. It is part of the mythology of Sligo Field that they discovered six megalithic tombs on one afternoon! This writer has discovered some tombs and Tom Mc Gettrick may have been instrumental in bringing to Sligo Field Club notice the only known photograph, taken by a doctor from Blackrock, of the destroyed Clough Portal tomb near Ballintrillick.. Though not mentioned, it was Anthony Kitchin of Newpark who discovered the Moneylahan court tomb. Throughout this work there are credits to Sligo Field Club and its members for their trojan field work which resulted in the discovery of some twenty tombs.

Let me relate about one when I witnessed Dr. Ó Nualláin in action out in the field. Recently Brendan Rooney found some tombs, cairns, enclosures and walls on a plateau high above Glencar. At one monument, a flat cairn in Augh-

amore, Mick Gibbons was trying to convince Dr. Ó Nualláin that the cairn was in fact a megalithic tomb of the court tomb class. Dr. Ó Nualláin was not having it saying that there was no sign of any stone of megalithic proportions and the Megalithic Survey would never be completed if every cairn were to be included. By this style of clinical decision making it seems most likely that Dr. Ó Nualláin will complete the publication of all the known tombs of this country.

Regrettably, while we know that at least 128 tombs survived the best part of 4,000 years, some eleven have not survived through the last two centuries. In 1972 I, assisted by Prof. Rynne, excavated what survived bulldozing and ploughing of the Breeoge wedge tomb. Cremated and uncremated remains were found. Luckily I had photographed this site in 1967 and Rynne had made a sketch plan of it in 1968 when I took him to see it. We can judge from Wakeman's drawing of pre-1888 that the megalithic tomb at Rathscanlan on the west side of Tobercurry was a court tomb. No doubt if this site was to be excavated the burial deposits and accompanying grave goods of stone and bone as well as the plan of the monument could be recovered.

There are 16 tombs strung out along the south side of the Ox mountains which are the part of a great concentration of tombs along the valley of the River Moy. There are 20 tombs in the Bricklieve to Geevagh area. There are only six tombs in the huge intervening area of drumlins and boglands. There are about 45 tombs in Tireragh north of the Ox Mts. There are lesser groupings along the north Sligo coast, northeast of Sligo town and south of Lough Gill.

We know that in adjacent North Mayo pre-bog fieldwalls and settlement sites are close to such tombs. Dr. Ó Nualláin excavated a house site which underlay the Ballyglass court tomb. On the northern slopes of the Ox Mountains, which have many megalithic tombs on them, we know of some field wall and of at least one settlement site, that at Croagh. Yet huge chunks of this area are being deep-ploughed in advance of planting with mathematical ranks of boring conifers without any advance archaeological investigation.

Megalithic tombs date to the Neolithic period and some may date to the beginnings of the Bronze age. This gives a time-span of these tombs of perhaps from as early as 4,000 BC

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to 2,000 BC. Thus many of them were ancient monuments long before the first pyramids were built. They were built by peoples with an agricultural way of life; they tilled the soil and kept cattle but no doubt the 'fruits of the forest' were still a major part of their diet as was the case in the preceding Mesolithic period. It is a matter of hot dispute as to how the idea of building such tombs reached this county and even more so as to when and in what sequence the various types were first built in this county. These matters of dispute have been touched on in 'The Corran Herald, (No 17, Summer 1989).

Not all of the 700 square miles of Co. Sligo is suitable for settlement. Still it has almost 14% of all the Irish tombs. With close on 200 megalithic tombs, if one includes the passage tombs, it has one of the greatest concentration of tombs in these islands, if not all of Western Europe. Why should Sligo and other counties around Donegal Bay be so saturated with megalithic tombs? With the publication of this volume this at present unanswerable question can be debated more from a more complete standpoint.

We can be most thankful to the Ordnance Survey and to Dr. Ó Nualláin in particular for this detailed record of this slice of Sligo's heritage, a heritage the Sites and Monuments Record tells us runs to 4,500 pre -1700 AD sites and monuments and estimate perhaps 2,000 post 1,700 AD sites and monuments. One wonders how often this has to be said before the powers that be will appoint a County Archaeologist to manage this heritage for the present generations' benefit and pass it on safely to the next. Hopefully the remaining three volumes will be published rapidly. The country owes that much to Dr. Ó Nualláin as much as it deserves to have the fruits of his labours in his lifetime. ☐☐

*'Where's That 'from Page 1*

lay between Toomour and the crest of Bricklieve, and there is a strong belief that this was the site of the battle. This then became BATTLEFIELD, a townland in the parish of Toomour in Co. Sligo. In giving the genealogy of the Harte family, descended from Francis Harte of Halwell, Devonshire,

John Hart in 'Irish Pedigrees or the Origin and Stem of the Irish Nation' tells that in 1796 William Johnson Harte of Coolrush, Croom, Co. Limerick married Marion, daughter and heir of James Mahony, of Battlefield in Kerry. This Battlefield we have been unable to locate.

IRISH TIMES 12th July 1989\*\*

## SLIGO BALLYMOTE CHURCH

This stands in the Barony of Corran, five miles from Achonry. It was built by one of the Mac Donoghs. There were two branches of this sept, the Mac Donoghs of Corran, founders of the church of Ballymote, and the Mac Donoghs of Tyrretil: it was given to Franciscans of the third order. At the suppression it was granted to Sir Henry Broncard, who assigned it to Sir William Taafe, Knt. ancestor of the present Viscount Taafe; a sister of whom was married to Brian Mac Donogh of Ballymote, and by whom that Property came into the Taaffe family.

The church stands at the end of the town, and was the cemetery of the Taafes for many years. An inquisition of the 27th of Elizabeth, finds that this friary, near the Castle of Ballymote, was totally ruined and destroyed by the rebels, and that the friary did belong to the castle, together with a small quarter of land, called Carron Temple, and the moiety of another quarter, called Carow Icale, with the tithes of the same. The building is not large, but of good workmanship, and the eastern window is remarkably handsome.

This View was taken from an original drawing, by Bigari, in the collection of the Right Hon. William Conyngham.

(FROM GROSE; ANTIQUITIES OF IRELAND VOL 2 (1797). BIGARI WAS ANGELO MARIO BIGARI, AN ITALIAN WHO WORKED AS A SCENE PAINTER AT THE SMOCK ALLEY THEATRE, DUBLIN.)



BALLYMOTE CHURCH, Co Sligo

FROM  
**MOATE TO BALLYMOTE**  
 Part Two

**JACK MARTIN**

*"I have considered the days of old  
 and the years that are past"*

(Taken from a Prayer Book 1662)

The line above is borrowed from a newspaper I got during a recent visit to Moate, called "The Westmeath Topic". Maybe it replaces the "Westmeath Examiner" which lasted for many years.

I was very pleased to find in the Topic an article headlined "Remembrance of things past" which dealt with the opening of a Museum in a disused part of the Moate courthouse. The museum was opened in 1987 and already has in the region of 600 artifacts, some old and some not so old. The Heritage group there is called "Moate Museum and Historical Society" formed in 1973. In the area a number of ancient sites have been found, some of which I mentioned in an earlier article in the Corran Herald.

To return to the courthouse – much could be written about it. As its name suggests it was a place where felons and law-breakers were tried for their transgressions and sentenced duly. It was also the gathering place for many a good dance or Céilí. Travelling shows used to set up there for maybe a week, and the Moate people were treated to such good plays as "East Lynne" or "The Murder in the Red Barn" Show People whose names come back to me were Lillian and Nicholas Carrickford, the Livingstones and more than once we had Anew Mc Master and his company. All had good

shows with good clean amusement. Unfortunately they have all gone and the country is much poorer by their passing.

At this time it would be very remiss of me not to mention the Moate Céilí Band. This group brought high class entertainment to thousands of people everywhere. I knew them all but I fear that by now all have passed on. The also famous Kincora Céilí Band was playing at a céilí in Riverstown some years later and I met a member of the then retired Moate band. He was a box player and a very good one too. Another member of the Moate band was Billy Donnelly from the Gap. He was caretaker of the Protestant Church opposite where he lived. On Saturdays after dinner he would recruit a few lads like myself to help clean out and dust the Church for Sunday Service. The organ had to be dusted and warmed up and no better man to do it than Billy. (He played piano and piano accordion in the Band). One boy was placed high up on a big window as a look out and if he saw the local Minister coming he gave a signal. The tune being played was changed from the "Sally Gardens" or some such like to "Nearer my God to Thee". No sacrifice intended of course.

There were also two Catholic Churches in the town, the Carmelites down in the Newtown and our own Church in the Main Street. Our P.P at the time was Mon. Thomas Langan D.D., P.P., V.G., to give him his full title. I was an altar

boy at that time and the other boys and myself had to know what the initials stood for. The See of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise became vacant on the death of Dr. Kilduff I think. Our Monsignor was next in line for the vacancy, but he was considered too lid for it and Dr. Mc Namee was appointed. The D. D. part of the Monsignor's title was of course Doctor of Divinity. (He had a ring but never wore it). He could discuss matters of religion which the Bishop could not discuss. His great boast was that eh met five Popes in Rome at different times of course, and in spite of his age he went out to meet the Pontiff who was in office at the particular time.

He did his early studies in Rome where among his classmates was a man called Franz Liszt. Liszt went on to become one of the world's most famous composers who wrote such beautiful works as Hungarian Rhapsody and Liebestraume to mention a few. He became a Secular Franciscan priest in 1865 and died in 1886. The old P.P at one time had a horse and he was often seen cantering around the paddock behind the Church. When he got too old for such rigorous exercise the horse was sold. His sermons were very brief and to the point. One bad summer there was quite an amount of turf-stealing. The P.P was not impressed. In the pulpit at Sunday Mass he said "I cannot accuse the people of stealing the turf but they are taking the loan of it and not bringing it back". He died on April 6th 1951 within three months of his 98th birthday, and Ireland lost its oldest

priest that day. Let us leave these reminiscences behind for now.

Let us try and remember what Ballymote was like in past years. Many changes have taken place, some of them perhaps for the better. The big fairs that once filled the streets with livestock have gone. The Mart has taken over. Farmers used to walk cattle and other livestock long journeys in all weathers to the fairs, some leaving home in the small hours to get a good position for showing and selling their animals. Big special trains moved the stock all over the country from the station. Steam engines pulled the trains then, the Diesel engine had not arrived on the scene. The long walks with the stock have gone too, and now big tractors and trailers and bigger lorries move the stock more quickly and easily.

To refer again in brief to the fairs. A friend of mine (from Moate), a cattle dealer, told me that when he started coming as a young man to Ballymote fair there was a fine thatched house where Roger's fine business premises now stands. Maybe an old photograph could prove this. Gorman's mill which once supplied grain and feeding to a large area of the country is gone too. It gave much needed employment to a number of people. The corn was crushed at the mill on the creamery road and the millstuffs were transferred to a store at Gorman's siding at the station by an overhead ropeway. The bags were loaded into wagons for dispatch all over the country as required. The mill ruins still stand, the station store has fallen and the rail track to the store has been taken up. Now there are rumours of the railway line to Dublin being closed. What a disaster! Ballymote station handles a large volume of passengers who come from as far away as Ballina to avail of the quick service to Dublin

and enjoy a long spell in the city. Goods traffic too has gone. On one occasion some years ago I saw twenty one lorries delivering goods such as coal, coke, timber, flour, fertilizer etc. from the station. One wonders where all that traffic has gone. There were forty two jobs on the lorries and they have gone too.

February 1947 was a memorable time. It was the time of the big blizzard. It started February 28th and the next day nothing was moving. The Sligo to Dublin bus got to the top of the Rock and stayed put, unable to go any further. It was joined by many other vehicles large and small, among them being a van with a load of sausages. Ballymote for quite a few days had sausages for breakfast, dinner and tea. The snow unlike the sausages lasted for months because it had drifted to great heights and the weather was so cold it would not melt. Even when the roads were cleared or partly cleared powdery snow blew on to them again causing more drifting and blocking them again especially in the mountain areas. It was a bad time, but the people took it in their stride and made the best of a bad situation. Livestock were lost but that was not unexpected. Compared to some of our present day disasters the snow of '47 was only a very mild upset.

Let us leave all the doom and gloom behind and have a look at present day Ballymote. We have the mart as already mentioned. We have good schools some new. Our Parish Church has been refurbished and cleaned outside and is now one of the finest churches in the country. We have at Corran Park a fine sports area, with a floodlit pitch for night games. We have a very active Credit Union which is housed in the upstairs portion of the Community Centre, better known as the Market House. This building has also a cen-

tre for the care of some of our less privileged citizens, and they can go there and enjoy a game of cards, read a book or watch T.V.

Two factories at Ballybrennan give much needed employment and our shops and supermarkets supply a wonderful variety of goods to our shoppers. Through the good offices of the local voluntary organisations our senior citizens are very well taken care of and do not want for much.

Last but not least we have a great Heritage Group. They are doing trojan work bringing our Heritage and ancient cultures to light, and more ancient sites are being found all the time. I fear that all the work being done by our Heritage Group and other groups is only the tip of the iceberg, but I am sure that by using our present day technology many more ancient sites will be found. It is only natural to expect that many farmers over the years have unknowingly ploughed up ancient sites and places of interest. They simply did not know what these things were and will have to remain blameless. Then scandal of all scandals some of our people have gone so far as to steal some of our ancient stones and artifacts and export them for sale for their own personal gain. Shame on them, it's sad to think that even our ancient historical and ancient pieces have been denigrated in this fashion. It is up to all Irish people, let them be Heritage members or not, to throw an odd glance at our places of historical interest and keep them from being vandalised or desecrated further. It's in our own interest, and many visiting tourists will thank and bless us for it. Finally let us be proud of our Heritage and preserve it, so that our visitors and ourselves will have an insight into what our Island of Saints and Scholars looked like in years gone by.

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## EMIGRATION

# ASSASSIN OF OUR NATION

by  
Stan Casey

The Autumn sun was sinking fast,  
As the village Master slowly passed,  
On his way to the old fashioned school on the hill,  
To where time and devotion were God's and His  
will

It was his last visit to this Hallowed spot,  
To where his years of fond learning had endeared  
him a lot,  
In the eyes of his fond pupils who loved him so dear.

Slowly and thoughtfully opening the door,  
Which he so often did in the days now no more,  
Thoughts of remembrance filled his lead laden  
heart,  
As he gazed from his rostrum to the desks on the  
floor,  
And his eyes filled with tears as he pondered their  
ways,  
Their childlike remarks and impish relays,  
All are gone, many scattered in lands far away.

And as he recounted their destiny anew,  
He was proud and consoled that his failures were  
few.

His ponderous thoughts were disturbed by a knell,  
It was the soft tones of the Angelus bell,  
And as the frail figure rose up to depart,  
His last noble act was a prayer to impart,  
On the children gone by and the children to come,  
May there some day be a living for everyone.

In the foregoing lines of verse is expressed the feelings and thoughts of the schoolteachers of yesteryear with regard to the many pupils who passed through their hands. Many of the pupils of these schools had to seek employment in other lands, and many never returned to their native land. This is especially so in the west of Ireland: many of the primary schools are now closed and the countryside has become silent and bare and the laughter and song of children at play is no longer heard.



**COMMDT. BAT J. KEANEY** (ret.) has contributed on many occasions to the Corran Herald.

Recently he received a presentation from the Bank of Ireland to acknowledge the fact that he has been a life-long member of their Branch at 28 O'Connell St., Dublin.

*The Photo shows Bat as a young man..*

With the industrial revolution of the 50's and 60's many of our young people were employed in industries throughout the country. Many of them were asked to take investment shares in the industries where they were employed thus ensuring them of a continued dividend. Regretfully, this did not happen but instead the strike weapon took over for increased pay and many of our industries had to close their doors leaving many thousands unemployed. All these workers had now to emigrate and this pattern is an ongoing thing up to the present day.

Now we may look forward to the 'Enterprise Plan' which will create many small industries throughout the country even in rural areas. These projects will be run by private individuals and will have projects relating to Agriculture, e.g. rope making, and instruments used in agriculture. These projects will be financed by the E.C. from 1992 onwards.

We may hopefully look forward to a renewal of the 'Brooke' talks between North and South. If there can be agreement on the island of Ireland for the E.C. plans to pool our resources North and South then there is hope for a progressive Ireland at least working on an economical industrial basis. This may help to solve emigration on a lasting basis. This is the wish of the majority of the people of Ireland North and South. To the people who may sit down at the conference table North and South, may I repeat the words of 'Thomas Davis':

*"What matter that at different shrines we pray on to one God,  
What matter that at different times our fathers won the sod.  
In fortune and in name we're bound by stronger links than steel  
And neither can be safe nor sound but in the other's weal."*

# Ballymote Franciscan Abbey:

## Guardians 1697- 1826

**Extract from the manuscripts of Rev. Carrigan in Archives of St. Kieran's College, Kilkenny. All taken from MSS No. 165 (reference to page on left margin)**

**The following were appointed as guardians of the Ballymote Franciscans Abbey at the various Provincial and intermediate chapters.**

274	Provincial Chapter at Dublin 28th July 1697	Daniel Kelly	291	P.C.D. 16th August 1727	Francis Brett
276	Intermediate Chapter at Louvain 26th July 1699	Bernard O' Lorcan	292	Provincial Chapter 1730	—
277	Intermediate Chapter at Cavan 9th June 1702	Peter Donnellan	293	Inter. Chapter at Dublin 17th Nov. 1729	Francis Brett
279	Provincial Chapter at Dublin (P.C.D.) 13th November 1703	Anthony O'Cullane	294	Provincial Chapter Dublin 5th Sept. 1733	Francis Quinane
280	Intermediate Chapter at Dublin (I.C.D.) 9th June 1705	Anthony Mc Donagh	295	Intermediate Chapter at Dublin (New Style) 5th March 1735	Hugh Mc Donagh
281	P.C.D. 13th November 1706	Michael Mc Donogh.	296	P.C.D. 6th Sept 1736 (Dead since last Inter Chapter John O'Gara)	
282	I.C.D. 12th May 1708	John Handley (?)	297	I.C.D. 6th March 1738	Francis Brett
283	Provincial Chapter in Loco refugii 12th Oct. 1709	John Hanley	298	P.C.D. 24th July 1739	Francis Brett
284	Intermediate Chapter in loco refugii 7th June 1711	Michael McDonough	299	Intermediate Chapter 25th May 1741	Francis Quinane
285	P.C.D. (Provincial Chapter at Dublin) 13th Oct. 1714	Luke Brinane	300	Prov. Chapter Dublin 16th August 1742	Francis Quinane
286	Int. Chapter at Kilconnel 10th May 1716	Michael Mc Donagh	301	I.C.D. 16th April 1744	Francis Brett
287	P.C.D. 16th Oct. 1717	John O'Kelly	302	P. Ch. Dublin 12th August 1745	Francis Brett
288	I.C.D. 30th May 1719 (appointed guardian, confessor and preacher)	John O'Gara	303	Int. Ch. Dublin 12th Feb. 1747	Francis Quinane
289	P.C.D. 3rd. Sept. 1720	Anthony Kelly	304	Provincial Chapter 22nd. August 1748	Francis Quinane
290	P.C.D. 22nd. July 1724 (Anthony Kelly now dead)	Michael Mc Donagh	305	I. Ch. Athlone 16th Feb. 1751	Anthony Mc Donagh
			306	P.Ch. Dublin 26th August 1751	Anthony Mc Donagh
			307	I.Ch. Dublin 26th Feb. 1753	James O'Hara
			308	P. Ch. Dublin 26th August 1754	—
			309	Int. Ch. Dublin 24th Sept. 1755	Anthony Mc Donogh



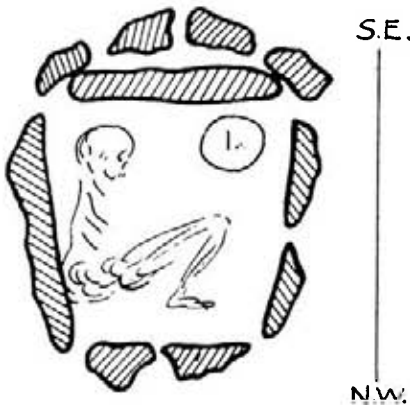
309	Int. Ch. Dublin 24th Sept. 1755	Anthony Mc Donogh	329	I.C. Athlone 9th May 1787	Francis Garvey
310	P.Ch. Dublin 29th August 1757	Anthony Mc Donogh	330	P.C. Dublin 14th July 1788 (Anthony Kelly appointed guardian, confessor and preacher)	Anthony Kelly
311	I. Ch. Dublin 19th Feb.1759	Terence Maguan	331	I.C. Athlone 18th May 1790 (James Bennett Ex-D died 7th March 1790)	John Cummins
312	P.C. Dublin 18th August 1760	Terence Maguan	332	P.C. Dublin 11th July 1791	Anthony Kelly
313.	I. Ch. Athlone 19th October 1761	James Naughton	333	I.C. 23rd. July 1793	Anthony Kelly
314	P. Ch. Dublin 22nd August 1763	Terence Maguan	334	I.C. 6th June 1794	Anthony Kelly
315	I. Ch. Athlone 17th April 1765	Terence Maguan	335	Intermediate Chapter 6th June 1796	Daniel Magloin
316	Provincial Chapter 1766	—	336	Prov. Chapter 1797/1798	—
317	I. Ch. Athlone 12th Nov. 1767	John Cuffe	337	Intermediate Chapter 22nd Sept 1800	Francis Mc Hugh
318	Provincial Chapter 1769	—	338	Prov. Chapter 13th July 1801	Anthony Kelly
319	Intermediate Chapter 8th Dec. 1770 (Richard Martin died at Charlestown, Co, Roscommon Oct. 1770)	Anthony French	339	Inter. Chapter 13th July 1803	Laurence Dolan
320	Provincial Chapter at ? 13th Aug.1772 Anthony French elected provincial	Eugene Hanley	340	Chapter 16th July 1804 Francis Ferguson ((Anthony Kelly died since last Chapter	
321	Inter. Ch. 13th Nov. 1773	Anthony Martin	341	Chapter 14th July 1806	Anthony Kelly
322	P. C. at Dublin 1st. July 1776 (Anthony French having finished his provincial-ship, Dominick Davett elected provincial)	Luke Farrell	342	Chapter 12th July 1815	Anthony Lyons
323	I.C. Athlone 30th April 1778	Thomas Corry Ex.-D	343	Chapter 14th July 1819 (Anthony Kelly since last chapter)	Hugh O'Donnell
324	P.C. Dublin 19th July 1779	James Bennett Ex.-D	344	Chapter 15th July 1822	John Mc Grath
325	I.C. Athlone 29th May 1781	James Bennett Ex.-D	?	Chapter 1824	Anthony Coniff
326	P.C. Dublin 22nd July 1782	Louis Williams	?	Chapter 13th July 1826	Anthony Green
327	I.C. Athlone 12th May 1784 (Fr. Francis Martin, Superior of Franciscans died in Galway Feb 1784)	James Bennett Ex -D			
328	P.C. Dublin 25th July 1785	Lewis Williams			

**Information supplied by:**

**REV FR MARTIN JENNINGS OF ST. NATHY'S COLLEGE, BALLAGHADERREEN.**

## THE STORY OF A BALLYMOTE GRAVE

Tom Mc Gettrick



There are some who will remember Andy Walsh. He may be leaning over his half-door in Emmet St. talking to a passerby. The modern door has two functions, to open and to close. The half-door was a cornucopia of accommodation and was a feature of rural architecture in the old, small thatched dwellings which have now disappeared. Most of them had no back door. Pdraig Colum wrote of "the peering of things across the half-door". I was using the chain on Marlow bog for Andy (an obsolete instrument also) when he asked me if I had heard about the skeleton he dug up on his land at Stonepark. Maybe I said no, skeletons were common enough I suppose. But this one turned out to be different. A few weeks ago it came back (not in person) to have its story told. I am grateful to the Royal Society of Antiquaries for this.

Andy Walsh had a field in Stonepark planted with potatoes. The year was 1928. In sinking the furrow for the 'second covering' he came on a limestone slab. He started to break up the slab and having

broken a small portion he saw that there was a cavity underneath containing bones and he proceeded no further with the breaking

At this time Henry Morris was an Inspector of Schools living in Sligo. He had a deep interest in, and considerable skill in archaeology. He came frequently to the schools in the Ballymote area and luckily he heard immediately about this grave, and he arranged to have no interference with it until the potatoes were dug in the Autumn. There was then a thorough examination.

The illustration was drawn by Mr. Morris from exact measurements (Fig. 1.) It is a burial known as a cist, a box like structure of stones of uniform height with usually a single slab covering the top.

The space is sufficient to contain the body on it's side with the knees up. A food urn was placed in the right-hand corner close to the head. This urn is now at the National Museum and is a very nicely decorated piece of pottery. The photostat copy which I include (Fig.2) may fail to illustrate this but the second urn which I include (Fig 3) will illustrate the skill of the potter. This one was also found 'near Ballymote'. Cists belong to the early Bronze Age so Andy Walsh's cist was likely to be approaching 4000 years old. They are occasionally unearthed in ploughing or land reclamation. This one received special attention which makes it more interesting.



THE STONE PARK FOOD VESSEL



-Clonary Urn found near Ballymote.

The skeleton was carefully taken from it's apartment and sent to Dr. Shea at Galway for critical examination. There is an account of the skill and dedication this man applied to the work. Space does not permit inclusion of the bone by bone analysis that he undertook but for the reader it will be sufficient to give the important points in his conclusions. These are listed:-

1. The sex is female.
2. Aged between 30 and 40 years.
3. All teeth present, all well worn.
4. Right tibia shows evidence of chronic osteo-arthritis.
5. Movement of right ankle joint restricted because of 4.
6. Height - 5ft/2.5 ins.
7. No evidence of cause of death.
8. She belonged to a branch of the Beaker People known as the 'short cist people of Scotland' (so called it seems because of the type of pottery associated with them).

One must pay tribute to the men who protected the cist and to those who in the examination extracted so much from so little. We are well aware that in the present as in the past many of our treasures have been destroyed through carelessness or made use of for greed. The Ballymote cist is an example of enlightened and patriotic men at work.

Yet one wonders who the Ballymote lady was that Andy Walsh disturbed after 4000 years. □

# On Your Bike!

## George Hamilton

A small tent, blankets, (there were no sleeping bags in those days), ground sheet and cooking utensils were the best investment Eddie Watson ever made. There were not many cyclists touring through Collooney almost sixty years ago but the brave Ned set the fashion!. Off he would set on an old crock of a bike and the local boys would eagerly await to hear of his exploits.

Once I remember Mickey Hargadon organising a gang of Watson fans to go out the Dublin road to provide a welcome worthy of their hero. However, when they arrived at Drumfin without having met him they decided he must have gone round via Cork! I remember once asking him was he not very tired having pushed so much equipment to Dublin in one day. His reply: "it is my ambition to go there and back in one day."

Ned asked me to come on a tour of Connemara with him. I was delighted with the thought. I was about fourteen. Unfortunately, I then looked only ten or eleven. Naturally my Mother's permission had to be sought. Imagine my disappointment at her refusal! In no way could I push a bicycle laden like Eddie Watson's over the hills and mountains of Connemara and, of course, it would be raining out of the heavens every day! I tried reasoning with her, but it was obvious that she was worried in case I developed pneumonia or was devoured by some wild animal on the Twelve Bens!

After several discussions with Ned he announced one day that he was going to talk with her. He told



*Eddie Watson and George Hamilton taken by Bill Manning in 1934 in Roundstone, also 'Shot', Bill's dog.*

her he would carry all the heavy gear and guaranteed that we would not exceed 100 miles in any one day. God alone knows what other conditions. My Mother agreed and with her blessing, we set out towards Charlestown. The Cyclists Touring Club had supplied us with a route for the whole tour to ensure that we saw the West at its best. My favourite Irish scenery is to be found in Sligo, Mayo and Galway.

The weather was mediocre. One day really worried me. It poured out of the heavens continuously from early morning. About 6pm, we were trying to find a sheltered spot at Recess to light a fire in an attempt to cook our tea. Picnic gas and cylinders for cooking were not invented.

An old building loomed through the rain. It seemed unoccupied and we thought we might get a kettle boiled and pan heated on the leeward side. Suddenly, a form

appeared and asked what we were doing. We explained that the inner man had conveyed to us both that we were starving. "Follow me in," came the reply.

To our amazement, we realised we were in a disused railway station. Our new found friend ushered us into the 'Ladies Waiting Room' where he quickly had a blazing fire roaring up the chimney. It was a lonely place and he was glad to see us as we were to see him. When youth are sound asleep a boarded floor can emulate an interior sprung mattress! We bade the Ladies Waiting Room farewell next morning in brilliant sunshine.

I remember when pitching our tent in Spiddal, a group of the local youth gathered around all speaking, as Archdeacon Mc Cormack put it (former rector of Collooney) "the silvern language of the Gael, now musical as the cascade which sings down the mountain side." It



*Bishop Bill Manning home on holidays from S. Africa 1988*

was then learned that the smattering of Irish I had got at school was not much help to me. We were considered a real novelty there and enjoyed a few hours hospitality around a neighbour's turf fire before turning in.

When we reached Roundstone, we called at the Rectory as I was at Boarding School with a good friend who lived there. He was Bill Manning and when we both moved on from that school, in 1936, I did not see him again until 1987 when he was on holiday in Ireland. At this time he was a Bishop in South Africa. When I showed him the photograph (below), taken by him in Roundstone in 1934, of Eddie and myself he became very nostalgic but his dog 'Shot' stole the picture! Bill did everything to enhance our stay in Roundstone, providing two boats - you may say one would be sufficient and I would agree but Eddie did not think so. He took Bill's sister, Meriel, out in one whilst Bill steered me clear of them in the other. Bill and I reached land first and when Meriel and Eddie arrived, I stooped down to steady the boat as they were disembarking. I thought I had just paid Meriel a very nice compliment when suddenly, about a gallon of water arrived on my head. Now, who did it and why? I knew it was not Bill -

after all he was going to be a Bishop! I have to admit that as our boats were pulling out we almost collided and I splashed with my hand a tiny drop of the Atlantic Ocean in Meriel's direction. Could the sister of a future Bishop resort to the Mosaic law of retaliation? Eddie was a great swimmer, were he the culprit, he would have been duty bound to save me had I fallen into the sea. I doubt if he thought I was worth all that trouble!

Dunmourne was our last port of call. We were so happy sleeping between the sand dunes! With such a beach, turf provided by the O'Donnells, a swim before breakfast followed by sausage, rasher and egg provided by my 'courdon bleu' cook.

The hospitality encountered on that tour was a credit to all whom we met. We were never allowed pay for farm produce such as eggs, butter, milk or turf. I had visions of Eddie drinking a creamery dry on one occasion. He would crack two raw eggs together into a mug and down they would go. Assuring me they had no taste, he persuaded me to have a go with one. One was enough! He was right, they have no taste - I wonder if it is the psychological feeling of swallowing more than one can chew? Ned was convinced the raw eggs contributed immensely to his fitness. \*

## GRIFFITH'S VALUATION

In this issue we resume publication of pages from Griffith's "Valuation of Tenements", with the townlands of Tieveboy, Ardree, Emlagh and Lissananny Beg. In earlier issues the following townlands have featured; Emlaghnaghtan and Cloonamanagh (Issue 11, October 1987); Maghera, Camross and Derron (Issue 12, Christmas 1987); Town of Ballymote (Issue 13 (misprinted as 12), March 1988); Roscrib west, Ballinvoher and Cletty (Issue 14, June 1988).

An introduction to Griffith's Valuation was written for the October 1987 issue by Tom Mc Gettrick. Part of it is reproduced here:

In the period 1850 - 1864 under the direction of Richard Griffith a Valuation was placed on each tenement (holding) throughout the country. Griffith was a man of many parts - he is referred to as a mining and canal engineer and as commissioner in charge of the Board of Works Relief Department during the Famine.

This Valuation was entrusted to the Guardians of each Poor-Law Union and was carried out by local valuers appointed by them. The finished work is commonly referred to as Griffith's Valuation. It is largely the basis for valuation as we know it today.

The "Immediate Lessor" in the second column was the landlord of the property as very few if any of the 'Occupiers' were actual owners at that time. Ownership was a gradual development brought about by the Land Acts at the end of the last century and the beginning of the present one.

It is interesting to note what names are still there and what families still hold on to the property their people were tenants of at that time.

VALUATION OF TENEMENTS.

PARISH OF EMLAGH.

Names.		Description of Tenement.	Area.	Rateable Annual Valuation.		Total Annual Valuation of Rateable Property.
Townlands and Occupiers.	Immediate Lessors.			Land.	Buildings.	
			A. R. P.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
<b>TIEVEBOY.</b> (Ord. S. 33 & 39.)						
Rev. Edward Moore,	Free,	Land, house, gate-lodge and office,	33 2 37	30 0 0	15 0 0	45 0 0
Bartholomew Coghlan,	William Phibbs,	Land and herd's house,	58 0 38	54 15 0	0 5 0	55 0 0
John Davy,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	13 0 16	12 0 0	1 0 0	20 0 0
		Land,	10 1 14	7 0 0	—	
Patrick Ferguson,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	17 2 0	13 10 0	0 10 0	14 0 0
Edward O'Brien,	Same,	Land and herd's house,	26 3 39	27 10 0	0 10 0	28 0 0
Total . . .			159 3 24	144 15 0	17 5 0	162 0 0
<b>ARDREE.</b> (Ord. S. 39 & 33.)						
Matthew Rogers,	William Phibbs,	Land,	9 3 10	5 10 0	—	5 10 0
Michael Davy,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	37 1 18	19 0 0	1 0 0	20 0 0
Mary Davy,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	14 3 9	9 5 0	0 15 0	10 0 0
Peter Healy,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	16 3 2	8 0 0	0 10 0	8 10 0
Peter M'Gann, sen.,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	13 2 39	9 10 0	0 15 0	10 5 0
Peter M'Gann, jun.,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	10 2 14	5 19 0	0 10 0	6 0 0
Mark M'Gann,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	17 2 35	9 5 0	0 15 0	10 0 0
Andrew Curly,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	13 3 0	9 0 0	0 10 0	9 10 0
James Taaffe,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	23 1 15	14 10 0	1 10 0	16 0 0
Margaret M'Manus,	Same,	Land and house,	2 0 0	1 5 0	0 10 0	1 15 0
Michael Gordon,	Same,	Land and house,	8 2 36	5 10 0	0 5 0	5 15 0
Bryan M'Donagh,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	5 2 20	3 0 0	0 5 0	3 5 0
Total . . .			174 1 38	99 5 0	7 5 0	106 10 0
<b>EMLAGH.</b> (Ord. S. 39.)						
James Fleming,	William Phibbs,	Land (bog),	7 1 0	0 15 0	—	0 15 0
Patrick Lavin,	Same,	Land (bog),	1 3 0	0 5 0	—	0 5 0
Thomas Crummy,	James Fleming,	Land, house, and offices,	8 0 36	6 10 0	0 10 0	7 0 0
Patrick Forry,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	10 2 25	7 10 0	0 10 0	8 0 0
Thomas Feheely,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	18 3 30	12 0 0	0 15 0	19 0 0
		Land,	8 3 29	0 5 0	—	
Patrick Davy, sen.,	Same,	House,	—	—	0 5 0	0 5 0
James Coligan,	Same,	House,	—	—	0 5 0	0 5 0
Edward Coligan,	Same,	House,	—	—	0 5 0	0 5 0
John Sesnan,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	7 2 35	5 0 0	0 10 0	5 10 0
James Coligan,	Same,	Land,	2 0 20	0 13 0	—	0 15 0
		Land,	0 0 32	0 2 0	—	
Patrick Davy, sen.,	Same,	Land,	3 1 30	1 0 0	—	1 0 0
Thomas Coligan,	Same,	Land,	0 1 10	0 2 0	—	4 5 0
		Land and house,	5 2 20	3 16 0	0 7 0	
Bridget M'Cuniffe,	Same,	Land,	0 2 20	0 3 0	—	0 5 0
		Land, house, and offices,	8 1 10	5 12 0	0 10 0	
Edward Coligan,	Same,	Land,	0 2 10	0 5 0	—	0 5 0
Patrick Davy, jun.,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	4 1 5	2 15 0	0 5 0	3 0 0
Patk. Davy (carman),	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	20 1 5	13 15 0	0 15 0	14 10 0
Total . . .			109 0 37	66 8 0	4 17 0	71 5 0
<b>LISSANANNY BEG.</b> (Ord. S. 39.)						
James Jackson,	Thomas Jones,	Land, herd's hou. & offs.	320 2 35	178 10 0	1 10 0	180 0 0
Francis Taaffe,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	20 1 56	18 15 0	0 15 0	14 10 0
Mark Walsh,	Same,	Land, house, and offices,	39 1 10	12 15 0	0 15 0	13 10 0
Winifred Kilcoyne,	Mark Walsh & Thos. Kilcoyne,	House,	—	—	0 5 0	0 5 0
Bridget Kilcoyne,	Thomas Kilcoyne,	House,	—	—	0 5 0	0 5 0
Thomas Kilcoyne,	James Jackson,	Land, house, and offices,	15 3 30	8 15 0	0 15 0	12 10 0
		Land,	6 1 7	3 0 0	—	
Patrick Feighney,	Same,	House,	—	—	0 5 0	0 5 0
Winifred Kilcoyne,	Mark Walsh & Thos. Kilcoyne,	Land,	0 1 18	0 2 0	—	0 5 0
		Land,	0 0 29	0 3 0	—	
Total . . .			403 1 5	217 0 0	4 10 0	221 10 0

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Editor James Flanagan  
Design and Typesetting

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Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim.  
072-55192

Printed by the Sligo Champion

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heather,*

*Nor feeling like bare feet squelching in the soft peat.*

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*I recall too the whitethorn, meadow-sweet and a trick  
ling stream*

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go back.*

Found in the Poetry display in Bewley's Cafe, Dublin  
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Supplied by Tom Mc Gettrick

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