

Coiseanna

The Journal of Clane Local History Group

Editorial Committee

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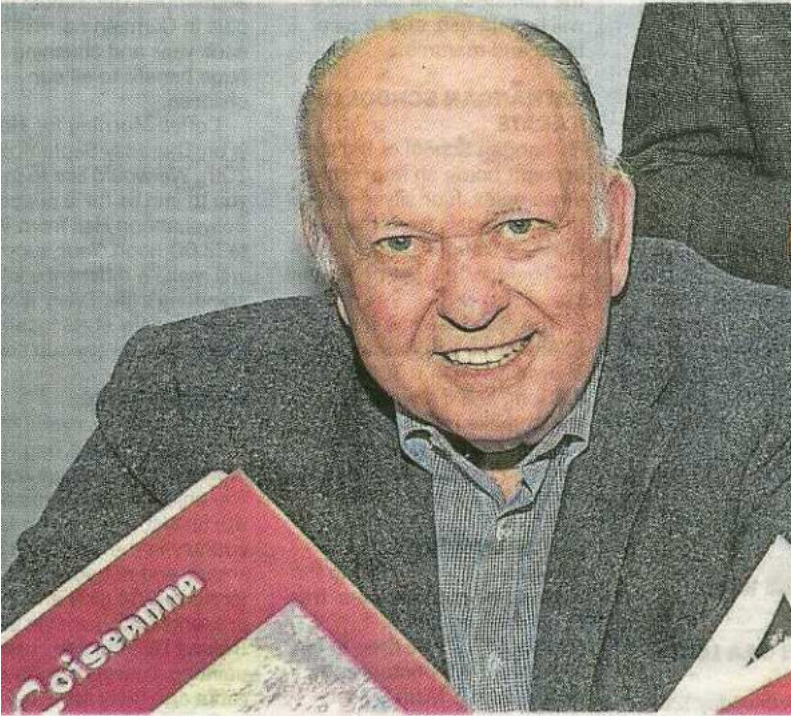
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Front cover: The Wogan-Browne Mausoleum at Mainham

Back cover: Sign post indicating Clane's two ancient Christian sites

In memory of



Pat Given RIP

*This edition is fondly dedicated to the
memory of our dear colleague and
friend who sadly departed this life in the
past year*

Requiescat in pace

EDITORIAL

When we, the members of the editorial committee, look back and reflect on the year 2018 it is with very mixed feelings.

Our programme of events and activities was very successful and included many interesting presentations accompanied by large attendances. During Heritage Week, Brendan Cullen took us on a Joycean Tour of Clongowes Wood College with a record attendance and Dr. Ciaran Reilly gave an excellent talk on the famous Clane athlete Tommy Conneff. Our monthly meetings commenced in October and featured such varied and interesting topics as The Life and Times of Horace de Vere Cole, The Sinking of the RMS Leinster, Richard Griffith of Millicent House, Lord Rosse of Birr Castle and Telescope fame and Ninette de Valois, a Blessington woman who founded The Royal Ballet. We would like to thank sincerely all our contributors who have written articles and all those who have helped in any way to make this edition of Coiseanna a reality.

However, all our activities were overshadowed by the sad and unexpected passing of our dear friend and colleague, Pat Given, after a short illness. Pat was a “tour de force” of Clane Local History Group from its inception and for many years after, being always involved in every aspect of the Group’s activities. Writing and research were among his great loves and his knowledge and prowess in that respect are evident throughout all our Coiseanna publications over the years. They bear the indelible stamp of his love for and interest in local history. Pat was an exceptional person, an accomplished historian, full of kindness, compassion, generosity, patience and a man of quiet temperament and good humour. He will be greatly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. We extend our sincere and heartfelt sympathy to his family and in particular to his daughters Gemma and Natasha and his beloved grandchildren. As a token of that sympathy this edition of Coiseanna is fondly dedicated to Pat’s memory.

The editorial committee.

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REMEMBERING CARRIGEEN'S FORGOTTEN MONUMENTS: SAINT BRIGID'S CHAIR, THIMBLE AND FOOTPRINT

Lorcan Harney

Introduction

Carrigeen townland is the site of some once important, but now vanished and largely forgotten, archaeological monuments: St. Brigid's Chair, Thimble and Footprint. These monuments were said to have been formerly located beside an Old Quarry site near a little bohereen that branched off the Moat Commons Lane connecting the Millicent and Naas Roads. This bohereen, now in the form of a *Cul de Sac*, is believed to have led towards a ford on the nearby River Liffey in ancient times. The townland, Carrigeen, derives its name from the Irish 'An Carraigín' or 'Little Rock' suggesting that its name found inspiration from a local natural stone outcrop or perhaps even St. Brigid's Chair, the site of a *Cromlech* or possible Neolithic megalith.

This stone outcrop in Carrigeen was the subject of extensive quarrying in the 18th and 19th centuries (See Figs. 1 and 2), before being reused as a public dump by Kildare County Council in the 20th century for some time. Unfortunately, these ill-fated monuments succumbed to destruction at some point as a result of these regrettable human interventions in the area in recent centuries. There are no pictorial or physical descriptions of these monuments, but we are lucky that some very limited information survives about them in the form of brief antiquarian accounts and historic maps, particularly Taylor's Map of 1783 and the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1838. In light of similar surviving monuments from County Kildare and elsewhere, these sources of information allow us to piece together a very tentative picture of how these monuments once appeared.

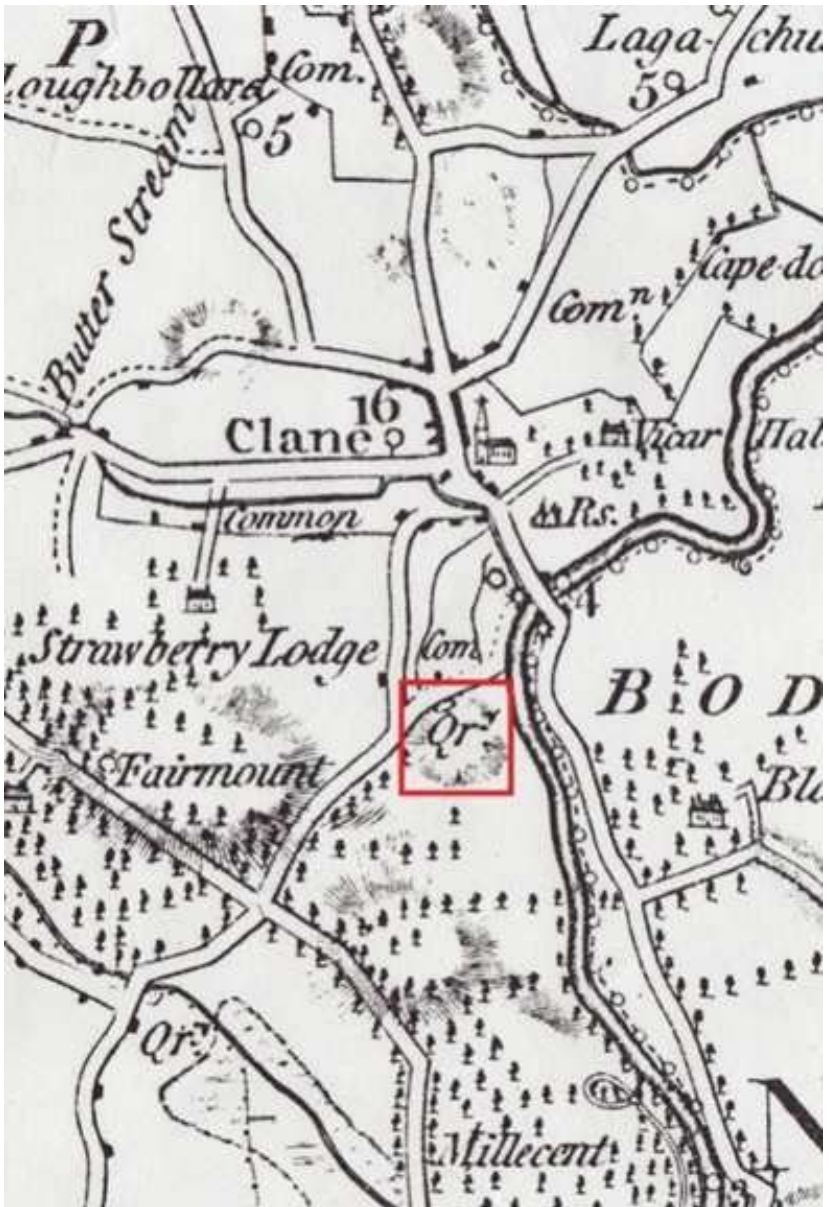


Fig. 1: Taylor's Map of 1783. As suggested by Tony McEvoy, the Cromlech is possibly represented by an oval to the immediate north of the 'Qr' in the red box (After McEvoy 2014, pp. 10, 12)

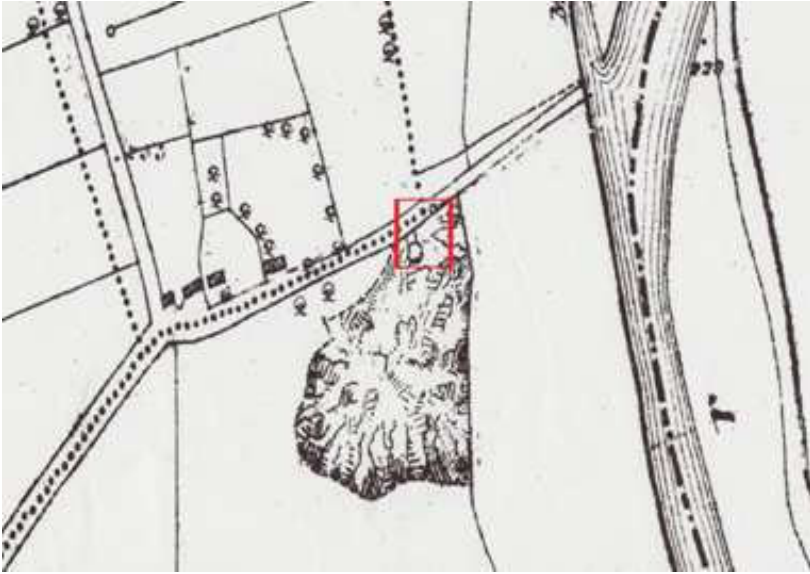


Fig. 2: First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1838. As suggested by Tony McEvoy, the Cromlech is possibly represented by a large circle in the bottom left of the red box. St. Brigid's Well is indicated by a small circle in the top right of the red box (After McEvoy 2014, pp. 10, 12)

St. Brigid's Chair, Thimble and Footprint in Carrigeen townland: the antiquarian and cartographic evidence.

Writing in 1891 for the Kildare Archaeology Journal, the Reverend Canon Sherlock provides us with the earliest written account of these monuments. As he provides us with some interesting details, we will quote a passage from his paper (p. 27).

“There are few ancient remains in this district. Some forty or fifty years ago there existed what was called St. Brigid's chair and thimble beside a stone said to bear the imprints of her feet, a little way above the head of the millrace at Clane, where there is now a disused quarry; but the stones were quarried a generation ago. I imagine from the description that it may have been an old cromlech. The well which sprung beside the chair,

and was known as St. Brigid's well, still sends a tiny flow to the river."

Significantly, Sherlock interpreted St. Brigid's Chair as a cromlech, a broad term used by antiquarians to refer to ancient Neolithic/Bronze megaliths (c. 4,000-1000 B.C.), particularly Neolithic Portal Tombs (a.k.a. 'Dolmens'). Portal Tombs comprised a single chamber Megalithic Tombs usually containing two or more vertical megaliths (great stones) supporting a large flat horizontal capstone ('table') (Fig. 3). These were often covered with earth or a cairn of small stones to form a tumulus, though these rarely survive. Sherlock's description of St. Brigid's Chair as a Cromlech is potentially significant as there are no fully surviving remains of a Neolithic Portal Tomb in Kildare.

Under the section 'Notes', Sherlock (1891, p. 269) added a further short comment about these monuments. The relevant section is quoted below:

"a few years ago a man living about a quarter of a mile above Clane, on the north side of the river, and close to the spot where the ancient ford crossed the Liffey, pointed out a spring of water, which he said was called 'St. Brigid's Well'. He also said that some forty or fifty years ago there were two curious stones standing near the well, the larger of which was called 'St. Brigid's Chair', and the other 'St. Brigid's Thimble'. These stones, situated near an outcrop of limestone rock which was quarried for roadmaking, were, he said, both broken up to mend roads with by a man named Tyrrell, who never had any luck afterwards."

The individual mentioned above was a certain 'Abraham Tyrrell' whom Sherlock described in a short note in the 1903 edition (p. 42) of the County Kildare Journal as:

"for a long succession of years, had been not only churchwarden, but contractor, having a finger in every parochial pie, including the erection of the short-lived spire. It

was this same Abraham Tyrrell who, having a contract for repairing the road, sacrilegiously broke up St. Brigid's Chair and Thimble, as recorded by me in a previous paper. Between 1810 and 1823 £1,687 3s. 8d. had been paid to Mr. Tyrrell for repairs and improvements to the church."



Fig. 3: 'The Cromlech Fields', Ballybrack, South County Dublin. Here in a housing estate aptly called 'The Cromlech Fields', one can find a small Neolithic Portal Tomb (c. 4,000-2,500 B.C.) in the Green.

Another local antiquarian, T. Cooke Trench, also made reference to these stones in his paper 'The Moat at Clane' about the same time (1900, p. 111), but his information appears to have been solely derived from the Reverend Canon Sherlock's research.

'Canon Sherlock, in his Paper read before the Society in 1892, records the existence, some half-century ago, of what was called St. Bridget's Chair and Thimble, besides a stone said to bear the impress of her feet. These stood in an old quarry, or gravel-pit, a few hundred yards to the south. He suggests that

they may have been an old cromlech. They were ruthlessly broken up and used for road-metal a couple of generations ago’.

These monuments appear to have been largely forgotten by local writers after these brief observations by Sherlock and Cooke at the turn of the 20th century until they were the subject of a very interesting paper by Tony McEvoy in the February 2014 edition of *Le Chéile*. Not only did Tony quote many of the above antiquarian references, but he discussed their possible identification on Taylor’s Map of 1783 and the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map in 1838 (Figs 1 & 2). Even more interesting is a discussion he had with a number of locals including the late Joe and Mona Noonan in 1980 who lived nearby on the Millicent road, whereby they reassured him that the monuments described by Sherlock in 1891 as having been destroyed in the nineteenth century had only actually been bulldozed sometime in the 1970s when council workers were closing the county dump in Carrigeen townland. Interestingly, these locals were also able to point out to Tony the former site of these monuments in Carrigeen in the exact location as indicated on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of A.D. 1838.

So, what really happened to these most enigmatic monuments in Carrigeen – as Tony quipped in his *Le Chéile* paper in 2014, ‘it would take Sherlock Holmes to solve this one’! As the Ordnance Survey Maps stopped including these sites after 1871 and as Canon Sherlock was so insistent and specific in the details of their destruction, we might assume that Joe and Móna were mistaken in their identification of these monuments. However, it is alternatively possible that these monuments (or more likely elements of them) may have partly survived or may have been somewhat restored at a later point before they were completely destroyed during the 1970s. Despite these monuments largely disappearing from scholarly literature after 1903, the information from Joe and Móna in 1980 clearly demonstrates that these local monuments were

certainly remembered and revered amongst the local community until relatively recent times.

What did these monuments once look like?

So what can we surmise from the above evidence? These monuments were all associated with St. Brigid and in close proximity to a well which was dedicated to her and were situated beside a prominent natural limestone outcrop to the immediate west of the River Liffey and its fording point and to



Fig.

4: A 16th century brass thimble from Nürnberg, Germany.

the south of the historic core of Clane indicated by St. Ailbe's early Christian church site ('The Abbey'). To start with 'St. Brigid's Thimble', we know almost nothing about its original appearance. By definition, a thimble is a small hard cup worn to protect the finger that pushes a needle in sewing (Fig. 4). Based on this appearance, we might assume that St. Brigid's Thimble Stone was somewhat conical-shaped in form with the smaller end curved or truncated. No natural or artificially hewn stones described as a thimble are known to me in an Irish context, though the Modern Antiquarian Website does record natural rock features from the Yorkshire Moors in England that are known as 'Thimble Stones'.



Fig. 5. The Brehon's Chair at Taylor's Grange, South Co. Dublin located on a green on a housing estate. Instead of being the remains of a Portal Tomb could St. Brigid's Chair have appeared in the landscape as a large flat stone (or perhaps a collection of flat and upright stones) in the form of a seat or chair?

We are on somewhat more confident ground about the appearance of St. Brigid's Chair. According to Sherlock, it was the site of a possible Cromlech and as such may have been not too dissimilar to any range of Neolithic/Bronze Age

monuments (e.g. Portal-, Passage-, Court-, Wedge-Tombs or also Stone Circles). Generally, the term appears to have been most employed in the case of Neolithic Portal Tombs as evident today at the Cromlech Fields, Ballybrack, Co. Dublin (Fig. 3).

Such Neolithic Megalithic tombs were occasionally described by Irish antiquarians as ‘Pagan Altars’ or ‘Druid or Brehon Chairs’ as is apparent at Taylor’s Grange, Co. Dublin (Fig. 5). This monument is well known as the Brehon’s Chair and is believed in local lore to have been the seat of judgment for an Arch druid in Iron Age times. However, recent excavations have established that it is in fact the Portal entrance of a once very impressive, but now almost entirely vanished Neolithic Passage Tomb (c.3000-2500 B.C.). The remains of Ballybrack and Taylor’s Grange provide us with two (of many) possible forms and appearances of St. Brigid’s Chair in Carrigeen townland in Clane.

Finally, we should discuss the stone said to have borne the imprint of St. Brigid’s foot, which was apparently situated beside St. Brigid’s Chair and Thimble. Christine Zuccheli in her book ‘Sacred Stones of Ireland’ (P. 91) has discussed how such imprints in stone of either saint’s knees (*glúin* leading to ‘Gloonan Stones’) or feet ‘have been recorded from almost every part of Ireland’, being ‘frequently situated near holy wells and early monastic sites and are usually renowned for their healing virtues’. In Kildare, we are lucky that there are a number of stones associated with saints that are invariably situated beside holy wells and are said to bear their feet or knee imprints.

At Ticknevin, for example, a stone containing an artificial hollow was recorded beside St. Brigid’s Well in close proximity to an ancient ecclesiastical site. Local lore indicates the imprint was formed from St. Brigid or her horse placing her foot (or hoof) on the stone. This stone was recorded by Jackson in her survey of the Holy Wells of Kildare in 1979, but was not visible on a recent visit to the site in 2017.



Fig. 6: The Holy Well at Riverstown, County Kildare showing the possible stone(s) that were locally known as St. Brigid's knee-prints

Elsewhere, a stone said to bear the imprints of St. Brigid's knees is said to have existed beside a holy well at Riverstown (Ballyhackan parish) to the south of Monasterevin and west of Kildangan. A visit to the well site identified a stone with a single linear indentation and beside it another smaller stone with a very slightly hollowed out profile, though neither had the distinctive features typical of a knee-/foot-print or bullaun stone (Fig. 6).

Lullymore was the site of a relatively important early medieval monastery and here a more convincing stone known as St. Patrick's Step or footprint can be found 30m outside the cemetery wall (Fig.7). Similarly, a large flat stone inside another ancient church site at Knockpatrick, Graney on the southern extremities of Kildare also bears a pair of feet marks accredited to St. Patrick beside an inscribed Latin cross (Fig. 8). A well dedicated to St. Patrick is again situated close to this large flat stone.



Fig. 7: St. Patrick's Step or Footprint, Lullymore, Co. Kildare



Fig. 8: St. Patrick's Footprints, Knockpatrick, Graney, Co. Kildare

These stones from Lullymore and Knockpatrick are probably the best two examples from County Kildare. How and when they were created and for what exact reason are all questions certainly open to debate – indeed, they could arguably be assigned to any particular period of time, though a medieval or later (early modern) origin is perhaps most plausible. Finally, a ‘stone with the mark of a knee’ is mentioned beside a holy well at Rickardstown Upper (Harristown Parish) in Kildangan Stud a number of kilometres to the east of the Riverstown example. Unfortunately, the site of this holy well within Kildangan Stud has become considerably overgrown with thorns and there was no visible evidence for any stone with a knee imprint on a visit to the site in 2017.

Conclusion

As these monuments from Carrigeen have now long vanished and have become largely forgotten, it is unlikely that we will ever be able to confidently reconstruct their physical appearance. Nonetheless, comparative monuments from elsewhere shed potential light on their original form. ‘St. Brigid’s Chair’ was described as a Cromlech by the antiquarian writer Sherlock and this was a term commonly used by writers of this period to refer to Neolithic and Bronze Age Megalithic monuments that included most typically Portal tombs, as well as Passage tombs, Court Tombs, Stone Circles and even Wedge Tombs. In the 19th century, many of these monuments were still widely revered and respected by local communities and in local mythology were often identified as ‘Pagan Altars’, ‘Witches or Hag’s Chairs’ or ‘Druid or Brehon Chairs’.

The Neolithic Portal tomb, as exists today in the ‘Cromlech Fields’ at Ballybrack (Fig. 3), is perhaps the most likely class of Megalith for the monument formerly known as ‘St. Brigid’s Chair’ in Carrigeen. These monuments had large capstones (‘tables’) and vertical upright stones and then may have been viewed by locals as enormous chairs/altars built in ancient times. Alternatively, however, we might speculate that local communities happened to identify a natural (or partly artificially created) rock feature in Carrigeen as a chair

associated with St. Brigid given its uncanny resemblance to this type of furniture and its close proximity to St. Brigid's Well. In addition, its close proximity to the well perhaps ensured that local mythology associated this monument with Brigid and not with a Pre-Christian druid/figure as found commonly elsewhere.

St. Brigid's Thimble appears to be a rather unique monument as stones associated with these artefacts appear to be relatively rare in the Irish landscape. Certainly, any thoughts or insights about this subject from readers would be welcomed. We may assume that this stone was shaped roughly in the form of a truncated cone and that its position beside St. Brigid's Well and Chair encouraged local communities to identify it as an artifact associated with this saint. Finally, stones said to have borne the imprints of a saint's foot are an occasional discovery beside holy wells, and the surviving (contrasting) examples from around Kildare indicate the various different natural (or artificially created) forms that the Carrigeen stone may have once assumed.

Finally, in terms of a chronology, we might assume that 'St. Brigid's Chair', taken as a Neolithic megalith (4,000-2,500 B.C.), represents the oldest monument. St. Brigid's Well is certainly early Christian (A.D. 400-1100), though there is evidence that Iron Age Pagan wells were Christianised and rededicated after local saints with the coming of Christianity to Ireland. Both the Thimble Stone and the stone with the foot imprint may have been essentially natural rock features or partly worked stones that either coincidentally or were deliberately hewn to take these physical forms, and which over time may have become intimately associated with a Brigidine mythological narrative.

Acknowledgements

This paper is dedicated to the memory of the late John Noonan and Pat Given - two great custodians of local knowledge of Clane, both of whom were always very generous with their time towards me over many years. Sincere thanks to Stephen

Morrin for proof-reading the paper and to Tony McEvoy for providing valuable information about these monuments and for supplying a copy of his 2014 *Le Chéile* paper. Without Tony's original research on this subject, this paper would have been significantly diminished.

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INTERPRETING SOME COATS OF ARMS IN THE CLANE AREA

Jim Heffernan

Heraldry in Ireland

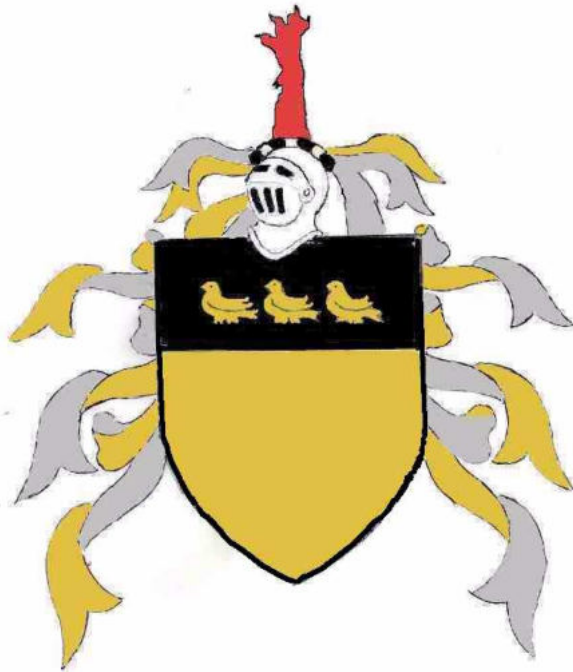
Heraldry developed from the feudal system as arms became the badge of noble and landed elites throughout Europe. The establishment of the Office of Ulster King of Arms in 1552 to register and confirm the granting of arms accelerated the adoption of arms by Irish families. Although the reasons are not entirely clear the authority of Ulster King of Arms extended to the whole of Ireland. The office of Ulster King of Arms survived Irish Independence in 1922 until after the death of the last Ulster King of Arms, Sir Arthur Neville Wilkinson. In 1940 the British and Irish Governments agreed that the remit of the Ulster King of Arms would be confined to the six Ulster counties which remained within the United Kingdom and in 1943 it was combined with one of the English Kings of Arms becoming the Ulster and Norroy King of Arms. In the south in the same year a new Genealogical Office, attached to the National library of Ireland, was set up and Edward MacLysaght was appointed Chief Genealogical Officer receiving the title Chief Herald of Ireland in 1946. Ireland and south Africa are among the few republics that maintain state heraldic offices although others such as Switzerland have arrangements for recognising grants of arms.

The language of heraldry

The language used in describing the central part of each coat of arms, the shield, is archaic Norman French reflecting Heraldry's origins. There are elaborate rules for describing the layout and details of coats of arms which cannot be fully addressed in this article but there are a number of authoritative sources to which reference can be made such as Burkes Armoury¹.

The Wogan arms

The arms below were recorded in 1616 as belonging to William Wogan of Rathcoffey and the same arms were granted in 1730 to Katherine Wogan, daughter of Patrick Wogan of Richardstown. Her brothers Charles and Nicholas were exiled in Europe having taken part in the 1715 Jacobite Rebellion.



Or on a chief sa. three martlets of the first. Crest—A lions gamb couped and erect gu.

Because of the archaic language and bizzare punctuation the blazon above, which describes the arms, requires some interpretation. 'Or' is gold indicating the colour (or tincture) of the main part of the shield, the division of the upper part of the shield as shown above is described as 'a chief' and sa is an abbreviation for sable meaning black. There is a convention that a colour is not repeated in a blazon so the gold colour of

the three martlets is referred to as 'of the first' ie the first colour to be mentioned. A lion's Gamb is its leg and paw and coupé means it is ended with a straight rather than a jagged line; gu is an abbreviation for gules meaning red.

The Wogan-Browne Arms at Clongowes Wood

Heraldry has very specific rules for the marshalling of arms which is the arranging of different arms on the same shield. The principal methods of marshalling are impalement, insertion and quartering.

The arms above the door of the old castle at Clongowes Wood College representing the union of Stephen Fitzwilliam Browne and Judith Wogan and are an example of 'impalement'.



The husband's arms should appear on the sinister (left) side of the shield and the wife's on the dexter (right) side. Therefore we see the Browne arms comprising a chevron between three cranes on the left and the Wogan arms on the right.

The Wogan Arms on the Mausoleum at Clane Abbey



One of the inscriptions on the mausoleum in the graveyard at Clane Abbey represents the Wogan arms with an escutcheon of pretence. The arms on the escutcheon are those of O'Neill of Killeghleigh, comprising two lions combatant holding a dexter hand. This inscription arises from the marriage of Nicholas Wogan of Rathcoffey to Rose the daughter of Sir Neil O'Neill of Shane's Castle Killeghleigh County Antrim. The escutcheon of pretence indicates that Rose was an heiress. The inscription was presumably prior to 1690 as Rose's father died of wounds sustained while commanding a regiment of Jacobite dragoons at the Battle of the Boyne. On the death of Rose's father the appropriate marshalling would have been impalement as in the Clongowes example above

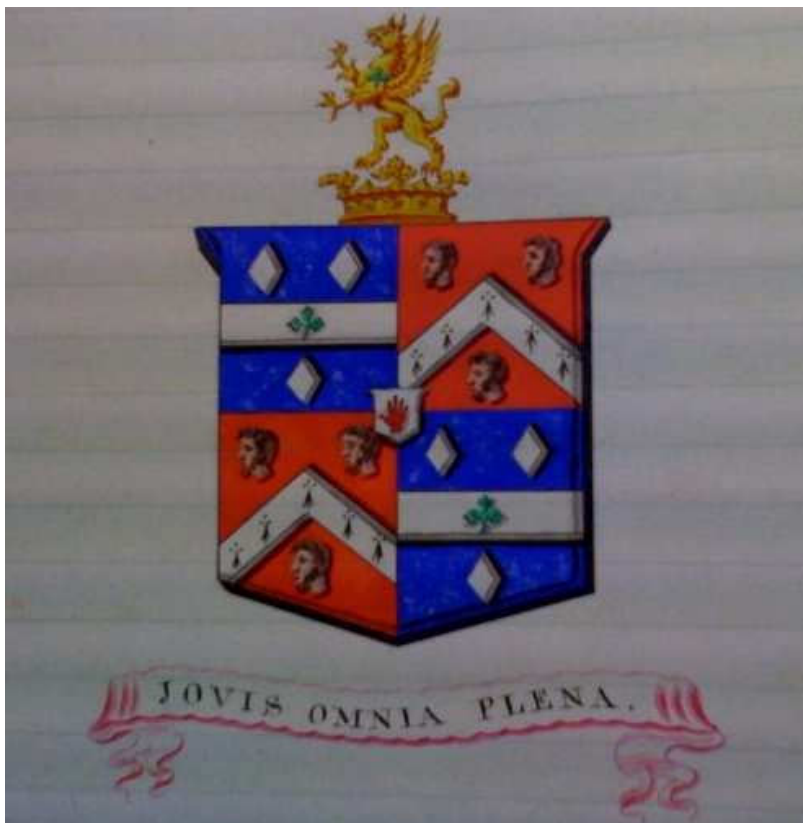
Grant of arms to Sir Richard John Griffith

The grant of arms to Richard John Griffith, son of Richard Griffith of Millicent illustrated the quartering of arms to include those of ancestors. On 27 February 1858 the arms shown below were granted to Griffith the celebrated engineer and geologist who is familiar to present day historians and genealogists for Griffith's Valuation.



The Ulster King of Arms in 1858 was Sir Bernard Burke who is now regarded as being somewhat pliable and reluctant to offend powerful, influential men such as Griffith who had just been made a baronet. Griffith was displeased that the arms did not acknowledge Griffith's claim to be descended from the ancient Welsh family Griffith of Penrhyn. While the Griffiths were certainly of Welsh origin the claim of descent from the Penrhyn Griffiths was, to put it mildly highly speculative.

However Burke complied and the arms below, showing the arms of Griffith of Penrhyn quartered with those previously granted to Sir Richard John were granted to Sir Richard John Griffith on 31 May 1858.

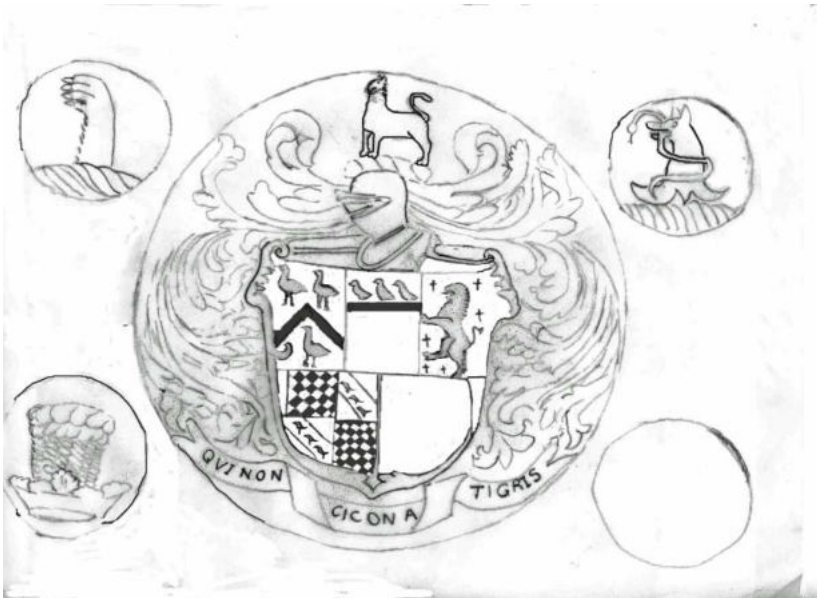


Arms Granted 31st May 1858.

Blazon:- *Quarterly 1st and 4th Azure on a Fesse between three lozenges Argent, a Trefoil slipped Vert for Griffith of Peneraig, 2nd and 3rd Gules a Chevron Ermine between three Englishmen's heads couped at the neck and bearded proper for Griffith of Penrhyn for Crest a Ducal Coronet a Griffin segreant Or charged with a trefoil as in the Arms And for Motto. JOVIS OMNIA PLENA.*

The Wogan Browne Mausoleum at Mainham

The Browne mausoleum at Mainham was erected by Stephen Browne in 1743. An inscription records the fact that Stephen Browne and his wife Judith Wogan daughter of John Wogan of Rathcoffey are buried there together with other Brownes re-interred from St Auden's Church Dublin. Of particular interest is a large memorial slab with a number of armorial carvings which are shown in the following photographs.



Sketch of armorial carvings on a monument inside the mausoleum

Across the top of the monument is a shield with four medallions around it. Three contain crests and one is blank. One of the crests is the Wogan lion's jamb, a second is an unidentified animal's head with a snake in its jaws and a third is identified in a paper by Lord Walter FitzGerald² as the Fitzwilliam crest. A crest above the shield is described by FitzGerald simply as 'a wolf-like animal' however it is clearly the Browne tiger from their crest as specified in the blazon describing the Browne arms:

(Sa. A Chev. Betw. Three cranes Ar. Crest-A **tiger** Az. Maned tufted and armed Or. Motto- *Qui non ciconia tigris*).

The shield bears several coats of arms as follows:

- The Browne Arms¹
- The Wogan arms¹
- Unidentified arms described by Fitzgerald as follows ‘- semi of cross-crosslets and a lion rampant-.for an unidentified family’.
- Arms described by Fitzgerald as ‘for Fitzwilliam’ , the blazon being given by Fitzgerald as ‘Quarterly, first and forth, lozengy argent and gules; second and third gules, on a bend, cotised argent, three popinjays vert, beaked and legged gules’. (Journal of the Kildare Archaeological Society Vol. III)
- A plain compartment

The motto on the shield is *Qui non ciconia tigris* confirmed by Burke as the Browne. motto¹.

Notes

1 Bernard Burke, *The General Armory of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales*, London 1884.

2 Fitzgerald is somewhat imprecise here. The arms of Fitzwilliam of Merrion (Appendix 2 (vi)) have popinjays on a bend but are not quartered, A number of Fitzwilliam arms recorded by Burke have lozengy but only that of the Earl of Fitzwilliam is quartered . It has a crest of a triple plume of ostrich feathers out of a ducal coronet as in the carving but the second and third quarters contain a chevron between three leopards’ heads rather than three popinjays on a bend.

A JOYCEAN TOUR OF CLONGOWES WOOD COLLEGE

Brendan Cullen

A large crowd of over sixty people assembled outside the castle at Clongowes Wood College in the afternoon of Saturday 18th August 2018 ready to embark on “A Joycean Tour of Clongowes Wood College” which was organised by Clane Local History Group as part of Heritage Week. Leader of the tour was Brendan Cullen, aided and abetted by Larry Breen, Jim Heffernan and Tom McCreery who helped to marshal the crowd. James Joyce entered Clongowes as a student in 1888 and the tour consisted of visiting the various locations he mentions in the Clongowes section of his first novel, “A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man”. The Portrait is a semi-autobiographical novel and features Stephen Dedalus, Joyce’s fictional alter ego as the hero. The first chapter records Stephen’s (i.e. Joyce’s) stay in Clongowes from the time of his enrolment in late August 1888 to the time of his departure at Christmas 1891.



Participants at the front of the castle at Clongowes

The Square Ditch

The tour commenced with a visit to the ‘square ditch’, a small moat-like stream, in front of the castle, which may have played a part in the original defence of the castle. This was the scene of a serious bullying incident early in Stephen’s school life when the class bully Wells *shouldered him into the square ditch the day before because he would not swop his little snuff box for Well’s seasoned hacking chestnut*. Joyce was the youngest and smallest boy in Clongowes at the time. He was only six and a half years old and because of his age and small stature he acquired the nickname ‘Half- past six’ from early on. In the novel Stephen was easy prey for Wells who was older and bigger. Stephen was shocked by the coldness and dirtiness of the water in the ditch. “the cold slime of the ditch covered his whole body; and when the bell rang for study and the lines filed out of the playrooms, he felt the cold air of the corridor and staircase inside his clothes”. Although Joyce refers to the ditch as the square ditch its correct name was and still is “Nelly’s ditch” called after an old lady who fell into it and drowned in the early 19th century. Joyce calls it the square ditch because it was very close to ‘the square’ which was the Clongowes word for the toilets during the 19th and the first half of the 20th century.



Nelly's Ditch aka 'the Square Ditch'

The People's Church

Our next stop was at the People's Church. This small, old-fashioned but charming church was converted from a large classroom and dormitory to a chapel for the boys in 1822. It was the Boys' Chapel until 1907 when the present large Boys' Chapel was built. Since 1907 it has been known as the People's Church and is frequented by people from the immediate locality. It was the Boys' Chapel in Joyce's time and it's here he would have attended Mass, night prayers, Benediction and also confession. Stephen describes attending night prayers here as follows:

The bell rang for night prayers and he filed out of the study hall after the others and down the staircase and along the corridors to the chapel. The corridors were darkly lit and the chapel was darkly lit. Soon all would be dark and sleeping. There was cold night air in the chapel and the marbles were the colour the sea was at night.



The author addressing the group inside the People's Church

The tradition of people from the locality attending Sunday Mass in the People's Church was well established in Joyce's time at Clongowes, as is evidenced by the following passage

from the Portrait when Stephen allowed his mind to wander in the chapel:

There was a cold night smell in the chapel. But it was a holy smell. It was not the smell of the old peasants who knelt at the back of the chapel at Sunday Mass. That was a smell of air and rain and turf and corduroy. But they were very holy peasants. They breathed behind him on his neck and sighed as they prayed. They lived in Clane a fellow said: there were little cottages there and he had seen a woman standing at the half-door of a cottage with a child in her arms, as the cars had come past from Sallins.

Gravel Football

A short walk from the People's Church brought the group round the back of the castle to a large flat, open area which was overlain by gravel in Joyce's time. This was the scene of the famous football match which is featured at the beginning of the Portrait. In the following extract Joyce describes the football match in which Stephen takes part:

The wide playgrounds were swarming with boys. All were shouting and the prefects urged them on with strong cries. The evening air was pale and chilly and after every charge and thud of the footballers the greasy leather orb flew like a heavy bird through the grey light..... He was caught in the whirl of a scrimmage and, fearful of the flashing eyes and muddy boots, bent down to look through the legs. The fellows were struggling and groaning and their legs were rubbing and kicking and stamping. Then Jack Lawton's yellow boots dodged out the ball and all the other boots and legs ran after. He ran after them a little way and then stopped. It was useless to run on.

Contrary to common belief the football game played here is not Rugby as many commentators maintain. It is in fact gravel football and was played on the gravel area at the back of the castle and not on the grass. Gravel was organized long before any other game in Clongowes and was the dominant game for

most of the 19th century. The game was unique to Clongowes and was played during the winter months beginning at the end of September and ending on St. Patrick's Day. The ball could not be handled but played only with the feet. The goals consisted of tall uprights, placed about nine feet apart but without a crossbar. In the late 1880s Soccer and later Rugby were introduced and gradually replaced Gravel.

On account of his young age and his frail physique Stephen did not enjoy the rough and tumble of gravel football. He was a reluctant participant and was so ill-at-ease on the pitch that he would have preferred to be anywhere else, even the study hall. He had such little interest in the game that the lights in the castle attracted his attention through the evening darkness and he had time to wonder *from which window Hamilton Rowan had thrown his hat on the "haha"*.

The Cinder Path

The cricket oval/crease was adjacent to the gravel area and was encircled by the cinder path which was the scene of a major incident involving Stephen and which was to have repercussions for him later on in Fr. Arnall's Latin class. He was knocked down by a cyclist:

a fellow from out of second grammar. He had been thrown by the fellow's machine lightly on the cinderpath and his spectacles had been broken in three pieces and some of the grit of the cinders had gone into his mouth.

The Entrance Hall

Having viewed the cinder path, now tarmacked, the group retraced its steps, accessed the castle through the front door and assembled in the spacious entrance hall. It was here that Stephen said goodbye to his parents whom he wouldn't see until Christmas. His mother kissed him but was very upset and tearful. Stephen recalls "her nose and eyes were red. But he had pretended not to see that she was going to cry". His father gave him "two fiveshilling pieces for pocket money" and advised him "never to peach on a fellow". The rector shook

hands with his parents and they waved to Stephen as the carriage sped down the avenue on its way to Sallins.

The landing in the entrance hall was the setting for another important event in Stephen's school life. He had come to a strict and exacting institution and soon suffered a major injustice when he received punishment from Fr Dolan for not writing his theme in Fr Arnall's Latin class. Stephen resented the punishment and decided to complain to the rector. To access the rector's office he had to walk along the Serpentine gallery ("he passed along the narrow dark corridor") and emerged "on the landing above the entrance hall and looked about him". While examining his unfamiliar surroundings he alluded again to the Hamilton Rowan incident and also mentioned "the ghost in the white cloak of a marshal". He was directed by an old servant to the rector's office at the corner of the landing; he knocked on the door and was eventually admitted.

The ghost story mentioned by Stephen is also associated with the entrance hall. It concerns the death of Marshal Browne who emigrated to Austria and was killed at the Battle of Prague 1757. On the day and at the hour he died a tall army officer in a distinctive white uniform entered the hall through the front door at Castle Browne (i.e. Clongowes) and ascended the stairs much to the bewilderment of the servants who saw him.

The Hamilton Rowan episode referred to by Stephen also occurred in this area of the castle. Hamilton Rowan, the renowned United Irishman fled from his home in nearby Rathcoffey and made his way to Castle Browne followed by soldiers of the Crown. He entered through the main door, ran up the stairs and through the Round Room and into the Drawing Room where he opened a window and threw his hat out on the 'haha' below at the back of the castle. He then hid in the tower in the corner of the room behind a door that was disguised as book shelves. The soldiers unable to find him withdrew.

Fr Arnall's Class

Fr William Power, the Elements class-master in 1888-89 appears in the Portrait under the pseudonym of Fr Arnall. In this classic classroom drama Fr. Arnall arrived in Latin class and remained silent, leaning on the desk with his arms folded. He was not happy. The source of his unhappiness was the poor quality of the homework presented by most of the students. He “gave out the theme books and he said that they were scandalous and that they were to be written out again”. The worst was Fleming’s theme because some pages of his copybook were stuck together by an ink blot. When Fleming missed his grammar Fr Arnall put him kneeling on the floor with instructions to rewrite his homework.



Visiting the Library: The hidden door through which Rowan is said to have fled is behind the book shelves beside the window on the right

Soon, Fr Dolan, the Prefect of Studies, entered the classroom brandishing a pandybat (i.e. a leather strap) and exclaiming “any boys want flogging here, Fr Arnall?” He sees Fleming on his knees, calls him “a born idler” and proceeds to give him six pandies on each hand i.e. twice six. On his way out Fr Dolan noticed that Stephen wasn’t writing. He enquired why and Fr

Arnall informed him that Stephen broke his glasses and that he, Fr Arnall had exempted him from work. Fr Dolan addressed Stephen as a “lazy little schemer” and asked him where he had broken his glasses. Stephen replied “the cinder path, sir”. “Hoho! the cinder path! cried the prefect of studies. I know that trick”, whereupon he gave Stephen two pandies, one on each hand. Stephen regarded the punishment as most unjust, unfair and cruel and reacted with great anger and resentment. Afterwards, Fleming encouraged him to “go up and tell the rector on him”. They all made their way to the refectory and Stephen determined to do what Fleming suggested after dinner. On exiting the refectory he turned right, walked up the stairs and entered “the low narrow dark corridor that led to the castle”. Eventually, he came out on the landing in the entrance hall, approached the rector’s room, knocked on the door and entered. Fr Conmee listened to his complaint and promised to tell Fr Dolan that he, Stephen had permission not to do homework. Afterwards, Stephen informed the other students what had happened and they all celebrated by throwing their caps in the air, “and they gave three groans for Baldyhead Dolan and three cheers for Conmee and they said he was the decentest rector that was ever in Clongowes”.

The Refectory

The group next visited the refectory, now the James Joyce Library. The year 1886 was a traumatic one in the history of Clongowes. It was in this year that the original refectory built in 1819 was destroyed by fire along with the study hall overhead. Both were rebuilt in 1887 just a year before Joyce entered the college. In Joyce’s time the tables were covered with white tablecloths and were arranged in four rows along the length of the room. The seniors were seated at the top beside the two stained glass windows while the juniors occupied the area just inside the door. The Clongowes food had a very poor reputation and Stephen had difficulty eating it. One student called the Friday pudding “dog-in-the-blanket” and Stephen “could not eat the blackish fish fritters they got on Wednesdays in Lent”. This is how Stephen described a visit to the refectory sometime during the period 1888-89:

The bell rang and then the classes began to file out of the rooms and along the corridors towards the refectory. He sat looking at the two prints of butter on his plate but could not eat the damp bread. The tablecloth was damp and limp. But he drank off the hot weak tea which the clumsy scullion, girt with a white apron, poured into his cup..... Nasty Roche and Saurin drank cocoa that their people sent them in tins. They said they could not drink the tea, that it was hogwash.

The Infirmary

Our last visit was to the Infirmary, a tall, free-standing limestone edifice situated at the end of a long corridor. On the way there the group passed the site of the old swimming bath which was built in 1887 and demolished at the beginning of August 2018. Stephen would have made the same journey to access the infirmary and would have been familiar with the bath's *warm turfcoloured bogwater, the warm moist air, the noise of the plunges, the smell of towels, like medicine*. Stephen appears to have been accommodated in the infirmary for most of his first year, instead of the regular dormitory, perhaps because of his young age. When he first arrived there Br Michael was at the door to welcome him. After sometime he seemed to be homesick and unwell and fantasised about writing a letter to his mother asking her to come and take him home. However, despite his illness he received no medicine. According to Stephen *you got stinking stuff to drink when you were in the infirmary*.

Having completed our visit to the infirmary our “Joycean Tour of Clongowes Wood College” came to an end.

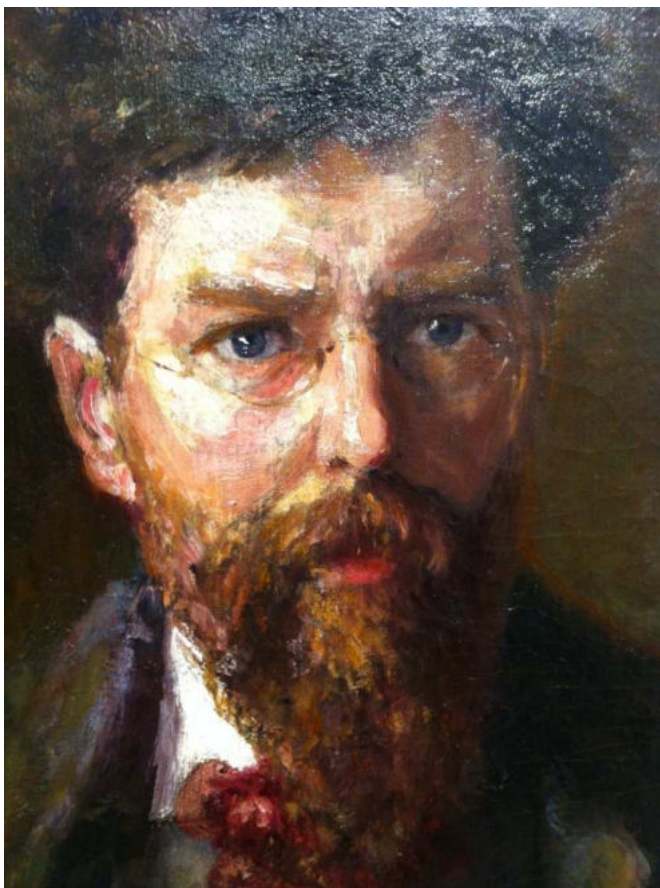
Clane Local History Group would like to thank Father Rector of Clongowes Wood College for his kindness in facilitating this tour.

LURGAN'S GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL

Brian McKernan

George Russell, known popularly as Æ, was an extremely rare gift for Ireland at a time of immense social and political upheaval. For Ireland he provided the philosophical wisdom, logic, ethics, insight and laying down of an intellectual foundation of the kind Socrates, Plato and Aristotle gave to the great Greek society so long before. Æ was an immense presence in Ireland from the 1890s to the 1930s.

Æ said; *'If I raise myself, I raise the rest of the world'*.



Self Portrait AE Russell

Æ was born at 12 William Street, Lurgan on 10th April 1867. Æ loved Lurgan but was sadly too aware of the sectarian divisions that often sparked into violence. Although the family relocated to Dublin in 1878, George often returned to Drumgor, Lurgan and Armagh to visit his relations and friends. These short breaks gave him time away from the hectic bustle of Dublin. Æ's father's family originally hailed from County Meath but moved to Lurgan in the 1850s. His grandmother died in 1867 and his grandfather moved to Armagh in 1870. The family grave at St. Mark's Church in Armagh was the final resting place for many of Æ's family.



The author with popular Lurgan historian Jimmy Conway who recently established an annual Lurgan festival in Æ's memory, at the Russell family grave at St. Mark's Church in Armagh

From the moment George Russell and William Butler Yeats first met, as teenagers, in May 1884, they began to build a lifelong partnership that would prove transformative for Ireland. Æ steered Yeats away from painting and towards poetry where his great ambition and self-drive would later flourish. From 1884 to 1887 Æ and Yeats spent most of their free time in each other's company reading and writing poetry. They explored philosophies and mythologies and mysticism. They shared all of their ideas on rhythms, language and subjects. Typical of their bond is a story of Yeats running round to Æ's house and pelting his window with little pebbles. This woke the whole house up, thinking there was an intruder, before realising it was only Yeats who could not wait till morning to tell Russell how he had found a good ending for a poem. Although Yeats moved back to England in 1887 they kept in touch and met up each time Yeats returned.

In 1888 Æ and Yeats both became attracted to the new Theosophy Society and its fresh blend of Eastern philosophy, mysticism and the occult. In 1891 they joined its theosophical residential community at 3 Upper Ely Place in Dublin. Yeats did not stay for long whereas Russell devoted five years there developing his eclectic approach to all things spiritual. Meanwhile Yeats' star was rising as his upper class family background enabled him to attract the attention and support of the influential London set and many notable people in Ireland. Naturally, Yeats became a fairly well known poet before Æ even got started. Yeats and others finally persuaded Æ to publish a first poetry anthology in 1894. He published a second in 1897 and by the turn of the century Æ was widely regarded as one of the two great Irish poets. In 1894 Æ also published 'The Future of Ireland and the Awakening of the Fires' which prophetically idealised an idea for a new generation of hero poets to lead the fight for Irish freedom. However, as a committed pacifist, whose thoughts significantly inspired Gandhi's campaign of peaceful resistance, Æ was not suggesting armed rebellion.

Throughout their fifty year association they dominated Ireland's Literary Revival and impacted hugely on the whole intellectual life of Ireland in their time. Yeats' fame, and the support he could attract, enabled Æ to promote new writers and artists, and advance his efforts to revolutionise Irish culture and society. Their support of each other was generally mutual. Following a failed four year effort by Yeats, Lady Gregory, J.M. Synge, George Moore and Edward Martyn to establish an Irish theatre, Æ successfully formed the Irish National Theatre Society and handed it over to Yeats who had a much deeper interest in theatre. Russell stayed on for a few years as Vice-President to help steer it as it developed into the great, world renowned Abbey Theatre. Russell's play *Deirdre* is credited to have been the spark that set the Irish dramatic movement alight.

Two events then dramatically transformed and stabilised Russell's life. By joining Horace Plunkett's Irish Agricultural Society Organisation (I.A.S.O.) in 1897 he began a thirty year service devoted to improving the living standards of people across rural Ireland. The following year he married Violet North. They established their home in Rathgar, had two sons, Brian and Diarmuid, and a daughter, Maeve, who died in infancy. His new employment brought him into close contact with impoverished farming communities and his home became a neutral zone for all manner of debate for everyone involved in the creation of a New Ireland. Æ's rich charismatic personality attracted everyone interested in the literary, economic, political and artistic future of Ireland. Artists, figures from high society, Irish revolutionaries, economists, journalists, friends, revivalists, politicians, suffragettes, all called, seeking his peculiar wisdom and to enjoy being entranced by his inspirational and calming personality. Æ never sought acknowledgement as he shaped the world around him for the good of society, and more often than not his participation remained private and uncelebrated.

Æ's life overflowed with people, issues, activity and innumerable fascinating stories. On one occasion the police



AE's wife Violet North

came to confront his next door neighbour, Maud Gonne, for hanging out a pair of black bloomers while Dublin was loyally awash with Union flags celebrating a royal visit to Dublin. The ladies of *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* rushed to the scene to protect their leader and the Russell's spent the day keeping everyone fed and watered, while also easing tensions.

Æ came to be known as 'The Sage of Ireland'. A title marvellously underscored by French journalist, Simone Téry. She wrote:

Do you want to know about providence, the origin of the universe, the end of the universe? Go to Æ.

Do you want to know about Gaelic literature? Go to Æ.

Do you want to know about the Celtic soul? Go to Æ.

Do you want to know about Irish History? Go to Æ.

Do you want to know about the export of eggs? Go to Æ.

Do you want to know how to run society? Go to Æ.

If you find life insipid - Go to Æ.

If you need a friend - Go to Æ.

Countess Markievicz regarded Æ as the one who did most to give Ireland its identity and Frank O'Connor referred to him as: '*The father to three generations of Irish writers*'.



17 Rathgar Avenue, Dublin

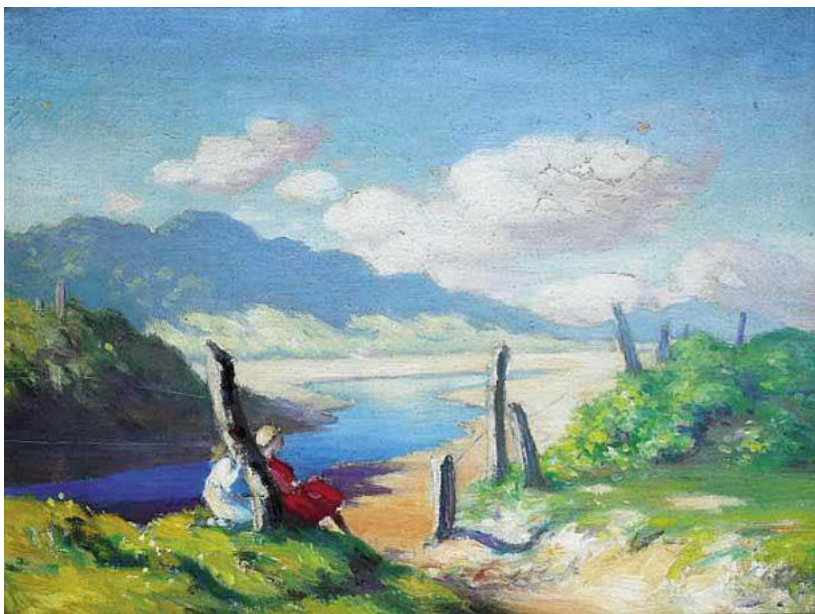
Æ became one of Ireland's greatest artists. His work was incredibly imaginative, creative and original. He promoted and encouraged younger artists, male and female, and worked tirelessly for the arts. In 1899 he staged a loan exhibition of

French art to inspire Irish art students and started a fund to acquire works of art for a future public gallery in Dublin. Accordingly, Æ was one of the main drivers in the creation of the Hugh Lane Metropolitan Gallery. He was a founder of the United Arts Club in Dublin where literature and the visual arts were able to flourish together. Æ held many exhibitions over a thirty year period and was the only Irish Artist to be included among the headline artists exhibited at the New York 'Armory Show' 1913, which was arguably the most important art exhibition ever staged. The show aimed to bring Modern European art to the USA in order to awaken the American art scene. Æ's name sat alongside other great living artists including - Degas, Renoir, Monet, Matisse and Braque, as well as recently deceased greats Cezanne, Van Gogh, Manet and Gauguin. Æ's work continued to be included in US art exhibitions throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. All of the major public art galleries in Ireland hold some of his estimated 600 paintings.



AE Painting - Figures by a Moonlit Sea

Russell had a great capacity to provide practical solutions to real world problems and he modestly applied his considerable powers on the side of the underdog. Æ was always on the side of fairness, equal rights, cooperation and peace. For thirty years, Æ built the rural co-operative movement so that farmers could support one another and not be kept in permanent indebtedness and poverty by the parasitic breed of ruthless profiteers he called *The Gombeen Men*. Æ developed the



Æ Painting - Marble Hill Strand

solutions that made sustained progress possible and began to implement them. He realised that the large impoverished and uneducated masses would need to be raised in both body and soul before they could reasonably be expected to use the widening electoral franchise to good ends. He understood the mutual necessity of creating and maintaining a successful rural community and city/town industry. He understood that economic success and interdependency would be a valuable tool in creating the bonds that build and unite a new society. He envisioned a new Irish nation, harnessing the potential of

the industrial powerhouse North and the rural South. His vision was for widespread wealth and economic stability.

Æ's power resided mostly in his pen. In addition to writing poetry, drama and novels, Æ used prose, journalism, letters and articles - placed in the press, pamphlets and speeches to address populist issues or concerns of the day. His ideas on rural reform inspired socialist trades-union leaders including James Connolly who described him as '*the great and magnetic personality*'. George designed the '*Starry Plough*' flag for Connolly's Citizen Army and helped Connolly's family after the 1916 rising.

From 1905 to 1930, as editor of the Irish Homestead and New Statesman weekly papers Æ began to offer advice on practically everything and gradually inspired the next generation as his paper carried his thoughts into homes across the land. Æ published hundreds of thoughtful articles and booklets on the important social and political subjects of the day, including:

Ireland and Tariff Reform 1909
The Building up of a Rural Civilisation 1910
Co-operation and Nationality 1912
Letter - To the Masters of Dublin 1913
The National Being 1916
Thoughts for a Convention 1917
A Plea for Justice 1920
The Economics of Ireland 1920
The Inner and the Outer Ireland 1921
Ireland, Past and Future 1922
Open Letter to the Irish Republicans 1922
The Censorship in Ireland 1928

In December 1915 Æ summed up his writing as follows:

'In their totality, the articles which have appeared in the Irish Homestead during the past six or seven years amount to a policy for the nation.'

Yeats also recognised Æ's impact and commitment, saying:

"If he convinced himself that any peculiar activity was desirable to the public interest or in that of his friends, he had at once the ardour that came to another from personal ambition."

After the 1916 Easter Rising the political divisions in Ireland became so extreme that Russell called for an Irish Convention of all groups in Irish society as a last chance to avoid a disastrous split. Russell set this in motion and had his friend Horace Plunkett appointed as chairman. Æ was on the 'committee of nine' established to thrash out the key elements that could form the basis for agreement. Ironically, it is Lloyd George who gets the credit for giving Ireland this last chance to avoid partition, even though it was the Prime Minister's own machinations that ultimately scuppered the project.



The 1917 Irish Convention picture showing the ninety-four convention members sitting listening to Plunkett, while one, and only one other person, is active in the room – Æ Russell.

From 1918 Æ reluctantly accepted that undesirable realities violence, partition and religious domination, would probably have to run their course. In 1922 Æ was invited to become an Irish Senator but turned it down as he believed he could be a stronger and more independent voice outside the formal political structures. He encouraged Yeats to become a Senator as he was constantly making efforts to involve him in Irish affairs. His famous friend then moved in to a house next door to Æ's office in Merrion Square where he could readily avail of Russell's wisdom.



Æ Plaque in Merrion Square

From 1923 to 1933 Æ remained active as the conscience of the nation, successfully curbing the excesses of the new government. He was equally still active on other fronts: as a supporter of new literary talent such as mentoring Pamela Travers and helping her to create the Mary Poppins stories, the arts world as a notable painter and poet. In his last couple of years, having lost Violet in 1932 and sold the house in 1933, he

spent more time travelling abroad, accepting invitations to tour America where he helped in the creation of Roosevelt's new deal, and spending more time visiting friends in England.

Towards the end of Æ's fourth trip to America he became quite ill. He made his way home and died four months later in England on 17th July 1935. George's body was brought back to Dublin, receiving a fly-over salute (which had never happened before) and laid in state at 84 Merrion Square where he'd had his main office for thirty years. *The Irish Times* estimated that half a million people turned out to mark his passing, there was a mile long procession trailing his final journey to his modest burial place beside Violet in Mount Jerome Cemetery.

Many biographical writers have referred to Russell's generation, when they were at their peak as; *Æ, Yeats and the rest.*



Æ's grave at Mount Jerome Cemetery, Dublin

THE CONSECRATION OF ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS CHURCH

The following article is taken from the Kildare Observer of Saturday, October 6th, 1883.

Consecration of St. Michael's Church, Clane

On Saturday last, in the presence of a large and distinguished congregation, the Lord Archbishop of Dublin consecrated the church which has been recently erected and presented to the parishioners, through the generosity and munificence of Mr. Thomas Cooke-Trench, of Millicent.

The building, which has cost the large sum of about £7,000, is capable of accommodating about two hundred people, and is a structure of much architectural beauty, reflecting great credit on Mr. Trench, on the architect and the builder. We are not going too far, we are sure, in saying that amongst the many parish churches throughout Ireland there are few, if indeed any to surpass in beauty the one consecrated at Clane on last Saturday morning.

Though the building was commenced but two years ago, yet long prior to that date, Mr. Trench had desired to improve the parish church. Indeed, as we learn from a pamphlet published by Mr. Trench, so long ago as 1869 an eminent architect had been and consulted, and plans for its improvement were submitted by him. But difficulties arose which were not at the time overcome; and it was not till eleven years after that it was finally resolved to abandon the old church and build a new one on an entirely new site. It would occupy too much space to enter into all the reasons for this resolution, but the parishioners were mainly influenced by the overcrowded state of the churchyard, which forbade extension in any direction, and rendered interments impossible without disturbing older graves. Suffice it to say that at three largely attended meetings of the select vestry, held in 1880 and 1881, resolutions were

unanimously passed: at the first accepting the offer of a new church, at the second approving of the plans, and at the third adopting the present site. This last resolution was passed on the 20th June, 1881, and on the same day operations were begun.



The Church of St Michael and All Angels

The church, of which the tower is visible for a considerable distance on all sides, stands on rising ground in a prominent and central position in the parish. The Wicklow mountains bound and give character to a view of much homely beauty. The chief material is the grey limestone of the neighbourhood, mostly from Mr. Henry's quarry in the adjoining townland. The quoins and external dressings are of Cumberland red sandstone, the saving arches being of a black stone from Mr. Kirkpatrick's quarry at Celbridge, which also supplied the lime. The sand was given, free of charge, by Mr. Manders from his strand at Millicent Bridge. Internally, the walls were plastered, the windows, doors, arches, string courses, pillars, and other dressings being of white Bath Stone. The steps, pulpit case, and platform at lectern and front are of Portland stone, the external steps and the bowl of the front and

kerbstone of the foot-place are of red Cork marble. The walls throughout are lined with bricks. The roof is of pitch pine, covered with Welsh slates. The doors, floors, and fittings of Riga oak. The walls externally are of uncoursed ashlar, giving an idea of great strength and solidity.

Handsome as is the exterior of the buildings, yet it is not till the interior is entered that its full beauties are seen. Those who have studied Lord Dunraven's "Notes on Irish Architecture" and have learned that we possess a national style of architecture capable of exquisite beauty, especially adopted to buildings of moderate size, will not be surprised to learn that an Irishman, building in Ireland, has adopted the style closely allied to the Norman, and technically known as Hiberno-Romanesque. The first object which strikes the eye entering is the chancel arch of three members and of great richness and beauty; another richly carved arch unites the choir and chancel. These arches strongly remind one of the arches in Cormac's Chapel, but are, if possible, more richly carved. One of the prettiest effects in the entire building is the view looking westward, when the five windows over the baptistery come into view, filled with a central figure of our Lord, with figures emblematic of baptism in the others—two from the Old and two from the New Testament. All the woodwork is richly carved, and of oak; the bosses of the roof are with a few exceptions different. When we mention that they are 220 in number, the expense will be apparent. There is no repetition of decorated work in the church. Every stroke of the chisel represents thought and care on the part of those who gave it. Of the 71 stone capitals, and 82 bosses, no two are alike, save those in the chimney and four high up on the tower. These were carved in Dublin before they came down, on account of the difficulty of afterwards of getting at them. Even the principal rafters, alike in other respects, have each their distinctive mid-rib. The floor under the seats is made of oak, tongued and grooved, and laid herring-bone fashion. The remainder of the floor is set in marble mosaic in various patterns; that in the chancel, outside the communion rails, and the border round the Baptistery, are both from the pavement of St. Mark's at Venice. It has been

executed by Italian artists in the employment of Messrs. Burke and Co. of Paris and London, The reredos and side walls of the sanctuary are covered with a glass mosaic, the work of Messrs. Powell and Sons of the Whitefriars Glass Works. The spandrels over the east windows are filled with Venetian mosaic by Capello, in memory of Lady Helena Trench who died in the ninety-first year of her age, whilst the building was in course of erection.*

Amongst the clergy present on Saturday were-The Deans of Dromore, Ossory, and Leighlin, the Archdeacon of Ossory, the Warden of St. Columbia, the Revs. E.D. Heathcote, J. Henry D D; B.C. Davidson-Houston, Canon Bagot, Canon Wilcox, C.J. Graham, Robert B. Stoney, H. Mollan, J. Molloy, Geo. R. Graham, Joseph Torrens, R. Irwin, R.D. Skuse, G. Garrett, A. Ren, Canon Cowell, James Adams, W. Foster, Canon Lloyd, R.S. Campbell.

The Venerable the Archdeacon of Kildare (the Rev. Maurice de Burgh), read the first lesson, and the Venerable the Archdeacon of Dublin the second. Prayers were intoned by the Rev. Canon Weldon and their services were highly appreciated, the choral parts of the ceremony being really magnificent. The offertory amounted to £72.

.....
.....

Justifying the ornate interior of the of the new church the archbishop preached a sermon based upon Mathew 26-8.¹

.....
At the conclusion of the ceremony the visitors and guests were entertained at Millicent and at the rectory, open house being apparently the order of a pulpit which had been made since morning, and that another bell had been promised; these, with the already promised lectern and other gifts, will make the furniture of the church almost complete.

***An illustrated article by Carita O Leary , describing the interior of the church appears the 2013 edition of Coiseanna.**

THE WOLFHILL RAILWAY

Frank Taaffe

The construction of a railway line from Athy to the Wolfhill colliery in County Laois was first proposed in June 1912 when the colliery owner, Mr. Parkinson, came before the members of Kildare County Council seeking sanction for the project insofar as it related to the southern part of County Kildare. At a subsequent meeting of Athy Urban District Council, chaired by James Deegan, Mr. Thomas Reddy Manager of the Gracefield colliery explained that it was intended to run the line beside the road from Wolfhill to Athy. The mining company he said was prepared to run the trains early in the morning or late at night and so avoid any possible danger to the public. The company was also willing to drop off passengers outside the town of Athy on market and fair days. The money to build the railway was to come from the promoters of the scheme. In return the Urban Council were asked to provide housing accommodation in the town for between 300 and 500 miners. Both the proposal and the request met with the unanimous approval of the Council members with John Duncan J.P. proposing acceptance, seconded by Thomas Plewman J.P. who claimed that 95% of the people of Athy favoured the project.

The Kildare Observer in a subsequent editorial praised the Urban District Council stating, *'the time has come for the making of a steady and determined endeavour towards our industrial regeneration.'* The editor expressed the hope *'that this new enterprise will bring to Athy and the surrounding country all the advantages of an extensive industrial development.'*

The meeting of Kildare County Council saw legal representatives of the colliery owner, the County Council and the Great Southern and Western Railway Company make detailed submissions in connection with the railway project. The Councillors were informed that the proposed light railway between Athy and the collieries at Gracefield and Modubeagh would extend for 10 miles, 1 furlong and 1.4 chains with 3

miles, 4 furlongs and 6 chains in County Kildare. It was proposed to have the rail lines laid on a raised track placed on the left-hand side of the road going from Athy to Ballylinan, the level of the rails to be 6 inches over the level of the centre of the road. The county surveyor, Edward Glover, pointed out where work on railways had been commenced but not completed and while not expecting anything of that kind to occur in relation to the Wolfhill line, nevertheless he advised that in the case of abandonment the County Council should seek reinstatement of all roads and public services affected by the work.



The Athy - Wolfhill Railway

The colliery owner, James Parkinson, advised the Council that he had purchased the mining rights of 10,500 acres for £20,000 and hoped in the near future to increase coal productivity each day to 1,000 tonnes in Modubeagh and 500 tonnes in Gracefield. He pointed out that Modubeagh coalfield had coal supplies for about 60 years and confirmed that the estimated cost of laying the railway line was £70,725. When asked if he anticipated any difficulty employing labourers when work was

started, Mr. Parkinson replied, '*None whatever, we can easily get Connemara labourers.*'

Despite the unanimous support of Kildare County Council and Athy Urban District Council an application had to be submitted to, and approved by, the Lord Lieutenant under the Tramways Acts to allow the construction work to proceed. By the time war was declared in August 1914 no progress had been made in relation to the Athy Wolfhill railway line. During the winter of 1916/'17 the Chief Secretary travelled from Dublin Castle to Wolfhill to investigate the railway proposal and John O'Connor M.P. made a submission outlining how and why the railway line could be provided as a war measure. Coal became scarce and very expensive during the war and he claimed that an increased quantity could be secured in Wolfhill and shipped to England if the railway line was put in place. Mr. O'Connor went so far as to suggest that 1,000 soldiers out of the 4,000 based in the Curragh camp could be employed in building the railway line in three to four weeks.

The Board of Works eventually approved the scheme and J.J. Bergin by then Manager of the Wolfhill colliery, indicated to the local press on the 31st of March 1917 that '*fourteen engineers are marking out the course.*' The same newspaper reported '*work in connection with the new railway commenced this week when a good deal of local labour was engaged under the engineers attached to the Great Southern and Western Railway Company.*' To discourage farm labourers from applying to work on the railway project where a weekly wage of twenty-seven shillings was paid, only men engaged in national service and registered for such work were employed.

On the 18th of June 1917 the property agent to the War Department in Ireland advertised that the lands required for the construction of the railway line between Athy and Wolfhill '*are taken under the powers contained in the Defence of the Realm Regulations.*' By the 5th of May the Nationalist and Leinster Times reported that '*the railway works have caused crowding and congestion in Athy. The influx of workers has*

caused overcrowding.' A further report indicated that the railway line had been extended as far as the River Barrow and that work on the bridge was to start. In fact the foundations for the bridge were laid in June 1917. In early July a large number of men arrived from Dublin to work on the railway. Their arrival prompted the local Medical Officer, Dr. Kilbride, to warn the Urban District Council of '*overcrowding in the lanes of Athy.*' The overcrowding was alleviated somewhat by the erection of large structures, akin to field hospitals, on the outskirts of Athy and Ballylinan to accommodate the workers.

During the year fifty Dublin men, previously unemployed, who were brought to Athy with a promise of 30 shillings per week wages and free bed and equipment returned to Dublin soon after their arrival. Apparently their demands of a wage increase of 8 shillings per week and a reduction of working hours from 60 to 58 hours per week was not accepted. The local newspaper noted that the Dublin men had a spokesman '*who like the agitator Larkin was a bit of a stump orator however he did not succeed in fooling the local workers who remained at work.*' A later newspaper report indicated that about 300 workers went on strike for a few days in August 1917 demanding an increase in the wages of 6 pence per hour for a 60 hour week. The strike was called off when the workers agreed to terms of 5 shillings and 6 pence per day with a slight reduction in the working hours.

The air of prosperity about Wolfhill noted by the local newspapers, which was absent in previous years, prompted a claim of overcharging by some railway workers. Not so, claimed John Meier of Simmons Mills who wrote to the papers on the 27th of August 1917 outlining the prices he charged the miners for various food stuffs. His prices of 3½ pence for a loaf of bread, 1/8 for a pound of smoked bacon, 3/6 for a pound of tea and sugar at 7 pence a pound did not represent over charging he asserted. By September 1917 with so many farm workers having enlisted in the British Army the Town Clerk, J.A. Lawler, met Mr. Waller the chief Engineer on the railway project to secure the release of men to help with local

harvesting work. Waller agreed to the release of 200 men for a short period and guaranteed to keep their jobs open for them.



A coal train at Ballylinan

The bridge across the river Barrow was nearing completion in January 1918 and work on the railway was expected to be finished in two to three months thereafter. As the project neared completion on the 14th of February 1918 the workers went on strike again. 200 men marched into Athy in what would appear to have been an unsuccessful attempt to get Athy men to join the strike. It was noted in the local press that “tradesmen engaged on the bridge and other skilled work was not affected”. However, a week later skilled workers were compelled to stop work on the railway line while the railway strikers sought to increase their wages from 5 shillings and 6 pence to 7 shillings and 6 pence per week. The strikers returned to work following intervention by Denis Kilbride MP P.J. Meehan M.P. and Fr. W. Wilson a curate in Luggacurran. It was agreed to wait for the decision of the Board of Trade regarding the workers’ demands. The intervention by a Catholic curate was indicative of the importance of Church figures in Irish society at the time. It can also be seen as a service to a neighbouring cleric, Rev. James Parkinson P.P. of

Ballyadams, whose brother was proprietor of the Wolfhill colliery.

In September 1918 work commenced on taking up the second railway line between Athy and Cherryville, Kildare to be used as the new line between Castlecomer and Kilkenny. The double line from Athy to Carlow had earlier been reduced to a single line and the lifted rail used to construct the branch line to Wolfhill. The Railway Bridge across the river Barrow forming part of the Athy Wolfhill line was the first recorded reinforced concrete railway bridge constructed in Ireland.



A bridge which carried the railway over a road near Kilfeacle

The Athy - Wolfhill line opened on the 24th of Sep 1918 and while it was operated by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company it remained in the ownership of the British Government until it passed to the Irish Free State following the Treaty. In 1929 the Great Southern Railway leased the Athy - Wolfhill rail line from the Irish Government for 999 years. It was one of the few Irish railway lines never privately owned. The Wolfhill Colliery's operating company went into receivership in the summer of 1925 and was later liquidated.

THE PICKLED EARL

Brian McCabe

Richard Southwell Bourke, 6th Earl of Mayo, who is buried beneath the large Celtic cross in the old graveyard at the entrance to the village of Johnstown, Co. Kildare, was one of the most notable political figures in 19th century Ireland.



Palmerstown House

Born in 1822 into a large landowning family with estates in counties Meath and Kildare as well as in the West of Ireland, he grew up at the family seat in nearby Palmerstown House. During the Famine years of 1846/47 he seems to have done much charitable work and taken an interest in the welfare of the tenantry. Having developed an interest in politics, he was in August 1847 (as Lord Naas) elected as a Conservative Member of Parliament at Westminster representing Co. Kildare. He rose quickly in politics and having succeeded to the Earldom on the death of his father (1849) he was appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1852. He continued however, to maintain a lively interest in how things were doing 'down on the farm'. One evening while he was entertaining important guests to dinner at the lodge in the Phoenix Park, a note was brought to him from his farm steward. The note seemed to please him very much and he read it out to the assembled company. 'Gentlemen,

listen to this: my Lord, this afternoon the prize leghorn laid an egg before she was killed by a fox. In the absence of your Lordship I placed the egg under the brown hen’.

Bourke was to serve twice more as Chief Secretary but the highlight of his career came in 1868 when he was appointed Governor General of India by Disraeli, the British Prime Minister. The appointment of Bourke, who had no colonial experience, was something of a surprise at the time. One of his colleagues in India however, afterwards pointed out that his experience as a Master of Foxhounds in Kildare fitted him ideally for the task, as it required tact, strength and management – just as did the ruling of India.



Richard Southwell Bourke, 6th Earl of Mayo

Bourke brought a breath of fresh air to Government house in Calcutta. Unlike his predecessors he was young, vigorous and a great hit with the ladies on account of his waltzing abilities. His entertainments were lavish and it was considered that his wife and he had brought back glamour and gaiety to the Viceroyalty. His popularity was such that certain snobs of Calcutta society fancied that they noticed a spectacular

improvement in the quality of Government House wine. What they did not realise was that he had simply bought up the cellar of his predecessor as Viceroy on taking office. Much of Mayo's journeying in India was done on horseback. Sometimes he rode as much as eighty miles a day. He also travelled by river steamer and rail and all the other modes of transport to which the 19th century rulers of India and their womenfolk were obliged to resort- elephant, yak, camel and inflated buffalo skins in the case of the rivers. Once, in the Central Provinces, having decided at the last minute to visit a place which had been left out of his itinerary, he found that the only way he could get there was by going overnight in a bullock cart. So, after dinner, with sentries crashing to attention, he emerged wearing his uniform coat over his pyjamas, lay down in the cart amidst cushions and straw, lit a cigar and pronounced himself to be most comfortable. "Excellent conveyance, a bullock cart" he observed next morning on arrival at his destination. "Slept splendid". He then put on the rest of his uniform and Star of India regalia. As Viceroy, Mayo loved enthusiasm and hated pomposity. One day, at a meeting of his governing Council, he was listening to his long-winded Finance Minister who was expounding on how export duty had been taken off shawls but not off rice. Tiring of the speech Mayo slipped a piece of paper to another member of the Council on which he had written:

*Sir Richard's the white-headed laddie
Who always takes care of the gurls
He keeps on the burden on Paddy
But takes off the duty on shawls".*

Mayo was an astute politician. He dealt with Indian princes and other potentates with openness and great tact. He successfully cultivated local rulers such as the Amir of Afghanistan who, on one occasion, sent him a somewhat impractical present - in view of the distance from Kabul to Calcutta- of a hundred camel loads of fruit. By securing such friendships Mayo effectively neutralised any threat to the Empire from Russia. Unlike many of his contemporaries he had little fear of Russia, having visited it as a young man. Now, as the ruler of millions of Moslems, he reckoned that he could, if he so wished, stir up

a “jihad” in Russia’s Central Asian Provinces. In 1870 he is quoted as saying; “I could make of Central Asia a hot plate for our friend the Bear to dance on”.

Perhaps the best story relating to Mayo however, relates to his funeral. In 1872, in a typically impetuous fashion, he decided to visit a penal settlement in the Andaman Islands, despite advice to the contrary. While there he was set upon and stabbed to death by a Pathan tribesman. Before leaving for India Mayo had specified that if anything befell him there, he was to be returned and buried in the graveyard in Johnstown. This left the colonial officials with a serious problem. How were they to get his body back from India without it decomposing on the long sea journey? The solution they hit upon was to have the body immersed, for the duration of the voyage, in a suitable nautical preservative, i.e. a barrel of rum. Accordingly, the noble Earl was shipped home to Ireland and buried with suitable pomp and ceremony.



The Assassination of Richard Southwell Bourke

Tradition has it that on the night of the funeral a local wag raised his glass in a local hostelry – probably the forerunner of the present Johnstown Inn – and proposed a toast to “the Pickled Earl of Mayo”. And since that day this is how the redoubtable Earl has been referred to in village lore!

ADESTE FIDELIS AND CLONGOWES WOOD COLLEGE

Liam Kenny

This article by Liam Kenny was first published in The Leinster Leader of December 13th 2007. Liam would like to thank Jim Rochfort of Kilcock for his assistance with its content.

The weeks before Christmas are associated with a seasonal fuss and rush. The increasing grasp of the consumerist build-up to the festive season is a source of bewilderment as each year brings an ever more ferocious onslaught of consumption. However, time can also be made for a more reflective approach to the season symbolised by that lovely word ‘advent’ or the sense of a new arrival. This more measured approach to Christmas finds a stirring echo in the hymns and carols which have been associated with the season through generations.

The origins of the familiar hymns are many and varied, some of relatively modern composition and others with unknown origins going back centuries in the Christian tradition. The remarkable feature of the Christmas carols is that despite great changes in the way we speak and communicate, their lyrics and melodies have remained constant, truly a rock of seasonal stability amidst the manufactured clamour and confusion. It may come as a surprise to learn that there is at least a hint of an Irish connection to the earliest renderings of one of the best loved hymns ‘Adeste Fidelis’ or ‘Come all ye Faithful’ which is sung in churches of all Christian denominations throughout the world. The connection has been highlighted by Kilcock historian, Jim Rochfort who in researching the story of carols and hymns came across an article in a learned church journal written in the early 1920s which indicated that the earliest script of the ‘Adeste Fidelis’ melody, dating to about 1745, was to be found in the museum of Clongowes Wood, the well-known Jesuit college near Clane in Co. Kildare. The account which appeared in the Irish Ecclesiastical Record was written

by one William Grattan Flood who, as Jim Rochfort points out, was an authority on church music history and wrote extensively on the topic in the early 1900s. Grattan Flood made a case for an Irish origin to *Adeste Fidelis* and used the evidence (available to him at the time of writing his article in the 1920s) of the musical script in Clongowes College as one of the assets to his argument. He wrote that there was at least a ‘floating theory’ that the *Adeste* was first heard in Dublin, in the Convent Chapel of the Dominican nuns in Channel Row, about the year 1748. Some time previously the nuns had been presented with a beautiful organ by Dame Mary Bellew and the gift may have been accompanied by a collection of musical scripts.

Whatever about the *Adeste*’s origins in manuscript the perfection of the printing technique facilitated its circulation to church communities in many parts. The first appearance in print of the *Adeste* melody, according to Grattan Flood, was in the earliest English volume of Catholic Church music published in London in 1766. Eight years later it was published in the first hymn book for American Catholics. The original was of course in Latin and it was not until 1789 that an English translation was printed. Ever since it has become one of the most universal Christmas hymns being sung in churches of all denominations in all continents.

The Irish connection to its origin remains an enigma. Unfortunately the 18th century melody script which Grattan Flood inspected at Clongowes in the 1920s is no longer to be found there and its whereabouts, like the origins of the words and music of the hymn, will most likely always remain a mystery. But Grattan Flood, as a leading church musicologist of his day made a strong case for an Irish echo to *Adeste*’s enduring musical cadences. He finishes his article with the declaration, ‘There is an unmistakable Irish flavour about the melody that cannot be considered accidental, and the oldest existing manuscript copy can be traced to Ireland. Anyhow, from 1746 to 1776 the hymn came into general use for the Christmas season and as so continued ever since’.

WICKLOW GAOL

Stan J. O'Reilly

The building of Wicklow Gaol was not only necessary but an urgent requirement for the county town. This was an active era for highwaymen, footpads, robbers, bandits, murderers, rapists, and sundry thieves. Lunatics, vagrants and prostitutes were also a danger to the stability of society in the county and a proper gaol was needed to incarcerate them all in. There had been a Gaol in the Abbey Grounds and in the dungeon of the King's Castle of Wicklow, known by locals as the 'Black' Castle due to the dark deeds carried out there. By the late 17th century the local gaol was falling to ruin and as insecure was no longer viable. The local gentry and businessmen, who were constant targets for countywide criminal actions by various nefarious types, organised and banded together to find a solution to the growing crime wave. They paid £5 each into a common fund and the building of a new gaol commenced.

Wicklow Gaol then established a centuries old record as a site with a long and brutal history of punishment, torture and execution. Overcrowding, rape, squalor, dirt, privation and disease were common threads to the early history of the building. Torture and cruelty such as branding, burning and washing out of convicts ceased in post reform times with prisoners now facing isolation, breaking rocks, lifting the weight and using the thread mill. They were also educated and taught trades. A prison infirmary was also added. Famous prisoners included United Irishmen leader Napper Tandy and rebel 1798 Captain William 'Billy' Byrne of Ballymanus. Erskine Childers, the author of 'The Riddle of the Sands,' father of a future Irish President and a national figure of The War of Independence and the Civil War, was held there, before his move to Dublin and execution in Beggars Bush Barracks, Dublin. The earliest prisoners included a party of shipwrecked French sailors. England was at war with France at the time and the sailors who survived the sinking were thrown in the cells. They cost two shillings and sixpence to keep in candles and straws. Fr. Owen McFee a 'Popish' priest was also a prisoner in

the cells before his transportation to the American colony in 1716. Lesser known inmates included George Manley who took his final walk to the Gallows in 1738. With the noose around his neck he declared to those present: 'Marlborough, Caesar and Alexander killed millions, and they are heroes, I am the murderer of one and must be hanged!' The travelling hangman wholeheartedly agreed. The hanging beam and 'trap door' can be seen on the upper level above the main door of the Gaol in the picture below.

Another lesser known villain who had established a reputation for himself as a desperate and hardened criminal was William



Peters. According to tradition his reputation was so bad that he had received the death sentence in six counties, which was carried out in every instance, including at Carlow, Wicklow and Kildare. He finally came unstuck for the second time in Co. Kildare, when he was convicted and sentenced to death for the seventh time, at Naas. His final date with a hangman was in 1787. His method was simple, he bribed the hangman in six instances, having the noose doctored, lined and stuffed. He then pretended to hang and was enough of a good actor to

play dead and make his escape afterwards. The Mangin brothers were a desperate and daring band. Three of them were apprehended before they could carry out the murder of William Fairbrother in December of 1764. They planned to escape and kill Fairbrother who was the man behind their capture and then continue their crime spree. They went to the Gallows instead. So too did another brother who was captured in March of 1765.

The fifth brother also captured in March of 1765 was transported. On December 11th 1792 two Highwaywomen were hanged from the Gallows at the front of Wicklow Gaol for the robbery of the Wicklow Mail. The best that they could hope for was that the travelling hangman was proficient and skilled enough to end their lives quickly. One of these women still haunts the ground floor of the gaol and the area to the back of the building. She is viewed minus her head.

Hanging days always drew a huge crowd into town for the entertainment. The area around the gaol was thronged with locals and visitors alike who could buy food and drink from the sellers on the street as they waited, musicians also plied their trade. The more well off could hire out an upstairs room across the street which had an excellent vantage point, with food and drink supplied.

There were a great number of escape attempts made during the long history of the Gaol but they were not always successful. Prisoners made their way to freedom over, under and through the walls and floor of Wicklow Gaol. In 1788 Walther Reed escaped from Wicklow Gaol but by July he had been recaptured and hanged within its confines. His accomplice in the murder of a Dr. Vincent Pandelon, Hugh Reed, no relation, was executed by hanging at Blackamore Hill, Wicklow. His body was then gibbeted, hung in chains inside an iron cage on a prominent road into town and left to decompose. The message was clear, engage in crime and this is how you will end up, learn from it. Two young boys who had robbed an orchard were taken from Wicklow Gaol to the gibbet site. They were warned as to the future consequences of a criminal lifestyle and were then fastened to the gibbet for the rest of the night. They were returned to the gaol the next day to serve the remainder of their sentence.

In the 1890s a young man was serving a sentence for theft and held in the cells of the gaol. He was let out to sweep the floors of the building and while doing so on the ground floor, he was told by the Warden to carry on. The Warden left the immediate

area. The young man noticed that he had forgotten his keys. He grabbed them, opened the front door of the gaol, walked to the front gate and let himself out. He was never recaptured. This was the only instance of an escapee not having to go through, over or under the confines of the building to freedom. The most famous escapee was Hugh 'Vesty' Byrne, a loyal follower and comrade of the noted 1798 leader Michael Dwyer. He escaped over the wall by climbing the ramparts which were constructed to defend the Gaol from rebel attack in the wake of the initial rebel victory in Wexford and the fleeing of the loyalist inhabitants, an event which became famous in nationalist folklore as 'the races of Gorey.' He had a reward of £50 placed on his head as a result of this and rejoined Dwyer in the Wicklow Mountains. Austin O'Toole, another 1798 rebel prisoner who hailed from Monaseed, Co. Wexford was a marked man who was hunted down and gaoled at the end of the rebellion. He escaped by lifting a flagstone in the ground floor of the gaol. He dropped down into the sewer system and crawled through over the decaying corpses of two prisoners who had previously tried the same method and failed. He stole a horse and rode north to safety. He did return to his native Monaseed, as a corpse, for burial in 1834.

During the War of Independence and the Civil War more escapes took place by political prisoners and by soldiers belonging to the Cheshire Regiment which were garrisoned there, who had been held in the cells on charges. The Lancashire Regiment had been garrisoned there previously. The political prisoners who escaped did so by going over and through the walls of the gaol, once with assistance from a sympathetic guard. There was also an instance of internment without trial, before that term was even coined, in the wake of the 1798 rebellion. James Kavanagh a rebel suspect who was held in custody but who could not be tried due to a lack of positive proof was moved between the Flannel Hall in Rathdrum and Wicklow Gaol. Whenever the Magistrates visited either location, Kavanagh was moved. This went on for several years and his health suffered badly. The only trial he ever received was a mock one which sentenced him to death.

The story of Wicklow Gaol would not be complete without bringing up the issue of transportation. This was a means by which troublesome individuals could be removed to one of the colonies. This aided the establishment of the colonies by having prisoners construct bridges, roads and infrastructure. Transportation also solved the problem of overcrowded gaols and an infliction of future crimes by vice and crime ridden convicts. Wicklow female prisoners who were sent out to



Wicklow Gaol Interior

grouping. There was a huge shortage of women in the colony and this was a practice by which the gender gap could be solved. Married women sent out could remarry in the colony. They could also bring children along with them but the family would be broken up and the children placed in an orphanage until the mother's sentence was served. Many of the male and

Australia were released to local gentry and authority figures as servants and maids and many then ended up as prostitutes on the streets, pimped out by the men whose custody they were released into. The Governor of the colony who put an end to this practice was Bligh, the man who gained worldwide fame as Captain of the ill fated mutiny ship, *Bounty*. Most of the females sent out to the penal colony of Tasmania from Wicklow Gaol were in the 16-40 age

female convicts continued with their lives of crime while others ended up doing far better and leading better lives in the colony than they would have at home.

In July of 2016 I travelled to Athgarvan, Co. Kildare to meet with and interview Australian native Kate Doherty Charles about her ancestor, a Wicklow Gaol transported convict, William Dempsey. He was sent out in 1829 having been convicted of horse stealing in 1828 at Wicklow. The Kildare native hailed from what is now the harbour area of Naas. He was a married man with the trades of ploughman and shearer when sent out on the convict ship 'Fergusson.' He served his sentence in the colony and worked hard afterwards, ending up with a large property in Victoria, 100kms from Melbourne. He ended up working for a Joseph Henden, a settler and adventurer who drove herds of cattle overland. William and his son-in-law were employed as drovers. William kept a keen eye out for virgin unsettled land during the cattle drives and found what he wanted with a plentiful supply of water. He then moved in as a squatter. Kate produced a map which clearly marked out 'Dempsey's land.' He sent for his wife and two daughters who joined him in the colony but he could never persuade his son John to do so. John's children had died back in Ireland. As Kate said 'He had beautiful land up on the Golden River Flats.' William wanted to pass this on to his son but it was not to be.

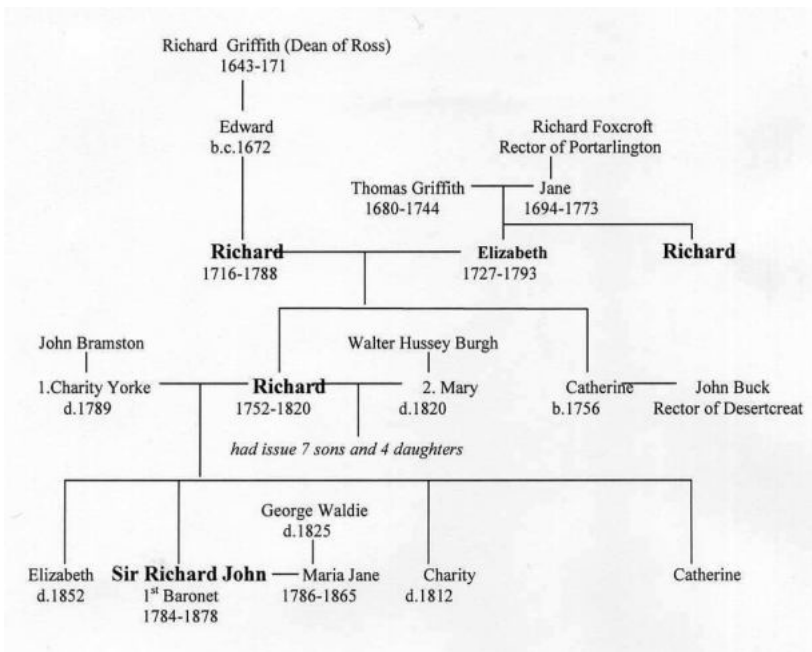
Famine times saw a rise in Transportation as people committed crimes just to get the three meals a day in Wicklow Gaol. Eleven men were transported from the gaol, despite each having a profession, in desperation they turned to highway robbery as a means of survival. Wicklow Gaol became a Bridewell, a place of incarceration for short stay prisoners before it became a military headquarters and gaol in the War of Independence and this continued during the Civil War. The insanitary conditions of the gaol were outlined by Jim Everett TD in Dail Eireann in 1923 and the gaol closed in 1924. Today Wicklow Gaol is a popular interpretive centre and tourist destination. I highly recommend a visit.

RICHARD GRIFFITH OF MILLICENT

Jim Heffernan

The Griffith Family

Confusion has often arisen as there were three generations of Richard Griffiths plus the fact that Elizabeth's maiden name was also Griffith and she had a brother Richard Griffith. A partial Griffith family tree is shown below.



Elizabeth's father, who had been actor manager of the Smock Alley Theatre died when she was 17, leaving her to support herself as an actress. She debuted in Smock Alley playing Juliet opposite Romeo played by an aging Thomas Sheridan. In 1746, aged 19, Elizabeth, who was living with her aunt in Abbey Street, met Richard Griffith, a gentleman farmer and libertine, who was living with an uncle in Maidenhill Co. Kilkenny. After unsuccessfully attempting for five years to persuade her to become his mistress, Richard married Elizabeth secretly (Elizabeth prudently had her friend Lady Margaret

Orrery, wife of John Boyle Earl of Cork and Orrery, as her witness). Initially the marriage was kept secret as Richard was afraid that it would affect a hoped for inheritance and the couple lived apart with Richard remaining in Kilkenny. Richard Griffith was born in his mother's aunt's house in Abbey Street Dublin on 10th June 1752.

Throughout their marriage the couple never had a settled home and Elizabeth was the principal breadwinner. Richard failed in an attempt to establish a linen industry in Kilkenny incurring heavy debts, he worked from time to time as an assistant to a cousin in Kilkenny and for a six month period had a sinecure as a customs officer in Carrickfergus. A year after Richard's birth Elizabeth moved to London to earn a living, joining the Covent Garden Company. She was forced to quit the stage in 1755 on becoming pregnant with a daughter Catherine. She subsequently became a successful writer and playwright. Although now largely forgotten she was famous in her day overshadowing her husband who was a less accomplished writer. While they were apart they corresponded frequently. In 1757 in dire financial circumstances they published their courtship letters under fictional names *A Series of Genuine Letters between Henry and Frances*.



Elizabeth Griffith

Richard and the Honourable East India Company

Richard appears to have spent much of his youth in London. In 1766 Elizabeth bought a house in Hyde Street Bloomsbury while her husband spent much of his time in Ireland. Richard attended Angelo's Fencing Academy which was frequented by members of the British Royal Family and fashionable young gentlemen where, besides fencing, they acquired riding skills and 'poise grace and manners'. Elizabeth, who appears to have

been a very charismatic woman, made a number of influential friends in London society and it was through some of these, in particular John Manship a prominent member of the Court of Directors of the British East India Company, she was able to get her son a job - it was a job that would set him up for life!

The British East India Company, formally 'The Honourable East India Company', was established by Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth I on 31 December 1600: it was granted the monopoly of trade with Asia and the Pacific. For the first century of its existence, competing with the Dutch and French East India Companies it focused on trade but gradually acquired and administered territory. The Company had its own army, with cavalry, artillery and infantry made up of native Indian soldiers with British officers which expanded and developed over the years from guard duties into a formidable



Sepoys of the East India Company's Infantry parading in 1804

military force. Company interests turned from trade to territory during the 18th century as the Mughal Empire in India declined in power between 1702 and 1720 filling the vacuum by piecemeal acquisition of territory while edging out the rival French East India Company: either ruling directly or using puppet rulers. The Company's navy consisted mainly of heavily armed merchant ships called East Indiamen but included some

warships. The East Indiamen were among the largest ships on the ocean in the 18th Century.

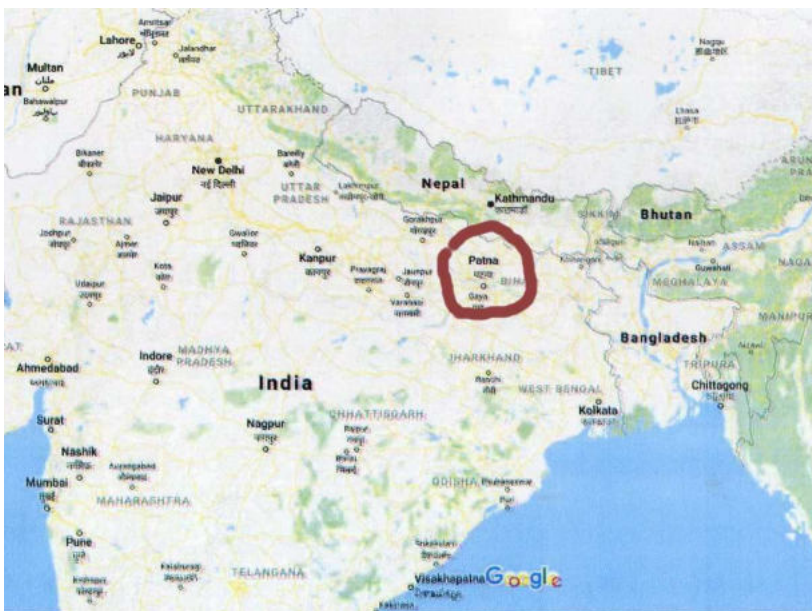


East Indiamen

By 1803, at the height of its rule in India, the British East India Company had a private army of about 260,000 men — twice the size of the British Army. The Company eventually came to rule large areas of India with its private armies, exercising military power and assuming administrative functions. Company rule in India effectively began in 1757, with the conquest of Bengal after the defeat of the Nawab of Bengal and his French allies at the battle of Plassey and lasted until 1858 by which time it ruled the whole continent. Following the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the Government of India Act 1858 led to the British Crown assuming direct control of the Indian subcontinent in the form of the new British Raj. Britain ruled directly and the British monarch assumed the title Empress of India and subsequently the Company faded away.

Richard joined the Company as a covenanted officer, essentially a member of its administrative 'civil service', in 1769 with the rank of 'writer' the lowest of the four classes into

which the covenanted officers of the East India Company were divided. He was appointed as a writer (clerk) at Patna in Bengal in 1870, taking up the post in 1771. In 1774 Griffith was appointed a Factor in Patna, this was essentially a merchant working on commission. It was at this point that Richard was able to accumulate his fortune as apart from his commission he had an additional, very lucrative source of income!



Map showing the location of Patna. In Richard's time Bengal consisted of modern Bangladesh and part of adjacent India

To rectify the large imbalance of trade with China the Company facilitated the import of opium into China. This was illegal in China so the Company distanced itself by licensing contractors who loaned Company money to farmers for seed and then bought the crop back. The opium was then sold in Calcutta with the condition that it must be exported to China. Richard was granted such a licence in a personal capacity. His profits from opium trading in his six years as a factor in Patna have been estimated at £60,000 to £ 90,000 (£10,000,000 to £15,000,000 at today's rates).

Richard returned to London in 1780 when appointed a Junior Merchant 'at home' and was promoted to Senior Merchant 'at home' in 1782

Richard Returns to Ireland

Richard returned to Ireland and he acquired Millicent House in County Kildare in 1782. Ultimately both of Richard's parents retired there and died there, Richard Senior in 1788 and Elizabeth in 1793.



Millicent House in 2000 prior to subsequent alterations

Richard was recognised as a successful agricultural improver with awards from the Dublin Society of which he was a member and he was active in promoting native commerce. Richard's town house was Number 8 Hume Street, Dublin where all of his children appear to have been born. Richard married twice, his first marriage to Charity Yorke Bramston daughter of John Bramston and Elizabeth Yorke of Oundle produced a son, Richard John and three daughters. Richard's second marriage to Mary Hussey Burgh, daughter of Walter Hussey Burgh of Donore County Kildare, a prominent orator and member of the Irish Parliament, produced seven sons and four daughters. Richard was Member of Parliament for Askeaton from 1783 to 1790 and was appointed Sheriff of

Kildare for the year 1788. The Corporation of Dublin made him a freeman of the City in recognition of his spirited defence of their rights and privileges in Parliament. He was liberal in his politics although he initially opposed extending the franchise to Catholics. He had been friendly with Theobald Wolfe Tone, Archibald Hamilton Rowan and Thomas Wogan Browne but as Irish Politics became radicalised in the 1790s he aligned himself with the pro-government grouping in Kildare and resigned from the Irish Whig Club.



Richard Griffith by George Romney

24th May 1798

Richard Griffith had been made commander of the Clane Yeoman Cavalry when it was formed in 1796.

At 3 o'clock in the morning of 24 May 1798 Richard Griffith was roused from his bed and informed that insurgents had attacked the garrison of 50 men of the Armagh Militia plus 20 men of the Clane Yeomanry in their billets in various houses in the village of Clane. The militia were able to fight their way out of their billets and form up to temporarily drive off the rebels with their superior fire power. Richard Griffith gathered the rest of the yeomanry from their homes and drove the insurgents from the village killing dozens and capturing six prisoners, five of whom were his own yeomen who had deserted. One of the prisoners was shot on the spot after a drumhead court martial, the others were hanged later in Naas.

At this point Griffith received news that, earlier that morning at 2 o'clock, insurgents had stormed the barracks in Prosperous massacring the garrison consisting of 24 Welsh Dragoons (aka Ancient British Fencibles) and 35 men of the City of Cork Militia under the hated Captain Swayne. Swayne had been particularly zealous in pursuing the Government's preemptive policy against the United Irishmen which involved measures such as flogging, pitch capping and hanging to obtain information. The previous Sunday Swayne had burst into the church during Mass and threatened the congregation: he subsequently burned fifteen houses and put twelve men in the guard house some of whom were tortured.

Shortly after Griffith had taken command in Clane insurgents from Prosperous attacked led by six men on horses wearing equipment taken from the Ancient Britons. Griffith was able to repel them but unable to secure his flank he withdrew to Coiseanna Hill and took up position there. They were subsequently attacked by large numbers of rebels but Griffith was again able to disperse them with his superior fire power.

At this stage Griffith's second-in command Dr John Esmonde who had been absent appeared and took his place. Griffith had been made aware that Esmonde had commanded the rebels at Prosperous as Esmonde had been betrayed by Phil Mite who had been with him at Prosperous. Because of the large number of insurgents remaining in the area Griffith withdrew to Naas. On arrival in Naas Griffith had Esmonde arrested. Esmonde was subsequently transferred to Dublin where he was hanged on Carlisle Bridge. The rebels withdrew to the Bog of Allen from where they conducted guerrilla warfare for several months. In the aftermath a large number of livestock were driven off from Millicent House and considerable damage was done to property.

Financial Problems

Richard became a director of the Grand Canal Company in 1784 and played a central role in its operations. He controlled the company in tandem with John Macartney and was chairman four times in 1789, 1795, 1800 and 1804-5 as well as investing much of his own money in company shares. The company accumulated considerable financial losses partly due to unrest in the aftermath of the 1798 rising but mainly as a result of engineering difficulties encountered when extending the canal west of Sallins and Griffith lost most of his personal fortune in company shares. Griffith, Macartney and their supporters were dismissed from the Board along with those other directors who supported him by an extraordinary meeting of shareholders in February 1810.

Having been forced to sell the heavily mortgaged Millicent House Richard appears to have spent a period in Sallins and moved to Leeson Street in 1812.

In 1813 Richard moved to England where he had obtained the post of Postmaster of Sheffield. Two years later, On 6th April 1815, he was appointed Post Office Packet Manager in Holyhead responsible for managing seven packets, these were 150 ton cutter-rigged sailing vessels. Diplomacy was needed in dealing with high officials such as the viceroy who were often

delayed by the weather and were hosted and entertained by the Packet Agent. In 1818 he was influential in transferring the Packet Station from Pigeon House to Howth. Sixteen years later it moved to Kingstown which had been developed to accommodate steam vessels.

Richard's will, made in Holyhead and dated 30th April 1819, made provision for his wife and the young family of his second marriage as best he could from his reduced resources. He referred affectionately to Walter Hussey Griffith the eldest son of his second marriage but made no provision for his first born son stating that Richard John had the means to provide for himself. This was very true as, apart from embarking upon an illustrious career, he had married an heiress!



St Cybi's Church Holyhead

Richard died on 27th June 1820 and is buried in St. Cybi's Churchyard Holyhead. In later years a Holyhead Town Council landscaping project destroyed a number of older graves including Richard's and only his grave's general location is now known. Richard's wife Mary returned to Dublin after his death, dying there three months later with her younger children subsequently being cared for by her relations.

THE HISTORY OF BARBERSTOWN CASTLE

This article is courtesy of Barberstown Castle Hotel

Not many towns possess a building that is really three buildings and where these three buildings, dating from different and seminal periods in Irish history, are still lived in and remain so. Such is the unique status of Barberstown Castle, located between Maynooth and Straffan. Formerly part of the Fitzgerald holdings, its history is as fascinating as its architecture and it is well worth a visit in its modern capacity as a luxury hotel and restaurant.



Barberstown Castle

As with Maynooth the area around Barberstown was settled early in history. This was confirmed by the discovery of a Bronze Age burial site in the locality, some of whose contents can be found in the National Museum. The area was one of the first to be converted to the new religion of Christianity. The neighbouring village of Staffan is named after St. Straffan, one of the early sixth century missionaries. St. Patrick also passed through the area, lighting one of his legendary fires on the

nearby hill of St. Patrick which can be seen from the top of the castle.

After the Norman Conquest Barberstown was amongst the lands granted to the Fitzgerald family. However, the property did not remain in their hands. By 1250 it had become the property of Robert de Copella, Lord of Straffan. It then passed into the hands of the Barby Family. The castle was built by Nicholas Barby towards the close of the thirteenth century. It consisted of a battlemented rectangular keep measuring twenty-six by twenty-three feet and fifty feet at its greatest height. The castle is divided into three floors. Interestingly, the rooms on the upper floors are larger than those on the ground level as their walls are somewhat thinner. This is probably due to the need for the walls at the bottom of the castle to be thicker for defence purposes.

The castle includes two small rectangular towers. The original crenulated loops for musketry are still visible in the northern tower. The southern tower also consists of three storeys: the ground floor of this tower is very small, three feet square, and there exists a curious gap in each floor just wide enough to permit a ladder giving access to the floor above or below. Another of the castle's defensive features is the walls of the keep. The walls slope inwards considerably from the outside base so as to prevent an enemy getting out of gunshot range by closing up to the building. The remains of the walls indicate that the fortress might once have been much larger.

It was a well-built fortress and was necessary to guard the inhabitants from the rebellious Ui Faelain, disinherited from their native soil by the newcomers. These were to burn the towns of Clane, Kerragh, Castlekelly and Barberstown in 1310. The lawlessness continued and in 1473 a Laurence Sutton of 'Barbyestown' complained to the courts that he had been robbed of a sword and cloak.

Some of the new owners went to extreme lengths to retain possession of the castle. Just how far some would go is

illustrated by the story of the body interred in the tower. The body's mysterious fate can be explained by reading the lease on the castle at the time, in which it was written that the lease would expire when he was buried underground (i.e. his death). The ending of a lease normally resulted in an increase in rent so after the man's death he was buried in the tower above the earth which ensured that the family continued to hold the lease to the castle.



The turrets, chimney and castellations are visible in this photo

During the period 1550-1600 a large stone dwelling was built onto the castle to form the centre of the present complex of buildings. This handsome building is one of the few houses in Ireland to have been occupied for over 400 years. The large brick chimney on the roof of the castle also dates from this period.

By the seventeenth century Barberstown was once again in the possession of the Fitzgeralds. In 1630 a William Sutton held the property. The Suttons and the Dillons were the most important families in the area at that time. During the wars of the Confederacy Barberstown remained remarkably quiet and avoided the disastrous fate of its sister castle in Maynooth, although some damage was caused to the south eastern corner by Crown forces in 1642. This may explain the decline in the letting value of the property from a high of £200 a year to £100 per annum by 1654. The population of Barberstown at this time was 36, the majority of whom were 'mere Irish', and it was bigger than Straffan.

During the wholesale confiscations of the Cromwelian period both the Suttons and the Dillons disappeared from Barberstown. These were replaced firstly by John Blackwell. A favourite of Cromwell's he had erected the scaffold on which Charles I was executed. He did not hold it long but passed it on to Lord Kingston. New kings meant new landlords and during the seventeenth century the game of musical chairs continued. In 1689 the second Lord Kingston had his property confiscated by Richard Talbot the Earl of Tyrconnell after the accession of James II in England. However the triumph of William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne stripped Talbot of all his lands and Barberstown fell into the somewhat less glamorous hands of the Commissioners of the Revenue, who let it out to a Roger Kelly for £102 yearly.

Barberstown Castle was purchased by Bartholomew Van Homreigh in 1703 for £1,013, the sixth owner in six years. The property of three hundred and thirty-five acres contained arable, meadow and pasture, one castle in repair with a large

stone house adjoining, together with eight 'cabins' and gardens. Van Homreigh had been mayor of Dublin in 1697. His greatest posthumous claim to fame lies in the fact that he was father to Vanessa, of whom Swift wrote with great passion.

In 1716 the property was sold to the Henry family. The Henrys remained in Straffan until 1826 although they leased out Barberstown Castle. However, like so many of the gentry of this time, improvident spending was to prove their downfall and in 1826 Barberstown was sold to Hugh Barton.

The Bartons had originally settled in Fermanagh during the Ulster Plantations. They retained their adventurousness and in the nineteenth century were closely associated with the French wine trade, They completed the last wing of the house in the 1830s resulting in the present day unique architectural status of Barberstown. Barton also repaired the old castle, crowning the edifice with turrets of brick covered by granite. Barton's stay was only temporary. He constructed the mansion, Straffan House, along the Liffey, today known as the Kildare Hotel and Country Club. By 1842 Barberstown was again leased, this time to Edward Smith, a gentleman farmer. It should be noted that the occupier found the residence rather large for his needs. The castle was subsequently leased by a Mr Littleboy, notable chiefly for his use of bullocks for ploughing. Subsequent owners included Sandham F Symes and the Huddlestons. By 1971 however it was too expensive to retain the buildings as a residence and Barberstown was sold to Mrs Norah Devlin who converted it to a hotel.

It was subsequently purchased in 1979 by possibly its most famous owner, Eric Clapton, who retained it until 1987. Since then this beautiful residence has been transformed from a 10 bedroom country house into a 55 bedroom four star castle hotel. The Geraldine tradition of generous hospitality continues to be extended to all who enter its ancient vaulted rooms and sixteenth century banqueting halls.

RMS LEINSTER: THE SHIP THAT IRELAND FORGOT.

Philip Lecane

On 10 October 1918, the Kingstown (now Dún Laoghaire) to Holyhead mail boat RMS Leinster was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine. Current research shows 565 people were lost in the sinking. It was the greatest ever loss of life in the Irish Sea and the highest death toll on an Irish-owned ship. More people were lost in the sinking than died in the 1916 Rising. Yet, most Irish people have never heard of the sinking.



RMS Leinster moored at Kingstown before the war

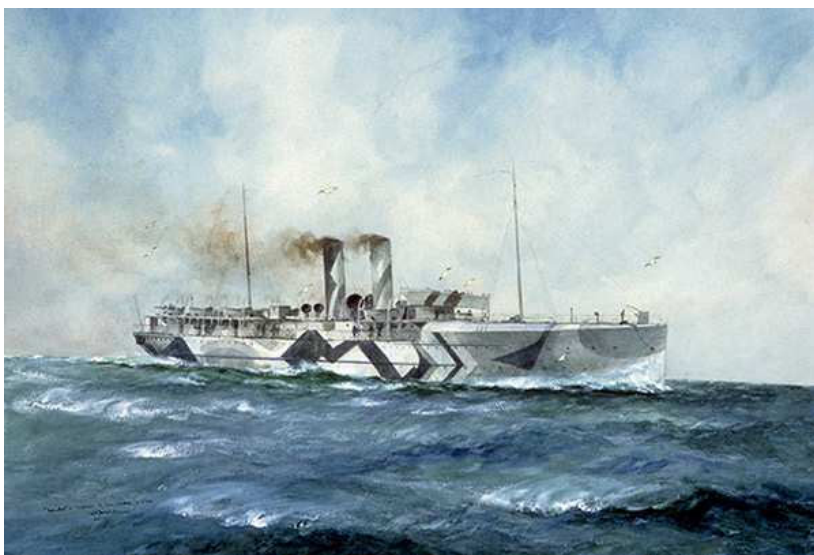
In the 1820s, Dubliner Charles Wye Williams established a shipping company named Charles Wye Williams & Company. The name was subsequently changed to the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company (CDSPCo). Operating ships between Dublin and Liverpool, the company's headquarters were at 15 Eden Quay, Dublin. As the nineteenth century approached the halfway mark, Holyhead, the British port which has the shortest Irish Sea route to Co. Dublin, was linked by rail to London. It was decided that mail to and from Ireland would be shipped through Holyhead and Kingstown. The CDSPCo secured the contract to carry the mail. This required that mail be sorted aboard the ships and railway lines be run onto the Carlisle Pier at Kingstown and the Admiralty Pier at Holyhead. This meant that mail could be carried by rail to and from the ships at both ports and passengers could speedily embark on, and disembark from trains at both ports. A penalty was imposed for every minute a sailing was late. To help meet the

terms of the contract, the CDSPCo had four paddle-steamers built. Named Connaught, Leinster, Munster, and Ulster, they were often referred to as the 'Provinces'. The ships used the prefix RMS, which stood for Royal Mail Steamer. In 1894, having obtained a further contract from the Post Office, the CDSPCo replaced the paddle-steamers with four identical twin-screw steamers, also named after the four provinces of Ireland.

Crew members of the 'Provinces', mostly came from Kingstown and Holyhead. Each ship had an onboard post office. Staffed by members of Dublin Post Office, it could facilitate 30 postal sorters and 250 bags of mail. With a speed of 24 knots, the 2640-ton vessels were, at the time of their launch, the fastest cross-channel steamers in the world. In their first year in service they made the crossing in an average of 2 hours 51 minutes. The usual routine was for two ships to be in operation on the route. A third ship would be on standby at Holyhead, ready to come into service immediately if required. The final ship would be undergoing overhaul or laid up. In order to meet the stringent conditions of the contact, regular overhauls were necessary.

The First World War saw Ireland, as part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, at war with Germany and its allies. Thousands of Irish men and women served in the British army, navy and air force and in the medical services of these organisations. They also served in the armed forces of Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada. From the start of the war, the Royal Navy blockaded the North Sea, Germany's ocean access to the outside world. With its navy bottled up in port, Germany faced defeat unless the blockade could be broken, or its army could achieve military victory. By late 1914, static trench warfare in France and Belgium resulted in stalemate. From the early days of the war German submarines avoided the British blockade by sailing beneath the ocean's surface and attacked enemy merchant shipping.

During the war the Provinces were painted in camouflage and a gun, manned by a Royal Naval gun-crew, was placed at the stern of each ship – a useless defence against submarine attack. The Admiralty requisitioned the RMS Connaught, taking possession of the ship on 21 April 1915. For almost two years, it was used to transport troops and supplies from Southampton to Le Havre. On 3 March 1917, it was torpedoed and sunk in the English Channel with the loss of three crewmen. Meanwhile, the remaining Provinces continued to operate on the Irish Sea throughout the war. They had a number of narrow escapes when attacked by German submarines.



The Leinster in wartime camouflage paint

Faced with protests from neutral America following the sinking of the RMS Lusitania in 1915, Germany suspended its unrestricted attacks on merchant shipping. In 1916, at the Battle of Jutland, the German navy failed to break the British blockade. In 1917, in a desperate attempt to win the war, Germany resumed unrestricted attacks on merchant shipping. While the German High Command realised this was likely to bring America into the war on the Allied side, they gambled on winning the war before American troops arrived in sufficient

numbers to break the deadlock of trench warfare. America declared war on Germany on 6 April 1917.

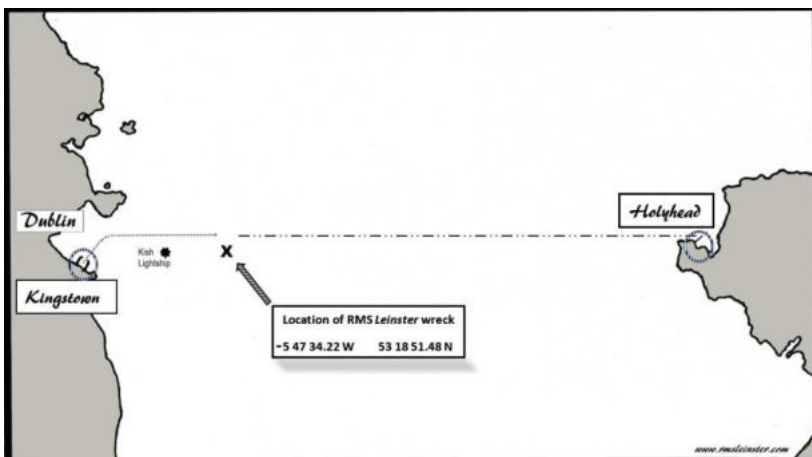
One of the anti-submarine measures adopted by the British and Americans was the sailing of their merchant ships in convoys, escorted by warships. Faced with the difficulty of attacking escorted convoys in the Atlantic, the Germans, in late 1917, began to focus their attacks on the waters of Great Britain and Ireland – including the Irish Sea – where local shipping tended not to be convoyed.

The German navy used three types of submarine in the First World War: the U-boat for longer voyages into the Atlantic, the UB-boat for operations around Britain and Ireland and the UC- boat for minelaying operations. In late September 1918, submarine UB-123 left its base on the north coast of Germany. Oberleutnantzur See Robert Ramm (27) was married to Gerda Emmmann. They had two children, Robert and Ursula. Ramm had orders to operate in the Irish Sea, an area in which neither he or his boat had previously operated. Including himself, Ramm's crew comprised of three officers and thirty-three men. He had served on submarines since April 1916, being given new submarine UB-123 as his first command on 6 April 1918. The submarine's first voyage had been plagued with mechanical difficulties and illness among the crew. As UB-123 did not survive its second voyage, it is not known how it made its way into the Irish Sea. It is believed that, having sailed north of Scotland, it sailed down the west coast of Ireland, along the south coast and then into the Irish Sea.

The RMS Leinster crossed from Holyhead on 9 October 1918 and docked at the Carlisle pier in Kingstown. A number of passengers boarded the ship, having booked cabins for the night, to avoid having to travel to the ship the following morning.

On the morning of 10 October 1918, the postal sorters who were on duty that day arrived by train from Dublin. As porters began to load mailbags from the train onto the ship, the sorters

boarded the RMS Leinster and went down to the mailroom, where they began to sort the post for Britain. High above them, passengers boarded the ship by means of two gangways to the main deck on the port (left) side of the ship. Some had travelled by train. Others had come by different modes of transport or had spent the previous night in Kingstown. The passengers included civilians from various parts of Ireland and Britain. But the majority of passengers that day were military personnel. Those returning from leave included Irish soldiers, sailors, air force ground staff and nurses, Australian, New Zealand and Canadian soldiers and nurses. Those going on leave included British soldiers and sailors and American sailors from the naval bases at Queenstown (now Cobh) and Bantry Bay, both in Co. Cork. At 8.50 a.m. the gangways were removed from the portside of the ship and the ropes cast off. The RMS Leinster moved away from Carlisle pier, sailed through Kingstown harbour and out to the open sea. The weather was fine, but the sea was rough following recent storms.



Map showing the position where the Leinster was attacked

Having left Holyhead at 7 a.m., the RMS Ulster reached the Kish Light Vessel at 9.42 a.m. Soon afterwards, she passed north of the outbound RMS Leinster. As the Provinces passed each other the radio operators gave a tap on the key to say “hello.” On board the RMS Leinster staff had just finished

serving breakfast in the dining room. Many passengers were in their cabins. On deck were the hardier souls and some of those who didn't have cabins. It was about 9.50 a.m. The RMS Ulster was still visible on the horizon. On the bridge Captain Birch gave the order to begin a zigzag course, the standard antisubmarine tactic. Soon afterwards, those on the bridge and some passengers on deck saw a torpedo approach the ship from the port (left) side. It missed the ship, passing across her bows. Soon afterwards another torpedo was seen approaching from the port side. Captain Birch gave orders for the ship to swing away, but the torpedo struck the ship on the port side, in the vicinity of the mailroom where 22 Postal Sorters were at work. Captain Birch ordered "All hands to the boat stations!" In the meantime, the ship, which was settling by the bow, had turned until it was facing back towards Kingstown. Another torpedo struck the ship on the starboard side in the vicinity of one of the boilers. A lifeboat full of people that was being lowered on that side of the ship was blown to pieces. There was a huge explosion, following which the ship quickly sank.



RMS Leinster sinking, 10 October 1918

In the hours following the sinking hundreds of people struggled to survive in lifeboats, on rafts, clinging to wreckage and swimming in the rough sea. Many of them lost the fight before rescue arrived. Among those lost were RMS Leinster's Captain William Birch (61), twenty one of the twenty two

postal sorters aboard, Josephine Carr (21) from Cork, the first ever member of the Women's Royal Naval Service (the Wrens) to be killed on active service, Catherine Gould (43) from Limerick and her children May (21), Alice (15), Michael John (8), Angela (5) and Olive (1). The rescued who needed medical care were brought to hospital in Kingstown or Dublin. The recovered dead were buried in Ireland, Wales, Scotland, England, Canada and the United States. The greatest number of RMS Leinster graves are in Grangegorman Military Cemetery, Dublin, where almost 150 are buried.



Postal sorter James Blake who died on the Leinster with his wife Catherine

While attempting to return to Germany, Robert Ramm and his entire crew died when UB-123 was lost in a minefield laid by

the British and Americans in the North Sea. Thirty-five young German lives were added to a death toll which brought grief to families in Ireland, Wales, England, Scotland, Guernsey, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States and Germany.

Aside from a number of British soldiers stationed in the Curragh – of whom space restrictions prevents coverage – there were a number of people with Co. Kildare associations aboard the RMS Leinster.

Edward Gibbs from Hertfordshire married Nurse Bridget Cluxton from Calverstown, Co. Kildare in Lancashire in 1913. They had at least three children. They subsequently moved to Calverstown. A private in the Labour Corps, Gibbs survived the sinking. The family later moved to Dublin, where Gibbs worked in Guinness. He died in 1951 and is buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery.

Rev. Father James Hoey survived the sinking. Born on 6 April 1867 in Moone, he was the son of Sarah (née Harrington) and Edward Hoey. He served in England before and after the sinking.

Patrick Horan was a Third Steward on the ship. The son of Mary (née Maher, from Bishopshill near Ballymore Eustace) and Martin Horan, a coachman from Portarlinton, he was born on 28 March 1878 at Barrettstown. He worked in Dublin as a General Domestic, a waiter in the Royal Yacht Club, Kingstown and a waiter in the Salthill Hotel, Monkstown. In 1903, he married Anna Donnellan from Co. Meath. They had at least three children. Patrick survived the sinking. He died in 1946. A newspaper described him as “late employee Royal Marine Hotel Dun Laoghaire.”

Major Frank Hurndall (35), 20th Hussars was travelling with his son John (5). Awarded a Military Cross for bravery, Birkenhead born Frank was an accomplished polo player who probably met his wife Madeline when his regiment was

stationed in Ireland. Her father Brigadier-General Francis Waldron of Melitta Lodge, Kildare was very involved in the Irish racing world. John had been born at Melitta Lodge. The



Major Frank Hurndall

Hurndalls appear to have been returning from a visit to Madeline's family. As she was ill with flu, Madeline was unable to make the return and remained in Kildare. After the sinking, Frank clung to the side of a raft on which he had placed John. In the rough sea, Frank lost consciousness and floated away from the raft. He was picked up by a destroyer and brought to St Michael's Hospital in Kingstown, where he was declared dead by a doctor. But Sister Bernadette, Superior in the hospital, spent three hours rubbing him with alcohol, following which he opened his eyes. He credited her with saving his life. Meanwhile his son, John had also been rescued

and was taken to a nursing home in Dublin where an aunt found him three days later and took him home. Madeline and Frank Hurndall's son Francis was born in 1923. Their son John was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross while serving with the RAF in WW2. Madeline and Frank died in Dorset, she in 1966 and he in 1968.



Thomas Regan was a jockey in later life

Co. Cork born Trooper Thomas Regan was batman to Major Frank Hurndall MC. The 1901 census recorded Regan's family as living in Kildare town, with his father's occupation given as stable boy. Thomas survived the sinking and later became a National Hunt jockey.

James Hanbury MacManus was lost in the sinking. His body was not recovered. A Co. Longford born manufacturer of pharmaceutical products, he lived in Dublin with his Co.

Kildare born wife, Susan E. Souter, and family. The couple had married in New York in 1890. Susan died in Dublin in 1943.

In Birkenhead in 1884, School Governess Fanny McCalman (born in Cheshire in 1860) married Frederick Wookey (born in Somerset in 1853). Wookey had bought the Salmon Leap Mills in Leixlip in 1870s and set up a Water Flock Manufacturing business. Fanny and Frederick lived at Weston Lodge. They had four children, of whom one died at the age of 4 ½ months. Their son Second Lieutenant Frederick Wookey, 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment, was killed in action in 1915. Frederick Senior (67) died in Leixlip in July 1918. Fanny sold the mills. On her way to live in England, she was lost in the sinking. Her body was recovered and buried in Leixlip.



The Anchor of RMS Leinster as a memorial in Dun Laoghaire

If you have further information on or would like to know more about any of the Co. Kildare people mentioned in this article, please email me at rmsleinster@gmail.com.

Philip Lecane's book 'Torpedoed! The R.M.S. Leinster Disaster', published in 2005 by Periscope Publishing Ltd. gives a comprehensive account of the sinking and has extensive lists of those whose lives were lost.

A LANDSCAPE FOR MANUFACTURING BRICKS - ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE SALLINS BYPASS

Noel Dunne, TH Archaeologist

Archaeological investigations in 2016 and 2017 in advance of construction of the Sallins Bypass yielded significant evidence of a brick manufacturing industry in the floodplain of the River Liffey. Three brickfields are depicted on the Ordnance Survey first edition 6 inch mapping (1839) on the banks of the River Liffey to the west of Sallins village. Here, the river incorporates a large meander, with the brickfields located on the western side of the river, within the loop created by the meander. Two are located on the NW river bank in Barrettstown townland (Brickfields 1 and 2), with the third located on the northern river bank in Waterstown townland (Brickfield 3). The existence of the brickfields would have been determined by a number of factors. The silty alluvial soils of the river flood plain supplied the main component for the manufacture of brick. The relatively flat adjacent terrain provided ideal spreading ground for laying out the moulded wet brick to air dry, prior to firing in the brick kilns. The open countryside was a suitable location for the brick kilns, given their inherent fire risk and the serious amount of pollution that they generated. The bricks may have been initially transported by road or by river, but the construction of the Grand Canal in the vicinity provided a more efficient and cheaper form of transport for this bulky, heavy product.

The brickfields were accessed via a road that extended to the NNW from the Osberstown road (L2006). Noble and Keenan's map of Kildare, dating to 1752, shows this road extending as far as Landenstown House, terminating with the tree-lined avenue to that house and its attendant demesne lands. This road crossed the River Liffey at an established fording point, marked 'Ford' on the Ordnance Survey first edition 6 inch mapping. Brickfield 3 was located immediately north of this fording point.



Figure 1: Extract from the Ordnance Survey first edition 6 inch map (1839). The route of the new Sallins Bypass is depicted by the red outline curving north–south, with the new Sallins Link Road extending to the east (IAC Ltd)

The construction of the Grand Canal and the Leinster Aqueduct in 1783 resulted in the severance of public access along this route to the NW of the canal. Interestingly, Lieutenant

Alexander Taylor's Map of the County Kildare published in the same year, depicts a bridge over the Grand Canal maintaining the connectivity of the road. However, this bridge was probably only a temporary structure at the time to facilitate canal construction and was subsequently removed. The portion of the road between the Grand Canal and the fording point of the River Liffey became known as the 'Green Road'. The Ordnance Survey first edition mapping depicts this stretch of road as tree-lined.

The severance created by the construction of the Grand Canal reduced the capacity of the road to an internal farm road, but importantly it also connected the three brickfields to the northern tow-path of the Grand Canal, via the fording point on the River Liffey. Following 1783, access to Naas and Sallins from the brickfields would have been via the northern tow-path and the canal into Sallins. It is likely that the Grand Canal played a major part in the onward shipping of brick from the brickfields by barge.

The construction of the Grand Canal also severed access to Landenstown House via this route. The Ordnance Survey first edition mapping of 1839 depicts the road turning at a right angle in Barrettstown townland and extending to the ENE to Brickfields 1 and 2. The road forms the western and southern sides of Brickfield 2, before terminating at the southern tip of Brickfield 1 on the NW bank of the River Liffey. The eastern portion of the road in the vicinity of the brickfields is depicted on the OS mapping with dashed parallel lines, suggested that it is likely to have been an undefined trackway extending across the land in this area.

Brickfields 1 and 2 are located adjacent to each other in Barrettstown townland, on land that is included in the Griffith's Valuation of 1848–1864 as being occupied by Mary McDonnell, leased from John Stott; including house, offices and lands. The total annual rateable valuation is relatively high at £80.10.00, with the valuation of the lands listed at £70.0.00 for 76 acres, possibly due to the presence of the brickfields and

associated industry. This is in contrast to other valuations in the same townland, such as £90 for 125 acres and £5 for 11 acres.

Brickfield 3 was located in Waterstown townland on the northern bank of the River Liffey, immediately north of the fording point and NE of the road. The land to the NE of the road, incorporating this brickfield, is included on the Griffith's Valuation as being occupied by Thomas O'Gorman, leased from Catherine Curran; incorporating house, offices and land. A dwelling and land on the opposite side of the road was occupied by John Doyle, leased from the Repts of Bryan Molloy; incorporating house, offices and land.

The houses occupied by Mary Mc Donnell and John Doyle are now in ruins, but are depicted on the Ordnance Survey first edition mapping as significant dwellings; with landscaped demesnes, orchards and tree-lined avenues and roadway. Further research is required to establish the owners of the brickworks and the relationship with the owners and leaseholders of the lands.

Excavation evidence:

The 'Green Road': Part of the 'Green Road' was impacted by the route of the Sallins Bypass and, consequently, this portion was the subject of advance archaeological excavation (Figure 1). While the road is now mainly visible as a cropmark or slight linear platform crossing the terrain, excavation showed that it was formerly a substantial feature, flanked on either side by a large, deep ditch (Plate 1). The road consisted of a linear platform aligned NW–SE, the surface of which was 5.25–6.0m wide. The flanking ditch on the NE side measured 2.1–2.6m wide and 0.95–1.3m deep, while that on the SW side measured 3.15–3.5m wide and 1.0–1.15m deep.

Pottery and other artefacts from the excavation indicate that the road is post-medieval in date, with no evidence of greater antiquity. An earlier origin was always a possibility, as the road leads to an established fording point of the River Liffey. The road surfacing was formed by a number of construction layers,

indicating on-going maintenance and repairs. The latter included a layer of fine sand and limestone, possibly a blinding layer to infill cracks, gaps and pot-holes. The basal layers consisted of gravel, pebbles and cobbles, as well as some fragments of red brick. The upper layers had similar composition, but contained more sand. Wheel ruts were present in the basal layers, presumably formed by carts and carriages travelling to and from Landenstown House and other dwellings, and also by carts transporting brick from the brickfields as far as the Grand Canal for onward shipment by barge, or by road to the settlements of Sallins and Naas. The spacing of the ruts suggests a cart and carriage width of up to 1.95m. Artefacts from the ditch fills suggest a relatively modern date for the infilling of the ditches, including a land drainage pipe inserted in the base of the ditch on the SW side.

Brickfield road:

The line of the Sallins Bypass extended between the locations of the three brickfields previously discussed, with Brickfields 1 and 2 located to the east and Brickfield 3 to the west. However, the line of the Bypass did impact with the previously mentioned roadway that accessed Brickfields 1 and 2 from the west (Figure 1). The route of the Bypass intersected a short distance to the west of Brickfield 2. As previously mentioned, the road in this area is depicted on the Ordnance Survey first edition mapping with dashed lines, suggested that is likely to have been an undefined trackway extending across the land. Further to the W and SW, the road is depicted with solid lines, indicating that here it was probably defined by flanking boundaries – by earthen banks, ditches or walls, or combinations of these boundary types.

Initial test-excavation of the trackway demonstrated that it had a metallised surface beneath the present top-sod. However, the metallised surface was not gravel or limestone as might have been expected; rather, it was red in colour from having been constructed with brick fragments. Subsequent excavation showed that the roadway consisted of two layers, underneath which were deep ruts in the plough-soil that had been infilled

with brick fragments (Plate 2). The trackway must have initially extended across the existing field surface. Heavily laden carts transporting brick from the brickfields were obviously rutting deeply into the ground, making travel and transport extremely difficult. These ruts were generally 25–30cms wide, but could be up to 65cms wide and were up to 30cms deep. The spacing of the ruts suggests a cart width of up to 1.9m.

It was necessary for the operators of the brickworks to repair these deep ruts and then lay a proper metallised road surface. The repair was done with waste material from the brick kilns; including ‘green’ or poorly-fired brick, broken brick and brick fragments, vitreous material, bloom, slag, ash, charcoal and brick dust or blinding. There is likely to have been a high attrition rate with the brick firings in ‘clamp’ kilns, so the operators undoubtedly had an abundant supply of waste material for ameliorative works. Test-excavations in numerous areas along the Sallins Bypass showed that this material was also being used at the time for land reclamation, building up ground levels and improving land surfaces and drainage, particularly in marshy and wet areas.

When the ruts were repaired, a proper metallised road was then constructed, comprising of two layers. The bottom layer consisted of tightly-compacted gravel, 2.3–3.7m wide and 15–20cms deep, which would have also helped to improve road drainage. Over this gravel, the road surface proper was laid, again consisting of waste matter from the brick kilns, similar to the material used to repair the wheel ruts. The road surface had a similar width and depth (20cms) as the underlying gravel layer. This surface was also tightly compacted and provided a much improved road for the heavily-laden carts. Artefacts from the excavation included 18/19th century pottery, portions of clay pipes, a copper alloy coin and iron nails. The latter could have been dislodged from carts travelling along the road.

Apart from this roadway and the evidence of the use of waste brick material in road construction and land reclamation, no

direct evidence for the manufacture of brick was recovered within the loop of the River Liffey, in the area of the three identified brickfields.

‘Clamp’ kiln:

However, one brick kiln was discovered outside this area in the course of the assessment and excavation works. This was at the very northern end of the scheme, immediately north of Sallins village and west of the Clane road, in Castlesize townland (Figure 1). Geophysical survey yielded a magnetometer anomaly, which was initially assessed as a possible structure with associated industrial activity. The anomaly formed a rectangular area, measuring 20.5m NNW–SSE by 13m ENE–WSW. Testing and subsequent excavation identified this site as the footprint of a clamp-type brick kiln. Approximately two-thirds of the site was located within the roadtake of the scheme and was excavated. However, the geophysical survey showed the full extent of the kiln, including its SSE end located outside the development.

Archaeological excavation revealed evidence of a large, post-medieval clamp kiln, mainly consisting of a rectangular area of *in situ* oxidation and reddening of the natural subsoil, arising from the intense firing of the kiln (Plate 3). This burning extended to depth of over 30cms and is testament to the high temperatures achieved in the firing. The remains incorporated a series of brick debris layers, interspersed with other spreads of mottled orange and black burnt clays. The linear nature of some of the spreads is likely to indicate fire channels or flues and lines of stacked bricks, or ‘benches’. A line of fused brick probably represents the partial survival of one ‘bench’. This linear pattern is also evident in the interpretative plot of the magnetometer anomalies. Charred seeds recovered in the course of the excavation may have originated from mud used to seal the clamp prior to firing. No rebate in the subsoil was present, showing that the clamp was stacked on the original ground surface for firing.

Test-excavation approximately 20m NE of the kiln uncovered a number of gravel extraction pits, over an area measuring up to 25 x 17m and up to 1.8m deep. Given the proximity to the kiln, the pits are likely to be associated with brick manufacture and may have been dug to supply a component soil for the bricks. This extraction was also picked up by the geophysical survey, but interestingly through resistivity survey, rather than through magnetometer.

A large, oval, gravel-extraction area was uncovered in Osberstown townland, between the River Liffey and the Grand Canal, and to the NE of the 'Green Road'. This was originally identified by the magnetometer survey and interpreted as possible gravel extraction and by the resistivity survey as possible structures. The area measured 70 x 20m and consisted of a large gravel extraction hollow, surrounded by upcast. The extraction occurred to a depth of up to 1.05m below the present base of the hollow. Locally-made brick was recovered from the base of the excavation and it is likely that this extraction also relates to the supply of a component soil for brick manufacture.

One rural two-storey building located immediately north of the Grand Canal and SW of the 'Green Road' in Osberstown townland is unusual in that it is largely constructed with locally made brick. The building is aligned NE/SW and complements the alignment of neighbouring field boundaries and the 'Green Road'. This alignment pre-dates the layout of the Grand Canal and Leinster Aqueduct, hence is pre-1783 in date and indicates that the manufacture of brick in the area also pre-dates AD 1783. This structure is worthy of further research and may well be associated with the local brick industry, whether for accommodation, offices or administration.

Clamp kilns and brick manufacture:

Handmade bricks were traditionally fired in 'clamp' kilns in Ireland from the seventeenth century and this kiln type was almost universal on Irish brickfields in the mid-nineteenth century (Rynne 2006, 165–172). The bricks formed in wooden moulds and fired in clamp kilns tended to be poorly fired and

variable in both size and colour. Ultimately, these were competing with commercially made brick, which were more uniform and consistent and were often much cheaper. By 1850, more permanent kiln structures were being built in Ireland and by the 1880s machine made bricks were being manufactured throughout the country; such as Athy brick, which was being commercially manufactured from 1893.

Brick ‘clay’ was sourced locally through clay extraction pits in the vicinity of brickfields, such as those referred to previously on the banks of the River Liffey. The clay was excavated in the autumn and left exposed to weather naturally over the winter months. Rain, snow and frost broke down the clay, washing out unwelcome natural salts. In spring, the weathered clay was worked to the right consistency for moulding by the brick-makers using their bare feet, a process called tempering. This laborious process was later replaced by mechanical means using a pug mill.

The manufacture of bricks was seasonal work, generally undertaken between April and September. The processed mixture was first shaped by a hand-moulder in wooden moulds. These green (unfired) moulded bricks were transported to the drying ground, where they were initially laid out flat and turned over frequently. Later they were stacked loosely in rows and left to dry and harden for several weeks. Once fully dry, the bricks were fired. The earliest method of firing was in temporary clamps, consisting of rows and layers of green brick – the unfired bricks formed their own kiln. The bricks were carefully arranged on a prepared base of parallel fire channels formed with previously fired bricks (Lynch et al. 2009). The channels and spaces between the bricks were packed with fuel and the entire structure was sealed with clay before being fired. Brushwood, firewood, turf, coal and culm were used as fuel. The firing took between several days and several weeks depending on the size of the clamp, after which the whole structure was left to cool naturally, which could take a further week or more. The kiln was then dismantled and the bricks stacked for onward transport and sale. Bricks varied in quality,

depending on their position in the clamp and were graded for sale and use. As previously mentioned, there was a high attrition rate with firing in clamp kilns and the process produced a considerable amount of waste.

Post-excavation analysis:

Specialist analysis of the excavation artefacts, samples and archive is on-going and will incorporate additional documentary research into the local brick industry in the Sallins area.

References:

Lynch, G, Roundtree, S & Shaffrey Associates Architectures 2009 *Bricks: a guide to the repair of historic brickwork*. Stationery Office, Dublin.

Rynne, C 2006 *Industrial Ireland 1750–1930: an archaeology*. Collins Press, Cork.

Plate 1: The ‘Green Road’ in the course of excavation, Osberstown townland.



Plate 2: The brickfield road in the course of excavation, Barrettstown townland. Note the deep ruts filled with waste brick under the road surface.



Plate 3: Rectangular footprint of the clamp kiln, Castlesize townland.



MONASTERBOICE AND MUIREDACH'S HIGH CROSS.

Brendan Cullen

Monasterboice was founded by St. Buithe who died in 521. The monastery appears to have ceased to function in the year 1122. The first reference to Monasterboice in the annals was recorded in 759 nearly 250 years after the death of its founder. However, there is evidence that Monasterboice was a famous seat of learning and had a well stocked library as the following entry in the “Annals of the Four Masters” for the year 1097 indicates: “The Round Tower of Monasterboice was burned and with it its books and numerous treasures”. What these books and treasures were is hard to say but we can assume that Monasterboice possessed decorated manuscripts and exquisite sacred vessels similar to those of other monastic establishments.



Monasterboice

It appears that Monasterboice was never attacked by the Vikings, despite the fact that there was a major Viking settlement in nearby Annagasson. Therefore, it is strange to find a Round Tower at Monasterboice because it has always

been assumed that Round Towers were erected as a defence against Viking raids. All the evidence points to the fact that the Vikings here lived in peace and may have lived either close to or even within the monastic enclosure. This may explain this reference in the “Annals of the Four Masters” for the year 968, “Domhnaill, the High King of Ireland, plundered Monasterboice against the foreigners and burned 300 of them in one house”. Presumably, the Round Tower was used as a defence against attacks by Irish groups as well.



The round tower with Muiredach's cross in the foreground

Today the principal remains at Monasterboice include two small stone churches, a Round Tower, a sundial, two grave slabs and three High Crosses. More than likely there were other buildings, all made of wood, because there is evidence that the monastery extended well beyond the site of the present

graveyard. Immediately south of the present site in the adjacent field there is a slight crescent-shaped rise in the ground. It's possible that this is the remains of an earthen bank and ditch which enclosed the original monastery. This suggests that the original enclosure was oval in plan and measured nearly 600 feet from east to west, covering an area of about 20 acres. The crowning glory of Monasterboice is undoubtedly its two High Crosses viz. Muiredach's Cross, also called the South Cross, and the tall West Cross.

MUIREDACH'S HIGH CROSS

Muiredach's Cross is very well preserved, is about 5.5m (18feet) high and consists of three separate blocks of sandstone: a pyramidal base; a shaft and wheeled head cut from one block and a separate house cap. The cross is named and dated from the inscription which occurs on the lowest part of the west face of the shaft. The scripture scenes are normally read upwards from the bottom.

WEST FACE

Base: This is severely weathered and it is difficult to interpret.

Shaft: On the base of the shaft are two cats sculptured in high relief. On the background above and between them is the inscription, "Pray for Muiredach who caused this cross to be erected". We know that the Abbot Muiredach Mac Domhnaill ruled Monasterboice from 890 to 923 when his death is recorded. So the cross was erected before 923 and is therefore dated to the early 10th century.

Panel 1. Ecce Homo or the Arrest of Christ.

Christ stands in the centre of the panel, his arms held by two soldiers both of whom are wielding what look like Viking swords. He is dressed in a long alb-like garment plus a long cloak. Note that the cloak is fastened at the top by a brooch, not unlike the Tara Brooch. This panel gives us a good idea how people dressed in the late 9th and early 10th centuries.



The West Face

Panel 2. Doubting Thomas.

Christ is standing in the centre between two other figures. On the left Thomas is putting his finger into Christ's wounded side. A person holding a book is on the right. This is probably

St. John who was the only Evangelist to record this incident. Note that Thomas is putting his finger into Christ's right side but in the Crucifixion scene on the head of the cross Longinus, the spear bearer is on the right side of the cross and thus pierces Christ's left side.

Panel 3. Traditio Evangelii.

Christ is seated in the centre between Peter and Paul. To Peter who is on the left He gives the keys of the Kingdom and to Paul He gives the Book of the New Law.

Head of the Cross.

Beneath and above the crucified Christ are four spiral bosses joined by interwoven serpents. At each side a group of twelve spiral bosses separates the panels on the arms from the central figure of Christ. Just below the house-cap are two swans with their heads entwined.

Crucifixion Scene.

Christ is depicted as a young clean-shaven man with his arms outstretched. He has short hair, is fully alive and shows no sign of suffering. Two angels support His head. His hands are nailed and His ankles are bound with a rope. The spear bearer (Longinus) on the right pierces Christ's left side. On the left the soldier (Stephaton) holds up a cup on a long stick instead of a sponge. Between the soldiers and Christ are two human heads. These represent the two thieves who were crucified with Christ. Under His feet there is a bird, possibly a phoenix, a symbolic allusion to Christ rising from the dead. Between the spiral bosses and each soldier are two small figures: the one on the right kneeling; the one on the left squatting. These are difficult to interpret.

Left Arm

A group of six soldiers, some armed, on duty at the Crucifixion.

Right Arm

Maybe a representation of the Resurrection. In the foreground are two guards each kneeling on one knee. Behind them is the opening to the tomb and in the top of the panel are three figures.

House Cap

The central figure is holding his arms in the air. The two figures at each side support his arms. The common interpretation of this scene is Moses on the Mount between Aaron and Hur. This refers to the Israelite victory over the Amalekites from the Book of Exodus. Some experts interpret this panel as the Ascension of Christ.

EAST FACE

Base: It is very weathered and is difficult to interpret.

Shaft: On the lowest part of the shaft a lion with its cub stand out in high relief.

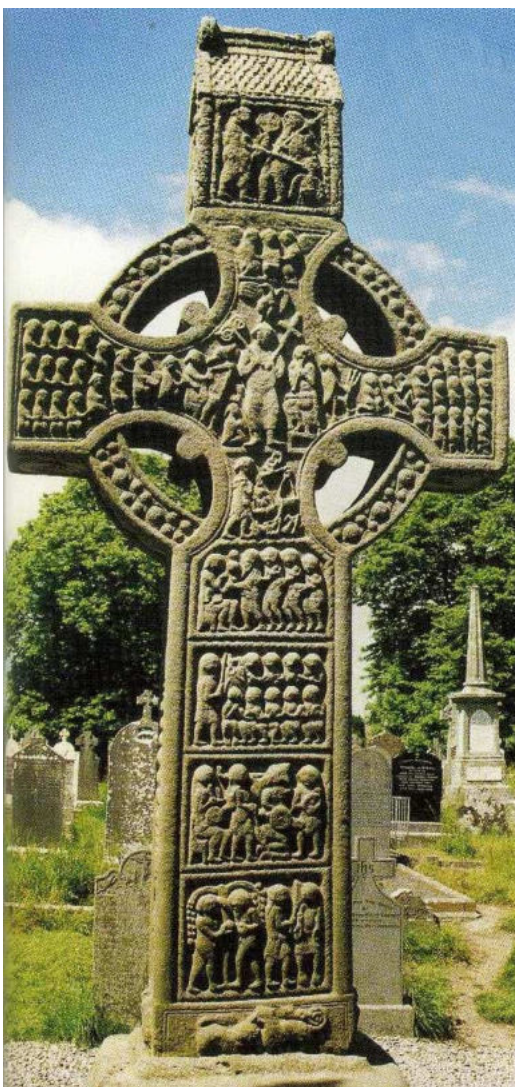
Panel 1: Adam and Eve; Cain and Abel

On the left Adam and Eve stand under the Tree of Knowledge. The serpent is entwined around the trunk and whispers in Eve's ear. Eve on the extreme left is offering an apple to Adam. Both are conscious of their nakedness and are trying to cover it up with one hand. This would indicate that the original sin has been committed.

On the right is the consequence of original sin i.e. Cain killing Abel. Cain is depicted rather menacingly with long hair and a long beard. Abel on the other hand appears young, beardless, defenceless; his hands bound by a rope, palms turned outward as if pleading for mercy. Cain wields a type of club with which he strikes Abel.

Panel 2: David and Goliath.

Reading from left to right: King Saul seated is armed with a sword and shield; in the centre is David, an open sling hanging from one hand; next Goliath with helmet and shield sinks to the ground. Standing beside him is his armour bearer. This panel refers to the story of David killing Goliath by flinging a stone at the giant from his sling.



The East Face

Panel 3: Moses strikes the rock

On the left the bearded figure of Moses is standing with a stick in his hand. Near his head the water is gushing from the rock. In front of him are the children of Israel sitting in two rows on the ground and holding drinking horns.

Panel 4: The adoration of the Magi

On the left Mary is seated on a chair, holding the infant Jesus. In the centre is Joseph who is bearded and then the three wise men who have followed the star (shown just above the Child's head) to meet Jesus. Rather strangely they are depicted without their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

EAST FACE HEAD

The Last Judgment

In the centre is Christ holding in His left hand a small cross and in His right a flowering rod. Above His head is a large bird possibly a phoenix which is a symbol of His resurrection. Immediately above the phoenix is a group of three small figures. The central figure is perhaps the enthroned Christ supported by two angels. To Christ's left is the Archangel Gabriel sounding the trumpet for the dead to rise. To his right a small kneeling figure holds an open book from which on the last day the deeds of men shall be read. Below Christ are the scales of justice. In one pan a tiny figure is protected by St. Michael the Archangel against the attacks of Satan. Satan is depicted as a demon trying to pull the balance down against the sinner. St. Michael drives his spear into the demon who is writhing in pain on the ground.

Left Arm

The blessed are gathered on Christ's right hand. A choir of singers and musicians are led by David playing the harp. The Dove of the Holy Spirit is standing on top of the harp. The blessed are looking towards Christ.

Right Arm

On Christ's left hand are the damned who are being driven away from Christ to hell by Satan wielding a trident. An assistant devil is helping by kicking the sinners in front of him. Between Satan and his assistant is a small kneeling figure which is difficult to interpret.

House Cap

On the left a figure holding a fan-shaped cross is thrusting at a bird-like creature (a devil?) with a crook-headed staff. On the right is a bearded man holding a spear. It is difficult to know what this panel means.



The base of the west face shaft showing the Arrest of Christ, below is the inscription mentioning Muiredach

RICHARD GRATTAN (1790-1886) OF DRUMMIN HOUSE, CARBURY

Ciarán Reilly

In 1841 George Howard, or Lord Morpeth as he was known, was defeated in the general election, which consequently led to his departure as Chief Secretary of Ireland. As Chief Secretary of Ireland from 1835-41, Morpeth was considered a reforming Whig introducing reform to tithes, poor law and municipal government. In a show of appreciation for his efforts an address, or testimonial roll, was presented to Lord Morpeth at the Royal Exchange, Dublin on 14 September 1841. A gala dinner followed which was attended by the leading gentry of the country including Ireland's premier peer, Augustus Frederick FitzGerald, third duke of Leinster of Carton House, Maynooth. FitzGerald's was amongst the first signatures on the testimonial which included some of the leading figures of the day: Daniel O'Connell, Charles Bianconi, Thomas Davis, Charles Gavan Duffy and the brewing magnates- Beamish, Smithwick and Guinness. Receiving the testimonial Morpeth responded saying that it was 'the greatest heirloom' that could ever be bestowed to him.

For many years the testimonial roll remained hidden away in a basement at Castle Howard, Yorkshire, but since 2009 it is on loan at Maynooth University thanks to the generosity of Simon Howard, owner of Castle Howard and the efforts of Professor Christopher Ridgway, curator at Castle Howard and Professor Terence Dooley, Director of the Centre for the Study of Historic Irish Houses & Estates at Maynooth University. The roll has been digitised and is available to view and search through www.ancestry.com. Comprising a farewell address, the Morpeth Testimonial Roll was signed by approximately 275,000 people (according to contemporary sources) on 652 individual sheets of paper. These sheets were subsequently joined together to create a continuous length of paper, approximately 412 meters in length (over three times the length of Croke Park), which was rolled onto a mahogany spool.

This unique document has huge research potential, whether looked at as a pre-Famine census substitute, a family heirloom, a genealogy resource or a politically motivated document in its own right. Moreover, it has the potential to provide a unique insight into Irish life, society and politics in pre-Famine Ireland. As a pre-Famine census substitute it is unparalleled and its importance is multiplied by the scarcity of census material from this period. The document also provides evidence of mass political involvement from the local to the national. Most importantly, the document provides the potential to reconstruct communities and how they were shaped on the eve of the Famine. Described by researchers as ‘Ireland’s longest farewell card’ and ‘the Facebook of the 19th century’ undoubtedly the document requires further attention from Irish local historians.

According to Terence Dooley it is the ‘most important pre-Famine document’ in existence. For many people the document was the first time they put their name to a political document and was the beginning of their association with local political movements including the Repeal Party, the Tenant League, the Home Rule movement and the Land League. From a local perspective there are only four known signatures on the roll from the general Clane area, although many more may well be included. Those that did provide addresses, allowing us to instantly identify them, were Michael Kearney, Rathcoffey, Clane, the Roman Catholic priest (also listed as M. Kearney, Clane); his curate, Francis Mooney; Charles Whyte, Mount Nugent, Clane and Richard Crotty of Firmount.

The politicisation and career of another Kildare man, Richard Grattan of Carbury can be traced from this document. Among the names on page 20 (of the digital collection) of the Morpeth Roll is Grattan’s who lived at Drummin House, Carbury. Grattan, who was related to Henry Grattan (1746-1820) and also Thomas Colley Grattan (1792-1864), British ambassador to the USA during the 1840s, was a Protestant, prolific writer and overt supporter of Daniel O’Connell. He had a colourful life during the Great Famine period and was sometime

chairman of the Edenderry Board of Guardians (a position he shared with two others who signed the Morpeth Roll – J.H. Nangle and Edward Wolstenholme). In 1849 Grattan caused consternation at the Dublin Central Relief Committee when he informed them that the Edenderry board of guardians had passed a resolution in an effort to prevent the crowds of paupers who frequented the town from Galway and other Famine stricken counties. In order to do so they had decided to transfer the paupers to Dublin by cart. ‘The people of Edenderry are determined not to have the frightful scenes of other places enacted there, of hundreds of corpses lying unburied on the roads and ditches and devoured by dogs’ he concluded.



Richard Grattan

Throughout the Famine period Grattan was involved in various measures to provide relief. His attitude changed somewhat after 1847 when a sensational case resulted in the death of his fifteen-year-old son. In 1846, as the second crop of potatoes failed, two of his servants Jane Maher and Garret Lynam were accused of poisoning, with arsenic, Richard Grattan Junior. Richard Grattan had attempted to alleviate the distress of his tenantry, and those in the surrounding area, by purchasing a large quantity of Indian corn. Indian corn was unpopular with the poor, being difficult to both prepare and digest. A tonne of Indian meal arrived at Drummin on 14-15 August 1846 but the servants refused to touch it. Richard Grattan ordered that it be served to his own family as breakfast porridge, or stirabout, on the morning of the 17th August. The servants still refused to eat it and gave the leftovers to four calves, which subsequently died. At the time of the trial brought before the Kildare assizes, Grattan testified that he was living at Drummin with his wife, five children (and five servants, two of whom were the suspects in the poisoning case - the cook, Jane Maher, and the steward, Garret Lynam). Grattan it transpired had helped Lynam to prepare the porridge in the kitchen but shortly after breakfast his family fell ill, and his son, Richard Junior, died about a day later. However, despite an extensive trial and medical forensics, the trial failed to find enough evidence to convict the two defendants and the pair were released.

While Grattan's involvement in local affairs diminished after this incident, he did live a politicised life thereafter. His first involvement in politics can be dated to 1829 when he became a member of the Irish Land Improvement Society, while two years later he attended the first meeting of the Repeal party, and was an organiser of anti-tithe meetings in Kildare in the 1830s. In 1848 he signed the William Smith O'Brien petition and by 1850 was a member of the Tenant League. He was also a founding member of the Home Government Association in 1870. In his professional life Grattan was appointed Censor of the King's and Queen's College of Physicians; Inspector of Apothecaries Shops, appointed by an Act of Parliament and in 1865 a Senior Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in

Ireland. He was a founding member of the Home Government Association in 1870.

A prolific writer and author his works included *Considerations on the Human Mind* (1861); *The Right to think: Addressed to the young men of Great Britain & Ireland* (1865); *VoxHiberniae e DesertoClamantis: or, Ireland, her Grievances and their Remedies* (Dublin, 1870) and an influential broadside, published in April 1875 in which he called on England to repeal the Act of Union.

Described as being 'a gentleman of great talent and industry, and of undoubted patriotism', Grattan was born in January 1790 and recalled that his father was 'a zealous cleric and a benevolent doctor'. Having attended Trinity College Dublin at the age of sixteen, he subsequently graduated with a B.A. Vern (1810) and a M.D. from Edinburgh. His early working days saw him employed at French Street Hospital, Dublin and later at the Cork Street Fever Hospital, York Street, Dublin and later the Coombe. A prolific writer, he was influential in promoting new treatments amongst the medical profession and in 1822 published 'A case of gangrene, occasioned by the use of Mercury' in the *Journal of Medical Science*. His final reported words spoke volumes about the long life he had led in local and national politics:

"During my long life I have neither observed nor experienced any intolerance from my Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, and I never had the slightest apprehension that, should Repeal be granted, my co-religionists would be treated with injustice or intolerance. I would rather be governed by a parliament of Roman Catholics than a parliament of Orangemen."

He died in 1886 and is buried in the Church of Ireland graveyard at Carbury.

OBITUARY: PAT GIVEN LATE CHAIRMAN OF CLANE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



On September 9th, 2018, we received the sad news that our dear friend Pat Given had passed away after a relatively short illness. The news sent shock waves through the local community in Clane, County Kildare, at the loss of one of its most respected residents. However the sad news was felt much further afield as Pat had friends all around the country including many in the History Federations. A genial giant of a man, he hailed from County Roscommon, something he was very proud of and, although living for many years in County Kildare, he was a Roscommon man at heart. Having spent a long time in the licensing trade, Pat had a tremendous knowledge of Whiskey Distilling in County Kildare, in Ireland

and for that matter in the rest of the world. We all remember well his most interesting and informative article, “The Golden Age of Kildare’s 18th Century Whiskey Distilling Industry” which was published just this year in the Federation Journal and also his many other contributions to the History Federation literature over the years. Pat was a great supporter of sharing in the North/South activities organised between the two Federations and I particularly remember how much he enjoyed our joint trip to Belfast and the Titanic Centre. He was a pivotal member of Clane Local History Group during the years of its existence and made a huge contribution to the success of the society. On our journey through life we meet many people, some good, some not so good, but occasionally one meets someone exceptional, a person who stands out from the crowd. Pat Given was such a person because of his kindness, his compassion, his generosity and his great patience. I knew Pat for many years but got to know him really well when we were part of the editorial committee of the Clane Local History Group’s annual journal, Coiseanna. He was without doubt a very accomplished and outstanding historian but he carried his knowledge very lightly in a quiet and unassuming way. His humility stood out. Although Pat, at the age of 70, obtained a PhD in local history from Maynooth University, he would never allow the title “Dr” to be placed before his name in any articles in the journal Coiseanna. Pat was so much more than a great historian. He was a friend and colleague to all who knew him. A man of quiet temperament and engaging good humour, it was always a pleasure to be in his company. It is no exaggeration to say that he helped enrich the lives of all those who came in contact with him. Pat, Chairman of Clane Local History Group, is survived by his daughters, Natasha and Gemma, his son-in-law Anthony, his grandchildren Sophie, Ben and David, and also his brother Fred. Like our other two deceased colleagues of Clane Local History Group, the late John Noonan and Una Heffernan, Pat will be long remembered and greatly missed by all those who had the privilege of knowing him.

Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a Anam Dílis

Larry Breen

MISCELLANY

Ice Skating in Clongowes.

Ice skating was a popular recreation in 19th century and early 20th century Clongowes Wood College. The ditch which runs half way across the field on the right of the main avenue (as one faces the castle) used to be dammed by the college workmen at the beginning of each winter thus creating a vast pond. The water froze in the low temperatures and the area was transformed into a huge ice-skating rink. The children from the locality were allowed to skate too but unlike the students, who had proper ice-skates, they would skate in their ordinary boots. The pupils also played ice hockey using jackets and jumpers as goalposts. Skating was popular from the foundation of the college. In January 1831 Mrs. Mary O'Connell sent a pair of skates to her youngest son Danny who was a student from 1830 to 1832. Danny's older brother John tells him in a letter to take care of the skates as they cost 15 shillings. He said he got them at Lampreys and stated "You may be sure of the goodness of the material". They were made of walnut wood and were fluted. However, not all students enjoyed skating as is evident from the following article written by a student and published in an early 'Clongownian'.

Skating - An Appreciation.

There is not much fun in skating except for the onlookers – and very seldom even for them. When you go skating the weather, of course, is beastly cold: there are icicles from your brow, yet you smile and say "It's a splendid day". You carry your skates to the pond. You spend a nice pleasant time in a cutting wind, putting them on. There's no seat of course. You take off one boot to fix on the skate. The grassy ground is wet and slushy. You lift the bootless foot and keep it up – not much trouble in that; you can lean back against your own shadow. Quite comfortable if you're a fat fellow. Mighty hard to get the blessed skate to fit right. You cut your hands just a bit. It's cold. That's nothing. A plucky fellow doesn't mind. – he thinks of the last sodality lecture on the formation of "Character". You get the skates on your boots. Ready at last! You call out

joyously to a fellow passing, “Holloa! that you!. Wait a minute I’m coming along”. You walk towards the ice: one heel comes off – a bit annoying. You go back again to the nice grassy place to mend it. Keep the foot up again – jolly tiring. Look to see what’s wrong – only a screw loose. Take out your key to fasten the nut – nut breaks. “The blooming thing!” (nothing stronger – remember “Character”). You go begging about, with one skate on, for a nut. Everybody is very sorry they have not one – “but if you run up to the house Mr. X will lend you a strap”.

It’s nothing. (“Character”). You rush back to the house. As you pass the library you catch a glimpse of two or three “Good-for-nothings” in arm-chairs reading. The library is a nice room! You hear the click of the billiard balls and “Good shot, by Jove!”. You look up and down for Mr. X. Can’t find him anywhere. Look into the playroom. “Any of you fellows see Mr. X?”. “What do you want him for?”. Oh, blow it I want a strap”. “What might you want with a strap?”. “To fix on my skates of course”. “An old pair of braces do? There’s one in my trunk”. “I suppose that’s meant for wit. You’re very funny”.

You slam the door and go up to the shoe shop. Bracken lends you three bootlaces. Best thing at all for keeping on Acme skates. A handy fellow can make anything out of a bit of twine. You get back to the pond. You get amongst a lot of fellows with gimlets and straps, and nuts and things. You get boots off – the two bootless feet all in the slush. No fear of cold when you’re moving about quickly. You fix the twine and are ready to go again when – the whistle blows – “All in”.
Skating’s grand!

Brendan Cullen

Nick Hewer Remembers Clongowes

Nick Hewer, TV personality and current host of the popular TV show *Countdown*, was a student in Clongowes Wood College in the 1950s. In his hugely entertaining memoir *My Alphabet, a Life from A to Z*, he devotes one chapter to the time he spent in Clongowes. In this short extract he describes the

college food which was of very poor quality and the boys' table manners which were appalling:

An important part of life at Clongowes was eating. The whole school, then of about 360 boys, ate in a huge refectory. Each table of eighteen places was split in half, with those at the top of the table taking what they wanted first and then pushing it down to the less fortunate ones at the other end. Steps in a wooden tower in the middle of the refectory led up to the Minister, a Jesuit, who sat with an open field of fire, and people would be summoned to him for talking during grace or other infringements. I seem to remember he would blow a whistle and then suddenly out of a black tunnel in the wall, the servers, would come roaring out in their dirty aprons carrying great battered deep aluminium trays full of potatoes and slops and slices of this and that.

Breakfast was porridge, delivered in the same trays. On Sundays we had boiled eggs for breakfast and I was particularly fond of them. My standard offer price was sixpence per egg, and I would normally attract a small clutch. In the middle of the afternoon there was *Frustulum*, in Latin 'a small parcel of food to be taken on a journey' - huge aluminium pots of tea, milk, bread and jam. We were always hungry but there was a tuckbox room, though I didn't have a tuckbox for some reason, nor did a lot of other boys, and therefore a culture of scrounging was in full play.....

If you looked up, you could see circular butter stains on the ceiling of the refectory. The trick was to lay your knife on the table, hold the handle down firmly, put a pat of butter on the tip of the blade, bend it down and then release with a satisfying 'boing' and if you were good at it you could get it to adhere to the ceiling. It was a question of getting the angles right.

Brendan Cullen

The Early Christian Period in Clane

Christianity was established in Ireland in the 5th century AD. However, from 500 AD onwards Christianity here developed

into a monastic Christianity, beginning with the foundation of the first monastery on Inishmore in the Aran Islands, which was founded by St. Enda. Soon monasteries such as Glendalough, Monasterboice and Clonmacnoise sprung up and became renowned as centres of learning and spirituality. Monasteries were usually built inside large raths or ring forts i.e. large circular enclosures surrounded by an earthen bank or a stone wall. The early Christian monastery in Clane was founded by St. Ailbe in 520 AD and although there is no visible trace of the original settlement it was more than likely located on the present site of the Community Centre. This location has many of the characteristics associated with a monastic site. It's an elevated area and is the highest point in the Village overlooking the adjacent green at the southern end of the main street. Because of its height it provides a dry-point for settlement giving it protection from periodic flooding. The monastery was built in a circular enclosure judging by the curvature of the present surrounding wall. The original church would have been made of wood and the monks' cells probably of wattle and daub which explains why there are no remains. The monastery flourished but in 1035 AD the Vikings attacked and plundered it. However, it recovered and hosted a church synod in 1162 AD, which was called to address church reform. More than likely the old monastery faded out of existence with the building of the new Franciscan friary in the 13th century. After the Reformation a Church of Ireland church occupied the site until 1883 when the Church of St. Michael and All Angels was opened at Millicent.

Brendan Cullen

An article by Pat Given in the 2017 edition of Coiseanna (page 99) told of a number of men with Clane connections who died in the First World War. James Durney identifies three others who died in the conflict.

Andrew Smith, drowned on 20 January 1917 while serving as a Trimmer, on the HMS *Teutonic*, a merchant cruiser which served as a convoy escort and a troop transport. He was the son of Andrew Smyth (groom) and Mary Lynam. Andrew Smith is buried at Dalmeny Parish Cemetery, South Queensferry

Linlithgowshire, near Edinburgh, in Scotland. It is unclear how he drowned or how long his body was in the water but Andrew Smith was taken from the water on 22 January 1917 while the *Teutonic* was in dock.

Hubert O'Connor was a captain with the 6th King's Shropshire Light Infantry when he died from wounds received in action in Flanders on 17 August 1917. His parents were Dr. Charles Joseph O'Connor (surgeon) and Marion Lynch. While Hubert was recorded as born in Clane the family lived at the Grove, Celbridge. He was educated at Clongowes Wood College and Trinity College, Dublin, and was a member of the Leinster Bar. He was also a former Irish Volunteer and participated in the Kilcoole gun-running in 1914. Shortly after the outbreak of war in August 1914 he joined the British Army. In an engagement on 16 August Capt. O'Connor had gained his objective, and was pushing on to help another unit when he was severely wounded. While being carried to the rear on a stretcher he was again hit in the leg. Hubert O'Connor died in hospital the next day.

The last Clane man to die in the war was John Colgan, of Firmount. He was the son of Patrick Colgan and Mary Cribbin and the twin of Mary. He was a private with the 9th Prince of Wales Own (West Yorkshire) Regiment, and enlisted in the Yorkshire Hussars while living and working in Ripley, Yorkshire. In 1917 the Yorkshire Hussars were amalgamated into the 9th Prince of Wales West Yorkshire Regiment. The 9th Prince of Wales Own took part in the attack on the strategic Canal du Nord; its capture opened the road to Cambrai. Private Patrick Colgan was killed in action, on 1 October 1918, the last day of the Canal du Nord battle.

At 11 a.m. on 11 November 1918 the guns finally fell silent on the Western Front. The war had lasted four years, three months and two weeks. Ten million combatants had died in the 'war to end all wars' among them at least 35,000 Irishmen. Among them were two women and 750 men from County Kildare.

James Durney