Coiseanna

The Journal of Clane Local History Group

Editorial Committee

Brendan Cullen
Larry Breen
Jim Heffernan

Design and Layout by Jim Heffernan

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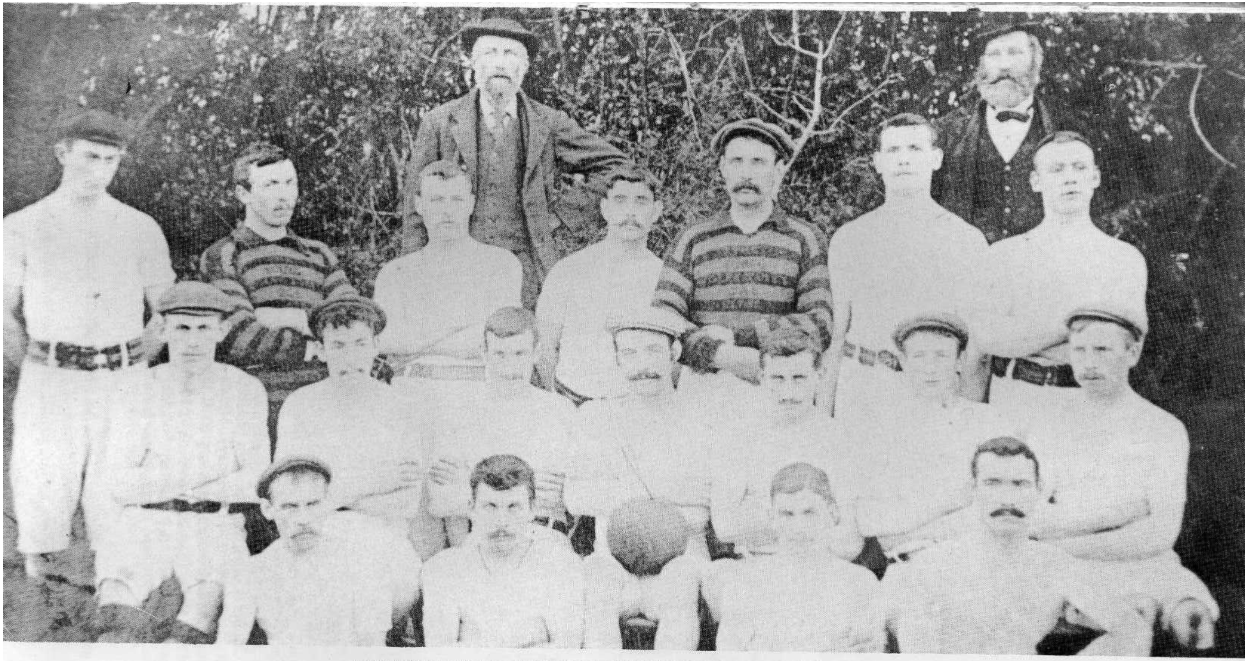
Front cover: Rear of Millicent House viewed from Castlesize

Back cover: Signpost at Crocán roundabout



WINNERS OF CO. KILDARE CHAMPIONSHIP - 1901/2/3

The genesis of Kildare's success was the Clane club of the turn of the century. Two of the players are wearing the Green and Black of the old William O'Briens, the rest wear the white of the Lord Edwards. The officials in the back are Thomas Reid (left) and Jim Archer. Back row (from left): Hubert White, J. Murphy, F. Walsh, Tom Gunner Delaney, Ned Ennis, Christy Campbell, Larry Hussey Cribben. Middle row: Bill Merriman, William Docherty, Addy Connolly, Dick Brien, Bill Bracken, J. Murphy, Joe Byrne. Front row: Jack Tierney, Eddy Deigan (captain), John Dunne, Pat Brien. The photograph was taken at the Curate's house, now Dr. Purcell's, probably after the 1901 County Championship. Clane won the championships of 1901, 1902 and 1903.

EDITORIAL

We can now look back on 2022 and welcome the return to some degree of normality after covid. It has been so much better to be again able to meet and enjoy the benefits that personal contact brings. We are all looking forward with a degree of optimism to the coming year and will explore some new ideas including a memorabilia night for members and friends, something we have never done before. We would welcome your input into any suggestions you think might help us to widen our programme of events in promoting our interest in local history in the community. The one sad note during the year was the sudden passing of our dear and great friend Tom McCreery. Tom was an important member of our group and liked by everyone. He worked behind the scenes, quietly and diligently helping to ensure that the group ran smoothly. We will all miss Tom but he will not be forgotten and may he rest in peace. The editorial team would like to thank all those who contributed articles for the journal and also to extend sincere thanks to all our members and friends for their continuing support over the years

Editorial Team Larry Breen, Brendan Cullen and Jim Heffernan

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“WHAT’S IN A NAME?”

Tony McEvoy

Claonadh
CLANE

The implication is “Not very much.” Many of our local place names belie the notion that place names can be uninteresting. Did you know, for example, that one of the longest place names in Ireland is Newtown-moneenaluggagh, which lies to the north of Ballagh Cross, is one of the longest place names in Ireland and is reputed to mean “little bog of the hollow” It has one letter more than Newtownmountkennedy.

Many of our older place names, which were not recorded on maps, have disappeared. Some older readers will remember the “Locán”, once a small pond on the right hand side about 300 yards out the Ballinagappa Road. “Coiseanna” referred to the Woods Centre area and the hill up from it. It derives from Cois Eannaigh (beside the marsh). The “marsh” refers to what is now known as Central Park Green. On Taylor’s Map of 1783 it was marked “Moneen Bán” (the “white bog” or fen). Others include:-

Gollamochy, as in the Gollamochy Bridge, which spans the stream at the bottom of the hill before Clongowes. It is translated as “the fork in the stream which enclosed a cattle field or milking plain”. The fork was shown in the O.S. Map of 1838. (It is now straightened out and flowing in one straight line along the Clongowes boundary) It is only at this immediate location that the river is known as Gollamochy. At all other points it is named after the immediate land-owner. The older name for the river was “Abha doibhinín” or “little deep river”. (Map of 1650)

Aghapaudeen: (near Digby Bridge) Paudeen's Field.

Ballynabooley: Báile na Buaile -the pasture district or milking quarters.

Ballynagappa: Báile na gCeapach the area of the tillage plots. The Map of 1650 designates it "Cappock".

Betaghstown: Báile an Bhiatigh, the district of the alms house. Under the Brehon Laws alms houses were established at central locations where roads crossed. To each was attached a Ballynab… and a Ballynag… to supply it. (From Archdeacon Sherlock).

Boherhole: Bóthar Coll the road of the hazel. (Reputed to have come from Buan's heart when she was buried under what the Normans were later to re-model as a Moat at Mainham.)

Borabride: Bóthar Bridhe - Brigid's Road, an older name for Nancy's Lane (Map of 1650) which leads behind the Scouts' Den to Butterstream and Loughanure.

Butterstream: Bóthar an tSruthain, the road by the stream. (mistakenly interpreted as the name of the stream)
Capdoo: Ceapach Dubh, the tillage area with the dark soil - moory in places?

Cappagh: Ceapagh, the tillage area -the original name of Meadow Court on the Ballynagappa Road.

Carrigeen: Caraigín, the little rock -site of an ancient group of stones known as St. Brigid's Table, Chair and Thimble. A further stone was said to bear the imprints of her feet. These were known to older residents as the Carrigeens (with the Gaelic pronunciation of "cor" rather than the Anglicized "car" and were situated on the flank of the old quarry beside the road which originally led to the weir on the Liffey. They were either buried or destroyed when the County Council operated a dump there in the '70s. Archdeacon Sherlock regarded them as a Cromlech, an ancient Stone Age burial site. We located them on the maps of 1838 and Taylor's map of 1783. (See Le Chéile Feb. 2014 on the website).

Castlesize: Casán na Soilse, the ford where the light is hung.
Clane: Claonadh, the slant or slope. See Le Chéile March 2014 on the website. The translation is controversial. When Comerford published his History of the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin in 1883 he was guided by the Annals of the Four Masters (1616). An alternative is the Annals of Mac Firbis (1643) in which reference is made to "**Cruachán Claonta**", a low slanted hill which was located near the Liffey Bridge in Clane and which had huge superstitions attached to it and was known throughout the whole of Leinster, if not the entire country. The Leinster Men never went into battle without first assembling here, in the belief that in doing so they could never be defeated. It was twice vandalized over the centuries. Firstly, the Normans built their Motte over it so that only the low slanting tail protruded to the west. Secondly, the land owner in the 1980s got a JCB at it and trimmed off the tail as well as the sides of the Motte all around. When the Cois Abhainn Apartments were being constructed the developer back-filled the sides but in doing so covered in the holy well -a thermal spring- known as Sunday's Well. See website as referenced above.

Clonaugh: Cluain ach the meadow of the horse.

Clongowes Wood: Coill Cluana Gabhann -the wood of the smith's meadow.

Crocán: A hill on the Capdoo Lane with a rushy area to its side. Irish name for a rush species which hangs its head. Also a townsland on the Prosperous Road, including the GAA and beyond, which protrudes by a narrow projection down the Woodbine Lane to the site of the Millenium Cross but no further. The latter was unveiled in 1999 and was placed in an existing small stone base, known locally as the Wart Stone.

The map of 1838 refers to it as the base of a stone cross. The word Crocán in this case could translate as a “small cross” (such as the Saviour was crucified on).

The Cool Mucks: Cúl na Mucos the place of the rose hips. The boundary ditch between The Elms and College Grove is a vertical south facing bank of up to twelve feet in depth formed by outflow from the melting ice. It catches the sun like the Strawberry Beds and was always covered in wild roses.

Donadea: Dómhnach Déagh the church of God or of Caoide, disciple of St. Patrick.

Loughanure: Lough an Iúir, the lake of the yew tree. Yew trees were regarded as sacred in pre-Christian times.

Loughbollard: Lough Beallach Árd the lake by the high path (top of the esker). The lake was on the opposite side of the road and was drained away.

Mainham: Mainham has two possible origins: one is that it derives from the Irish word magh for a plain or open space as in Maynooth (Ma Nuad). The other is that it might have derived its name from St. Maighneamh of Kilainham.

Rathcoffey: Ráth Cobhthaigh, the fortified dwelling place of the Coffeys.

Rathmore: the large rath or fortified dwelling place.

Tobernamona: Tober na Móna, the marshy well. Was located in the ditch, now piped, inside the hedge by the playing field of Scoil Phadraig on the edge of the Prosperous Road.

Móneen Bán: Old name for Central Park or the Church Parks. The white bog or fen (withered reeds and sedges). Old maps used the name Moneen Ban. The writer remembers a donkey being buried there in the ‘50s and a load of turf being harvested in the operation.

THE ANCIENT GAME OF HURLING

From the Battle Of Moytura Near Cong 1272 and Cuchulainn To Hayes' Hotel, Thurles 1884

Noel Hynes

The game of hurling has prehistoric origins and has been played in Ireland for at least 3,000 years and has never been as popular as it is currently. The earliest reference to our marvellous game is in 1272 BC at the battle of Moytura near Cong in Mayo. The Firbolgs were then rulers of Ireland and were protecting their place in a battle against the Tuatha de Danaan. While preparing for the battle the Firbolgs challenged the invaders to a hurling contest with 27 players on each team taking part with the Firbolgs winning the match but losing the battle.

Hurlers in action

There are many references to the game of hurling in the centuries before the birth of Christ and that hurling was an essential part of life for young men preparing to be warriors. After the occupation of Ireland by the Normans in the 12th century hurling was outlawed. It is interesting to note that in 1367 Kilkenny, the current holders of the most All Ireland hurling titles, attempted to ban hurling according to the infamous Statutes of Kilkenny. Despite threats and imprisonment that law failed and Kilkenny continued to become the most decorated hurling county in Ireland to date, where the great game continues to flourish. During the great Famine from 1846 to 1849 hurling dramatically declined except in the strong hurling counties of Kilkenny, Cork, Tipperary and surprisingly in Donegal and Down. By the time the 1880s arrived a Clare man named Michael Cusack born in Carron in 1847 at the height of The Famine, would be responsible for arranging that famous meeting held in Hayes's Hotel in Thurles in 1884. I suspect that it is not generally known that Cusack had been an athlete, hurler, footballer, handballer, cricketer and oarsman. Here is Cusack's view of the game of hurling - "When I reflect on the sublime simplicity of the game, the strength, the swiftness of the players, their apparently angelic impetuosity, the apparent recklessness of life and limb, their magic skill, their marvellous escapes and the overwhelming pleasure they give their friends, I have no hesitation in saying that the game of hurling is in the front ranks of the fine arts". Indeed members of An Garda Siochana, under the guidance of Commissioner Eoin O'Duffy played a tremendous part ensuring that Hurling would continue to survive for eternity by introducing the game in most of the Divisions they were stationed in, culminating in Dublin winning the All Ireland in 1927 with nine members on that team and four members among the substitutes.

Hurling is, beyond a shadow of doubt, the most scientific game in the world. It can certainly be stated that the swish of the caman is as music to the ear akin to Pietro Mascagni's Cavalleria Rusticana or Puccini's Cora A Boca Cerrada from Madame Butterfly. Indeed Tom Humphries aptly sums up the game of hurling as, " The game is the most common expression of Ireland's wild beauty. Hurling is art wrapped up in sport". The late Jack Lynch stated in 1968 that "The true hurler is a man of dignity, proud of his heritage. skilful, well disciplined and a sportsman" Under the 1801 Act of Union which made Ireland part of the United Kingdom the British authorities

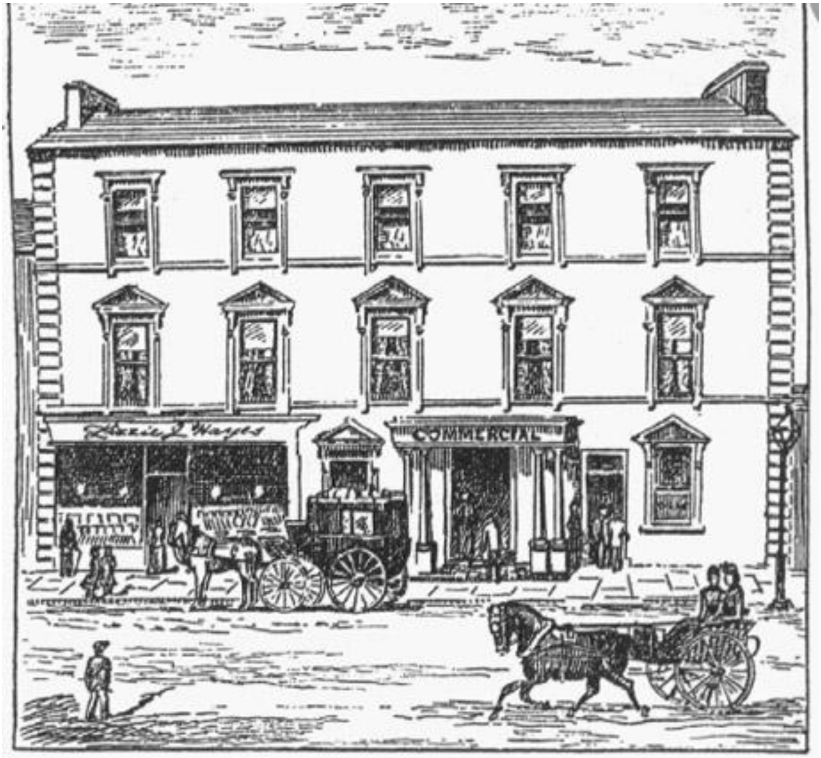
Cusack's Statue at Croke Park

banned hurling as they were afraid of large gatherings of men. After the Famine the game of hurling in Ireland almost became extinct until the arrival of one Michael Cusack who in 1883 revived our marvellous game of hurling when he founded Cusack's Academy Hurling Club leading to the founding of the GAA in 1884 which formalised the game around a common set of written rules resulting in the first All Ireland Hurling Final in 1891, peculiarly won by Kerry, far more famous for winning All Ireland football titles, then represented by Ballyduff who beat Wexford represented by Crossabeg. It is to be assumed that after that successful period of hurling that football replaced our ancient game and Kerry became the most famous football county in Ireland.

Indeed hurling lay dormant in Kerry until 1983 when a member of An Garda Siochana was transferred from Dublin Castle to Ballyduff on promotion and set about reviving once again the game of hurling in that region. For an ex inter county footballer who had played for Sligo between 1959 and 1967 to take on the task as Manager of the Kerry senior hurling team was some achievement indeed. Jerry McManus deserves great credit for reviving the game of hurling in Ballyduff who won 4 county titles under his management and produced several players who represented Kerry at senior inter county level.

Hurling is now certainly on a firm footing and hopefully will never again go into demise. It certainly has spread throughout the world. My two oldest Grandsons, Cathal and Ronan McGrath play with the Eire Og Hurling club here in Kildare. For the past 18 months Cathal has been domiciled in Qatar bringing with him his two hurleys and sliothar. It is my hope that he will be responsible for introducing our game of hurling to that part of the world and from encouragement from me it can be assumed that he may very well succeed! Conversely, who would have envisaged that a non native of this country would arrive here in 1983 and take up the game of hurling against his will and become one of the most exciting hurlers in this country. To quote the well known Michael O'Muircheartaigh during one of his exciting broadcasts - "Father from Fermanagh, Mother from Fiji, neither a hurling stronghold". He was of course referring to the now famous Sean Og O'hAilpin who at the age of eleven reluctantly took up our great game of hurling with distinction playing for Cork. After lifting the Liam McCarthy Cup as Captain of the Cork Senior Hurling team at the end of the 2005 All Ireland Final, Sean delivered his total speech as Gaelge.

There is no doubt that the power and attraction of the GAA is enormous. Back in the early 1940s, Bill Doonan, who won 2 All Irelands with Cavan in 1947 and 1948, had joined the British Army and was based in Monte Casino in 1943. The war in Southern Italy was raging at that time. Bill was a radio operator with his unit. One Sunday in early September he was no longer to be seen. He had vanished as if the ground had swallowed him up. His unit considered that it was unlikely that he was shot as there was a lull there in hostilities at the time. They mounted a search and found him up on a tree on the side of a steep hill and had difficulty in attracting his attention as he appeared to be in a trance. Bill Doonan
had eventually homed in on the commentary of the second half of the All Ireland Football Final between Roscommon and



Hayes' Hotel Thurles

Cavan. As he was too indispensable to his unit he escaped being court- martialed and survived the war. On his return from Italy he played for Cavan in the Polo Grounds, New York, in 1947 All Ireland and in Croke Park in 1948 winning two All Ireland medals. Some years ago I became aware that the attraction and lure of the GAA, and in particular Hurling, was not the preserve of the ordinary man in the street.

In the words of Matt the Thrasher in Kickham's "Deserted Village" hurlers do it for the sake of the little village. It is Irish and the best".

CLANE AT THE DAWN OF THE G.A.A.

Pat Lynch

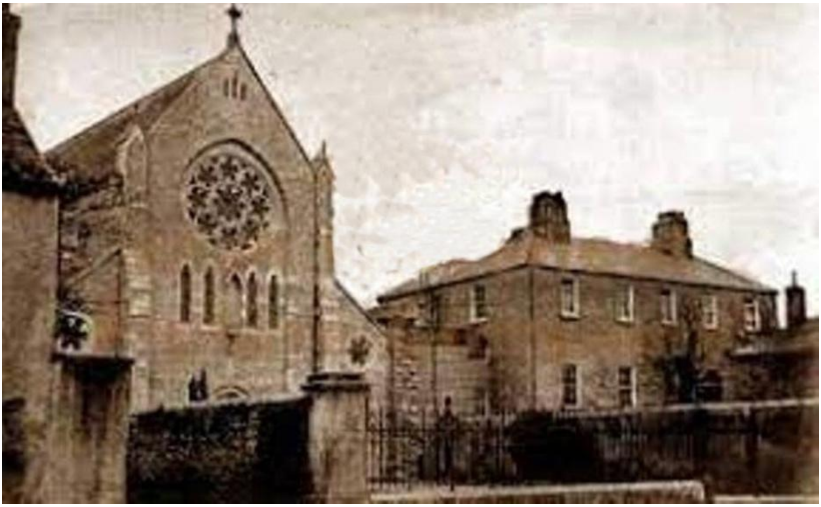
This article is an excerpt from "A Legacy from Clane GAA", by Pat Lynch. The Editor would like to thank Pat for giving his permission to publish it.

Towards the end of the 1800s, a number of substantial building projects were taking place in Clane. In 1881, the Church of Ireland Community contemplated restoring their old church in Clane but decided against it. The building of a new church at Millicent was a better option. Work commenced on the 20th June 1881. It gave employment for two years. On 29th September, the Archbishop of Dublin and then also the Bishop of Kildare, Richard Chenevix consecrated the Church of St. Michael and All Angels. The marble mosaic part of the floor had been laid by Italian craftsmen.

Meanwhile down in the village, other workmen had been busy since 1875, building the Catholic Church, named in honour of Saint Patrick and Saint Brigid. That was another serious undertaking, a nine year project opening in 1884. Those buildings, undertaken before the days of J.C.Bs, steel scaffolding or hoists are a tribute to the skills and work ethics of the men of that era. The pick and shovel were the tools used to dig all foundations. A test of a workman could be his performance with a pick and shovel. One has heard of disputes as regards working ability being sorted out as follows: mark out two lengths of solid hard ground ten yards long. Who will be the first to take out two feet depth of clay? The winner deserves a few bottles of stout.

The site of the church was said to be donated by a Dr. O'Sullivan, a former pupil at Clongowes, who once owned the area of Marie's Pianos and the flower shop and car park. He lived in Celbridge and travelled to his practice in Clane by horse and sidecar, a common mode of transport in those days.

Later he would purchase a car. A McEvoy family later owned this area.



The Church of St Patrick and St Brigid and the Presentation Convent. The building between them which provided a private corridor for the nuns to enter the church has long gone.

Johnny Harrington remembers stories related by his grandmother. She spoke of huge, long four-wheeled carts filled with long slabs of stone arriving in Clane and pulled by four draught horses all the way from Co. Wicklow. The slabs were cut at the building site, into neat building stones which one can see so neatly positioned on the church walls. What a feat of skill from those far-off days.

Down on the "Green" where the Fr. John Sullivan monument now stands, were located four slated houses which were said to be "just beautiful", built prior to the church. They were occupied by four trades people families. Tom Coffey, the stone mason lived in one. Tom played a major part in the building of the church, as did Hampsons, the painters who lived in the second house. The Byrnes were plasterers and slaters, the Whelans painters and decorators. All were employed in the building of the churches. Tom Byrne ceilinged the church vestry for 7/6, seven shillings and sixpence. Tom Coffee erected the church gate for three pounds and sixteen shillings (£3-16-0), labour and some materials included. A Mr. Gahan had constructed the actual gate at a cost of £7-8s-10d. Joe Byrne was paid three shillings and six pence for some slate work. The church building cost £7,000.

Further employment was available in the vicinity of Firmount Cross where Major Hugh Henry, a railway engineer, arrived from Tuam in Co. Galway. His aim was to refurbish Firmount House. Instead he built a new one. This was later used as a Sanatorium during the Tuberculosis (T.B.) outbreak and as late as the 40s and 50s. Some materials were imported from Scotland, the aim to make the building fireproof.

The Nestor family from Moate in Co. Westmeath, who had worked for Major Henry in Galway came to Clane at the same time. Much of the information in this article was related by James (Jimmy) Nestor Junior, an honourable, upright gentleman who worked in Clongowes Wood College garden for close on forty years. Those were unwritten stories related to him by his granny who came to Clane in 1870. Jimmy told of 29 horses at Firmount House. Each horse required a “driver”, providing employment, even if the wages were small, very small by today’s standard. Every farthing had a value. Pennies had real value.

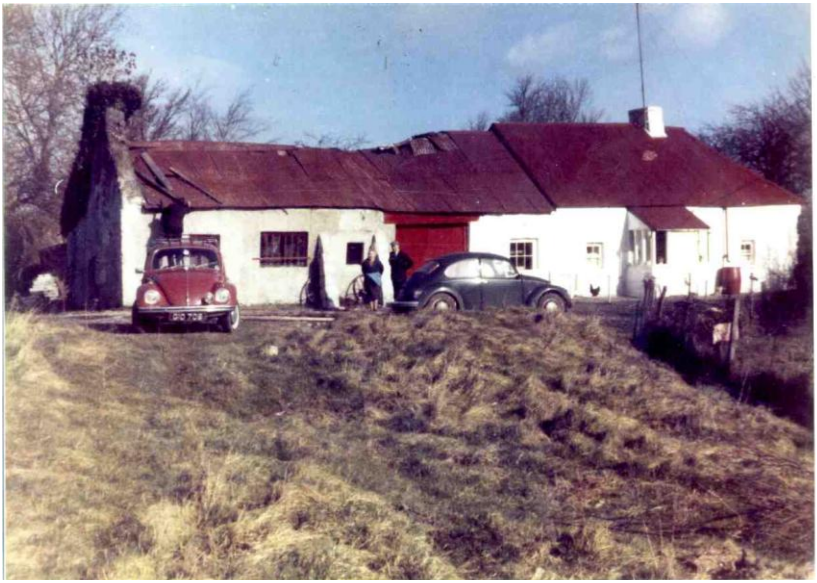
Jimmy Nestor’s granny remembered Jack McCracken’s textile factory at the Liffey Bridge in Clane. Natives still refer to that area as “down at the mill”. McCrackens employed forty women making linen garments. He supplied army blankets to the English soldiers at the Curragh. As a businessman of substance in those days, he was President of Clane Sports Committee in 1884, then run under A.A.A. Rules but for the final time. Coates’ Bakery was located at the present Macari Take-Away. Number of employees is not known but “four-wheeled horse-drawn coaches, boxes full with bread, left there at 5am or 6am every day on their way to Sallins, Naas, Robertstown, etc. Bakers were and always will be early risers”.

McCracken's Mill

Donnelly’s Tannery: a former resident of Clane who died, aged 82, in 1936 spoke of “leather works” at the rear of Dr. Flanagan’s dwelling. “Cart loads of hides arrived”, he said. There was a belief that the Donnelly family members were relatives of Dan Donnelly who defeated Tom Hall from the Isle of Wight at Donnelly’s Hollow in the Curragh in 1814 for a purse of one hundred sovereigns, in the presence of 20,000 spectators. Later he defeated Tom Oliver, the English Champion, at a location near London in 1818 when £100,000 in wagers changed hands. He was knighted “Sir Dan” by the Prince Regent, later George IV. Sir Dan is said to have died penniless in 1820 at the age of 32 years.

Blacksmiths were always busy in Clane, the horse and cart being the main source of transport for goods. There were many local horses at work, including up to twenty at Clongowes Wood College which was self-sufficient. The college produced every type of vegetable, every type of fruit, its own milk and butter, beef, lamb and bacon. The college baker, tailor, butcher, laundry staff, cleaners, chefs, milkers, ploughmen, crop harvesters, all availed of local employment, as did turf cutters, so many other areas. The horses were taken to local blacksmiths for shoeing and cartwheel bands. Add to this the horses at Firmount House, the huge number of horses that passed through Clane each day, on their way to Dublin with loads of hay for the Dublin horses and turf for cooking and heating. They travelled from as far away as Carbury.

Jack Toole "who wore a hard hat and a moustache" lived in the Tower House, presently the abode of the Cash family, ran a forge at the end of the village where the Millicent and Naas roads meet. Many still remember the building at that location, later used by the Cash family to house horses. It is adjacent to the site of the Children's Playground/Shrubbery. Pat and Thomas Reddy worked there. People gathered there to chat. They were visited by the Black and Tans who wondered why people gathered at any location. No damage ensued.



The Dunne forge at Mainham

Johnny Reddy operated a forge on the Naas side of Doolan's Supermarket, once a small thatched shop, the floor below street level. "Mind the Step". Eileen Duffy (nee Noonan) worked there. The Conneff family forge was at the home place at Kilmurry where once lived a champion athlete of world fame.

At the rear of the Royal Oak pub, now closed, the Dunne family were busy at iron works, shoeing horses and constructing horse shoes and all types of iron work.

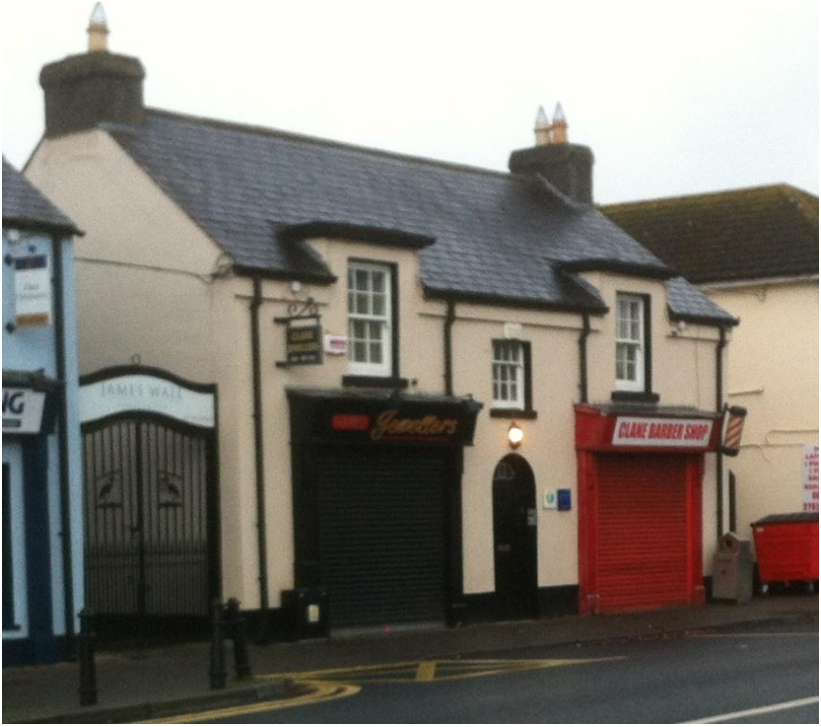
Clane may have been luckier than most areas in Ireland with such sources of employment. But it should be remembered that most of the land consisted of very large estates owned by a few. Shopkeepers too were large land owners. There were many families who worked hard for a living, as was the case all over Ireland. James Joyce of Ulysses fame, who was a student at Clongowes Wood College, recalled that on his way to Sallins, going home on holidays, he saw small cottages with half-doors, ladies leaning over some and chatting. Half-doors were common throughout Ireland and were a product of a landlord system which placed a tax on the amount of light entering a house. That is why old houses had such small windows. “How can we beat the system”, people asked. “I’ve got it”, thought some smart guy. “Half-doors, that’s the solution, let the light in. Let’s outwit the landlords”.

The type of employment then available in Clane was not to be found in many parts of Ireland. Some rural areas had none. That was why several fathers of families had to take the boat to England for parts of the year. They returned to sow the crops in spring or to save the hay and turf in summer. Meanwhile the mothers reared the family. Dad sent home the money. A man who was born in 1902 recalled how he and his mates dug potatoes on English farms. Their day started at 5am, a break for breakfast at 8am, and a break for dinner. Work continued until 8pm. During the morning period, when digging the “early” potatoes, their pants’ legs would be wet to the knees from wet stalks. They slept in sheds on straw. We hear of men walking from Mayo, Galway and Donegal to Dublin for the boat to England. Others walked long distances to Cobh to get the ferry to America. Most never returned.

BLESSED DOM COLUMBA MARMION (1858 - 1923)

Michael Clifford

In Coiseanna Number 11, Brendan Cullen in his most enjoyable and informative article "A Virtual History Tour of Clane", wrote "The building was also the home of the paternal family of Blessed Columba Marmion who was beatified on 3rd September 2000 by Pope John Paul 11". So, who was Blessed Dom Columba Marmion and what do we know about his connection with Clane.



The building on Clane Main Street which was once the Marmion Family home. It was subsequently a Garda Station and was later occupied by various retail premises

The Clane connection

It all began in 1818 when Matthew Marmion, a native of Woodlands, Kilmessan, Co. Meath, married Elizabeth Rourke a native of Clane. After their marriage they went to live in what is now the barber shop and what at one stage was the Garda barracks in Clane. They had three children, William, Matthew and Rose, who was also known as Roseanna. Matthew who was born in 1790, died about in 1824 leaving his young widow to look after 3 young children. A few years later Elizabeth married John O'Sullivan a medical doctor. They had 6 children, 4 boys and 2 girls. The boys were named Joseph, Christopher, Daniel and John. The girls were named Teresa and Catherine. There is a striking monument to Dr. John in the Old Abbey which informs us that he died in June 1871.

Roseanna Marmion married Martin Keenan. They had two sons. There is a headstone in the Old Mainham Cemetery which reads as follows: *Roseanna Keenan of Mainham in memory of her beloved husband Martin Keenan who departed this life 5th Septr.1858 aged 59 years.*

Erected by
ROSANNA KEENAN of Mainham
in memory of her beloved Husband
MARTIN KEENAN
who departed this life 5th Septr. 1858,
Aged 59 years.

Keenan headstone in Mainham Cemetery

Matthew Marmion married Margaret Farrell. Margaret died in 1857. Reference to her death is made on another headstone in the Old Mainham Cemetery. It reads as follows:

Also Margaret the beloved wife of the above Matthew Marmion, who died 4th March 1857, aged 28 years. Reference to this other headstone will be made again as it has so much information about the Marmion family. Reference to Margaret's death was also made in the Leinster Express of March 14, 1857, and read as follows: *At Clane, County*

Kildare, on the 4th of March, aged 28 years, Margaret, wife of Mr. Matthew Marmion, of same place.

WILLIAM – MATTHEW MARMION
to the memory of their beloved Mother
ELIZABETH O'SULLIVAN
who departed this life 30th March 1855
Aged 59 years
Also MARGARET the beloved Wife of
the above MATTHEW MARMION, who died
4th March 1857, aged 28 years
Also their Brother JOHN O'SULLIVAN
who died 17th Augt. 1850, aged 21 years
And JOHN SEBASTIAN the beloved Child of
the above WILLIAM MARMION, who died
18th Octr. 1853, aged 2 years

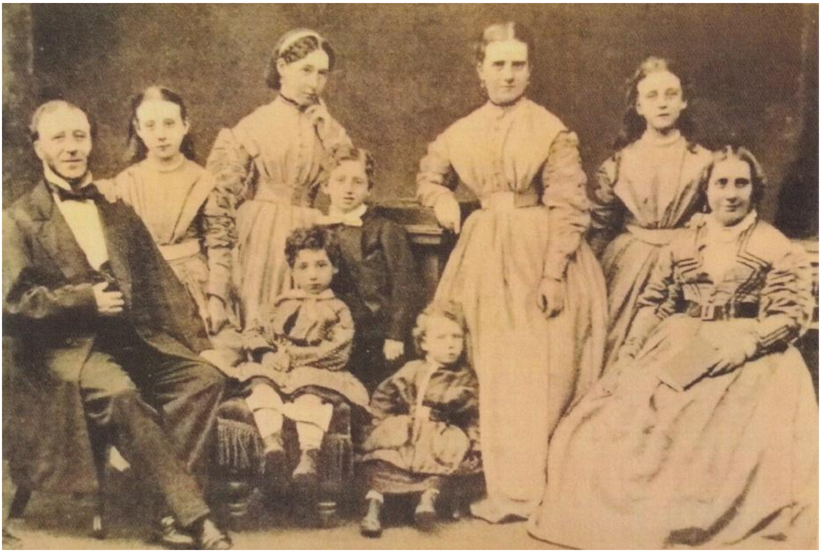
The Marmion headstone at Mainham Cemetery

This headstone has other information which reads as follows: *William – Matthew Marmion to the memory of their beloved Mother Elizabeth O'Sullivan who departed this life 30th March1855 aged 59 years……Also their brother John O'Sullivan who died 17th Augt 1850, aged 21 years. And John Sebastian the beloved Child of the above William Marmion, who died 18th Octr. 1853 aged 2 years.*

In the 1840s William, who was living in Clane, moved to Dublin and lived at 57 Queen Street. He started working with Vernon and Cullen who were corn factors on Arran Quay. He was, obviously, very well-known and moved amongst the upper strata of society as "*It was at the French consulate in Dublin that William met for the first time the one who was to be his life's companion, Miss Herminie Cordier*."[1]

Mr Donald Campbell, a Scotsman, who was involved in the wine business, was sent to Paris on business. There he met and married Marie Cordier. He was then sent to Dublin along with his wife with the intention of opening a branch of the wine business in the city. They were accompanied by Mrs Campbell's younger sister Herminie Cordier. It was at a chance meeting in the French consulate that William set eyes on Herminie for the first time. He was smitten by her and resolved to ask for her hand. Her parents were Sebastian Cordier and Catherine Claude. They lived in Paris where they had a family printing business.

William and Herminie got married on the 21st April 1847 in St. Andrew's Church in Dublin. Often referred to as "Black 47", this was when the famine was raging in Ireland and causing major upheaval in the lives of so many people. Death and disease were rampant. They appeared after getting married to have returned to Clane where they lived for a number of years. They had 4 daughters and 5 sons. Mary, the first born, was the only one of the girls who married. The other 3, Lizzie, Flora and Rosie all joined the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy. In between John Sebastian was born after Lizzie and died at the age of 2 years. Philip Henry was born after his sister Flora and died when he was about 12 months old. Finally, 3 sons were born, Joseph who became a priest, Frank and finally Matthew. Shortly after the death of their son John Sebastian, they moved back to Dublin and were living at 57 Queen Street when Joseph was born.



The Marmion family, Joseph is in the centre wearing black

Joseph who later became a monk and was known as Dom Columba Marmion was born on April the 1st which was a Holy Thursday, in 1858. He was baptised in St. Paul's Church on the 6th of April and given the name Joseph. His family were a very devote Catholic family and it was no surprise that he decided to become a priest.

The family had moved to number 2 Blackhall Place by the time he started his primary education in what was called the Seminary of St. Laurence O'Toole's in 1868. He spent very little time there and on the 11th of January 1869 he transferred to the Jesuit Fathers' Belvedere College. He made his First Holy Communion at the age of 9.

Joseph in his younger days often visited Clane to spend time with his cousins. While he was visiting he would visit the chapel in Clongowes Wood to say his prayers. In January 1874 at the age of 15 years and 9 months, he entered Holy Cross College, Clonliffe. Clonliffe College was founded in 1859 by the Archbishop Paul Cullen of Dublin to educate priests for the Dublin diocese. Paul Cullen, Ireland's first Cardinal, was born in Prospect, Narraghmore, Athy in County Kildare in April 1803. His first school was the Quaker Shackleton School in nearby Ballitore.

It became evident very quickly that Joseph was a very bright, lively and questioning student even if a little impulsive. Witty and high spirited, he was quite popular with his fellow students. While he was in Clonliffe College, his father William died in April 1878. This upset him very much. He distinguished himself in theology and philosophy. So, it was no surprise that the new Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Edward McCabe selected him for further theological studies in Rome. He set out for Rome with the Rector, Fr. Verdon, and they arrived on the 24th of December 1879. He was to spend almost 2 years in Rome and continued his studies in the College of Propaganda. The years in Rome were wonderful.

"I always look back on Rome as one of the happiest epochs on my life" Letter from February 1890 [2]

On February 27, 1881, he received minor orders, he was ordained sub-deacon on March 12, and deacon on the 15th April in the church of St. John Lateran. This church is not too far away from the present Irish College in Rome. Finally, on June 16, the Feast of Corpus Christi, he was ordained a priest. On July 11, Fr. Marmion returned to Ireland.

On the 14th of September Fr. Marmion was appointed curate to the parish of Dundrum. In September 1882, he was appointed professor of philosophy in Clonliffe College, a post he filled with distinction until June 25th 1886. A few months later, November 21st 1886 he entered the Benedictine Monastery in Maredsous to begin his novitiate. Maredsous is about an hour south of Brussels. He had already visited Maredsous on his way home to Ireland after his ordination. He took his vows at Maredsous on the 10th of February 1888. He was now known as Brother Columba. He continued his religious formation until 1891. His solemn profession took place in February 1891. He remained in Maredsous until 1899.

Brother Columba
Maredsous 1888

On the 13th of April 1899 a colony of monks from Maredsous was established at Mont-César which was dedicated to the mother of God. Dom Columba spent the next 10 years of his life here, from April 1899 to September 1909. Here he was the Prior and also the professor of theology. In addition, he was also the spiritual director to the young monks.

The invasion of Belgium in August in 1914 by the Germans caused Dom Columba considerable stress. The fall of Namur to the German onslaught led to the withdrawl of the French and Belgium soldiers, all passing by the abbey. Crowds fleeing the advance of the Germans, arrived at the monastery. This led to major upheavals among the community in the abbey. Dom Columba was very concerned especially for the younger members of the community. Something had to be done. Following discussions, it was decided that a place of safety and refuge should be sought for the community and that Dom Columba should do this himself. Having travelled through Holland in disguise as a cattle dealer, he arrived in England without the appropriate passport. On his arrival, he was met by the custom officers. “I am Irish” The Dom told them, “and the Irish never have a passport….except for hell, and …it isn’t there I am wanting to go” [3] This triggered much laughter among the officers and he was allowed to land in England.

On his arrival, Dom Columba started to look for a suitable place for his community almost immediately. He was considering transferring his community to England or possibly Ireland. While searching for a suitable location for his community he met the Marquise de Bizien du Lézard, a wealthy French lady who promised to fund his purchase of a property which Dom Columba felt was suitable. His friend and colleague Fr. Francis Sweetman, who was also a Benedictine monk, encouraged him to consider buying Edermine House, outside Enniscorthy, which belonged to the wealthy distiller Sir John Power.

“Edermine House and 100 acres of adjoining land was purchased for £2,000. Marmion intended that this new premises would become a permanent foundation for his monks subject to the approval of his superiors in Maredsous” [4]. The house was purchased in December 1914.

Once this property had been purchased Dom Columba was anxious to return to Maredsous, but despite his best efforts he was unable to do so until May the 16th 1916. This was a source of immense hurt and suffering for him. He spent the intervening time looking for money to keep Edermine open, giving retreats in England and Ireland. His health began to suffer and this was causing him much stress. He refers to this in one of his letters dated January 18th 1915. *"I have been suffering greatly"* he writes from London to one of his monks in Ireland; *"the influenza has taken a dangerous turn. My weakness is such that I can scarcely stand."* [5]

The set up in Edermine faced many difficulties and the war made it practically impossible to maintain contact with Meredsous, which led to confusion and uncertainty regarding the status of Edermine. In addition, the outbreak of the War of Independence in Ireland led to further uncertainty. Eventually it was decided to close Edermine.

"There were three things to be decided in relation to Edermine as soon as the war ended:
Who was the responsible superior of the house? (ii) Would Edermine continue in existence, as a permanent Irish foundation? And (iii) What was to be done about those monks who had been the main instigators of the Edermine crisis?! [6]

The house and lands were sold on the 27th of January 1920.
In the meantime, the war had ended and the monastery marked this event with the ringing of the its bells which had been silent since 1914.

There was one outstanding issue which had to be dealt with and which required infinite tact. The original monks who were involved in establishing Maredsous came from the Congregation of Beuron which is in Germany. There were very strong anti-German emotions in Belgium after the war. One can easily understand this after all the Belgians had suffered and endured. Pope Benedict XV was very conscious of this and by Decree on the 20th of February 1920 sanctioned the separation of monasteries of Maradsous and Mont-César from Beuron.

Gradually life in Maredsous returned to what the monks had experienced before the outbreak of the war. But the health of Dom Columba continued to decline. Despite this he continued to travel around Europe, giving retreats and visiting monasteries where difficulties arose. Dom Columba died on the 30th of January 1923 after a brief illness.

Spiritual writings

Dom Columba’s reputation as a retreat master and teacher grew rapidly during his lifetime. He was also a gifted theologian and teacher. He was in constant demand and despite his failing health continued to do his best to meet the many requests to him to speak. He gave many retreats not only in Europe but also in England and Ireland. He published very little during his lifetime.

His first publication was *Christ, the life of the Soul*, which appeared in 1916. This became very popular very quickly. This was followed by *Christ in his Mysteries,* (1919), *Christ, the Ideal of the Monk* (1922) and *Sponsa Verbi* (1923). These were not written by him but were based on his notes during his conferences with his monastic community.

At the core of his message was his desire to make sure that each of us would become aware that we can really become the sons and daughters of God through Jesus. We become the children of God in baptism.

Beatification

Dom Columba was beatified by Pope John Paul II on 3 September 2000. The beatification was attended by many pilgrims from Ireland as well as members of the Marmion family. Also beatified on the same day were the former popes John XXIII and Pius IX. In addition, two other clerics were also beatified on the same day. These were Bishop Tommaso Reggio (1818-1901) a former Archbishop of Genoa, founder of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Martha, and Guillaume

Joseph Chaminade (1761 – 1850), who served as a priest in Bordeaux, founder of the Society of Mary.

Mrs Patricia Bitzan, an American, also attended the beatification. Patricia had been diagnosed with cancer and given just a few months to live. Once she heard this news she travelled with her husband Donald to Europe in 1966. Dom

DOM COLUMBA
MARMION

Blessed Dom Marmion's tomb.

Columba's reputation for sanctity had grown very quickly after his death and in no time his tomb was drawing many pilgrims. Patricia and her husband spent four days at the tomb of Dom Columba.

"Bitzan and her husband spent four days at the Maredsous Abbey in southern Belgium, asking the deceased Abbot Marmion to intercede on her behalf. ``*We went to the abbot's tomb every day and said our prayers*," she said." [7]. On returning to the US, they went to their doctor who informed them that Patricia's cancer had disappeared. In September 2007 Patricia and her husband returned to Maredsous. "*As I placed my hand on the cool marble of his tomb, I could again feel the bond to Blessed Marmion that has remained with me since my first visit on August 8, 1966. I am humbled and grateful for the gift of life that God has given me through his intercession.".*[8]

When he became abbot, Marmion's motto was, "To serve rather than to rule".

References

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2 Abbot Columba Marmion by Dom Raymund Thibaut, translated from the French by Mother Mary St. Thomas. P. 21
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6 Mark Tierney, OSB. Blessed Columba Marmion (The Columba Press, Colour Books Ltd, Dublin 2000). P. 92
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THE BURNING OF PALMERSTON HOUSE

Brian McCabe

Dermot Bourke, the Seventh Earl of Mayo resided at Palmerston House County Kildare during the Civil War. Dermot had been an opponent of the Home Rule and independence movements and would, accordingly, certainly not have been popular with nationalists in the area. However it was probably not for this reason alone that his house was targeted for burning in January 1923. Dermot had earlier come to terms with the reality of an independent Ireland and, indeed, had encouraged his unionist peers and friends to do the same, having recognised that they had been, effectively, abandoned by the British administration.

A report in the local unionists newspaper, the Kildare Observer, in January 1922 reported him as speaking at a meeting *“of the kaleidoscopic changes that had placed all public departments in the charge of an Irish Provisional Government. Those present could not call themselves Unionists any longer. Country gentlemen wished to live in peace in their homes in Ireland, and also carry out their business. They could not remain simply to go out to hunt, course, fish and otherwise amuse themselves. Their duty was to take part in building up their country and take part in the affairs of the country with the new Government now in possession. The castle had been given over in its entirety to the Provisional Government and there could be no falling back or shirking. His lordship, after saying he had no use for those landlords who scuttled away from Ireland and grumbled, quoted Mr Arthur Griffiths’s declaration about Southern Unionists and the representation to be given”.*

In return for his stance, he was rewarded by being included in that group of unionists who had been appointed to the new Senate of the Irish Free State by W.T Cosgrave. When the new Free State came into existence on 6th December 1922, ‘Seanad Eireann’ was instituted to form, along with ‘Dail Eireann’, the new ‘Oireachtas’. These appointments were made to send a clear signal that those who had been previously involved in the administration of the country, or in positions of power, would continue to have a role to play in the new dispensation, provided they accepted the authority of the new Government. In fact, three Kildare men, from unionist backgrounds, Lord Mayo, Sir Bryan Mahon and Henry Greer, were appointed to serve for a term of six years.

Unfortunately, these men were to find themselves becoming prime targets as the Civil War, which had broken out in June of that year, spread and intensified. Attack and counter-attack quickly led to executions and reprisals in an ever-spiraling circle of viciousness. By January 1923, the leader of the Anti-Treaty IRA, Liam Lynch, had ordered that the houses of the new Free State Senators should be targeted.

Accordingly, on the night of 29th January, a number of armed men called to Mayo's home at Palmerstown House and informed him that they had come to burn the house. The burning was reported by the local newspaper, the Leinster Leader, in the following terms:

"At 9.30 on Monday night, the Irish residence of Senator, the Earl of Mayo and the Countess of Mayo, was entered by armed men who set the massive building on fire, destroying it and its contents. Lord and Lady Mayo had finished dinner and there were in the house with them at the time, two male and six female servants. Two young fellows knocked at the front door which was opened by the butler. They demanded money and he shut the door speedily without answering them. Some minutes later, a knock came to the servants entrance and the hall boy, enquiring 'who was there?': 'an orderly officer of the Irish Republican Army'.

He opened the door and three men entered, armed with revolvers. They left and returned in a few minutes with petrol tins. They were met by Lord Mayo who asked what they wanted. They said they had come to burn the house 'as a reprisal for the execution of six men at the Curragh'. They *proceeded through the house and sprinkled the main hall, dining room and drawing room with petrol.*

They allowed the servants a quarter of an hour to remove their personal belongings. Lord Mayo asked if they would give him time to remove his best pictures and his plate, and they consented. The plate and some valuable pictures were removed, also the contents of the study, kitchen, scullery and housekeepers room. In all, about half an hour was allowed. Then matches were set to the saturated rooms and in a few moments, the place was a roaring mass of flame. The raiders left, having stated that they could not wait and wanted to get back to Dublin. Military from Naas, and the military fire brigade from the Curragh arrived on the scene, but nothing could be done to save the fine mansion, which was completely gutted. The offices and servants' quarters adjoining were saved."

The Irish Independent carried a similar report, adding that *"The ruins of Lord Mayo's magnificent mansion at Palmerstown, Naas, still continued to smoulder yesterday. A floor over the wine cellar having collapsed in the meantime, blocking the entrance to the cellar, which is stated to contain wines valued for about £1,000..."* It added that *"On Wednesday Lord Mayo assisted his workmen energetically in striving to extinguish the still glowing embers of the fire. Lord Mayo has declared that he will not be driven from his own country, and that he will not leave his ruined home, but will live in the undamaged wing, hitherto used as servants' quarters."*

The reference, in the Leinster Leader report, to the executions in the Curragh refers to the execution, by firing squad, of seven captured republicans by Free State soldiers on 19 December 1922. The men, Stephen White, Joseph Johnson, Patrick Mangan, Patrick Nolan , Bryan Moore, James O'Connor, and Patrick Bagnel, had been charged with unlawful possession of guns and ammunition, tried before a military tribunal, and executed. An eighth man, Tom Behan, had been struck on the head with a rifle butt and died at the arrest scene, so one can imagine that feelings would have been running strongly in the area in the aftermath.

This would certainly have added another motive for the attack, but the significance of Mayo's being a Senator is also highlighted in his own detailed account of what happened that night. That account was given in a hearing in Naas District Court during a subsequent claim for compensation by Mayo for the burning of the house. It was reported by the Leinster Leader as follows:

"Lord Mayo: Two lads came to the front door and knocked. The door was opened by my butler. One of them made a snatch at his watch chain. The men were disguised. The butler shut the door and came and reported to me that there were two men outside looking for me. The postman arrived from Naas shortly afterwards and came to deliver the letters to the back door. I guessed what was up, and I ordered the back door to be locked. That was not done.

I then went upstairs and when I came down, the butler informed me that the two men had entered the house and said they were going to burn it. As I had put out the light, I asked to have it re-lit so that I could see these two men. One of them appeared to be disguised and I doubt if he was armed. The other man was fully armed with a service rifle. He covered him and me while this individual spoke to me. Lady Mayo then came out of the drawing room and this man, who was covered by the armed man, said "Lord Mayo, I believe, is a Senator" Her ladyship said "Yes" and then she went back to the drawing room. The man then said "We have come to burn the house". I said "Surely you would not burn this house full of beautiful things" and he said "We have our orders my Lord". I then said "Are you going to shoot me?" and he replied "No, my lord, we are not going to shoot you, but we have orders to burn the building". "I suppose, at all events, you will give me twenty minutes for the servants and ourselves to get some wearing apparel while the house is burning?" He said he would. At the end of twenty minutes the place was set on fire.

I managed to save pictures that are mentioned in the details of the contents, including three Sir Joshuas, two Titians and most of my hunting clothes. By that time, the incendiaries had entered the dining room and saturated the thick carpet with petrol, and the room was in blazes in a moment. I went and opened the door of the dining room and I found it a flaming furnace. Nobody has any conception of the fumes from that room – I shall never forget it. I didn't get my throat right for 18 months afterwards…

I went into the house again and attempted, with a hand pump, to extinguish the fire in the hall, but the raiders had done the job excessively well, because not only did they use petrol but also those little pastiles which the Germans used during the war, and which are impossible to put out with anything whatsoever. It is only right to say that the raiders were excessively polite.

By this time, I thought it better to call some of my own men up. My groom accompanied me to my study which contained important private papers as well as all the bills of the old house. Every scrap that was in the room was saved by myself and my groom, and also with the help of four very fine looking Free State soldiers who, when they saw the glare in the sky, motored as hard as they could from Newbridge barracks. Things were so bad that I was giving up hopes of saving a piece of furniture that was given to me as a wedding present, when my groom said he would fetch it. The soldiers knocked the casement out of the window, which was a rather dangerous operation considering that the rifles were loaded and some of them had the catches down. I have been a soldier six years myself and I told them to put up the catches. The casing was knocked out, and eight minutes afterwards my groom left the room, having secured the article. A moment later, the ceiling fell in and the room was in flames.

That is the whole story of what occurred that night"

Mayo was awarded total compensation of £51,831 for the burning - comprising £36,331 for the house itself and £15,500 for the contents. Unlike many others who received compensation for 'big house' burnings, Mayo actually rebuilt the house, albeit on a smaller scale, and took up residence there again.

The house of his fellow Senator, Sir Bryan Mahon, Mullaboden House in Ballymore Eustace, was burned on 16 February but, by then, Sir Bryan (a retired British Army general) had vacated the house. It was never rebuilt.

Mayo later moved to London, where he died, in a nursing home, on 31st December 1927, at the age of 77, leaving an estate worth £70,000. In his will, he bequeathed to his trustees the plate, furniture, china, glass, ornaments, prints, pictures, busts, statues, bronzes, marbles, vases, jewellery, medals, antiques, books and manuscripts in or belonging to the Mansion House at Palmerstown, on trust to allow the articles to devolve as heirlooms.

PATRICK SARSFIELD

Jim Heffernan

Origins

The first Sarsfields to arrive in Ireland landed in 1172 with Henry II on his mission to gain control of those of his barons who had seized lands in Ireland. The family established themselves at Lucan; this remained the home of the senior branch of the family. Patrick Sarsfield's father, Patrick, a great-grandson of Sir William Sarsfield head of the Lucan Branch had his seat at Tully Castle where Patrick was brought up. For centuries such families had supported the English crown but when the Reformation and the subsequent plantations established a dominant Protestant element the interests of these "old English" families fused with those of their fellow Catholic, indigenous Irish.

Patrick Sarsfield Senior married Annie O'More the daughter of Rory O'More a leading figure in the Kilkenny Confederacy which was in rebellion against the English Crown and its successor the Cromwellian Protectorate. Patrick Senior supported the Confederacy and as a result of this Patrick senior, who ironically, was ejected from both the Lucan (which he had just inherited from a cousin) and Tully properties by the Cromwellians on 20th June 1657 and given a modest holding in Clare. Lucan Manor was granted to a prominent Cromwellian Sir Theophilis Jones and Tully to a Dublin Alderman David Hutchinson. In 1661 after the restoration of the Monarchy Sarsfield was able, with some difficulty, to obtain a ruling that the estates be returned to the family. However, although Hutchinson went quietly, Jones who was not without influence refused to budge from Lucan Manor. After a complicated legal wrangle the Court of Claims struck a compromise; Patrick Sarsfield senior was refused possession because of his involvement with the Confederacy and Jones was allowed to retain possession for his lifetime. After Jones's death Lucan Manor was to pass to Sarsfield's eldest son William. In the event William died relatively young from Smallpox and Jones outlived him by a decade!

Sarsfield's early years

Because of the family's reduced circumstances during the eleven years of Cromwellian rule nothing is known of Patrick Sarsfield's place or date of birth. Because Lucan Manor was unavailable the children grew up in Tully Castle in Kildare the site of a former commandery of the Knights Hospitaller. There were four children in the family William, the eldest, two girls Frances and Anne and Patrick himself who was probably ten years younger than William.

In 1671 William married Mary Walter. Mary's mother was Lucy Walter an early mistress of King Charles II. Lucy had a son in 1649 of whom Charles acknowledged paternity creating him the Duke of Monmouth. Charles did not acknowledge Mary, born 1651, whose reputed father was Henry Bennet, the Earl of Arlington.

Career options for Patrick were limited as Catholics were barred from the professions and from commissions in the army. He was however able to fulfill his ambition to become a soldier through the influence of his relation by marriage to the Duke of Monmouth. Monmouth was colonel-proprietor of the "Royal Anglais" a regiment serving with the French army. Sarsfield received training as a cavalry officer at an elite French academy and saw action in the southern Netherlands in 1672-73. However sentiment in England was changing to favour an alliance with the Dutch and the Royal Anglais were recalled to England and Sarsfield found himself living in London. Again through Monmouth's influence he obtained a commission as a lieutenant in the elite Kings Lifeguards.

In 1678 Sarsfield was about to be appointed to a newly formed regiment to be sent to France at the expense of the French king when events shattered his prospects. Titus Oats, a notorious, habitual liar, informed the Privy Council of a "Popish Plot" to assassinate the king and replace him with his Catholic brother James. Mass hysteria broke out and prominent Catholics were hounded out of home and office. In the frenzied atmosphere a proclamation was issued ordering all "Papist recusants" to leave London. Sarsfield got as far as Chester before being detained until a letter from the Secretary of State instructed the Mayor to release Sarsfield and others as they had merely been obeying the Proclamation. Learning that he had been dismissed from the army and was unemployed Sarsfield continued his journey to Ireland. In Ireland Sarsfield, who was short of money, occupied himself in trying to obtain his back pay from the Army and involving himself in the matter of Lucan Manor to which he had become the heir on the death of his brother William's young son. The issue had been further complicated as William's widow had challenged the will delaying matters further.

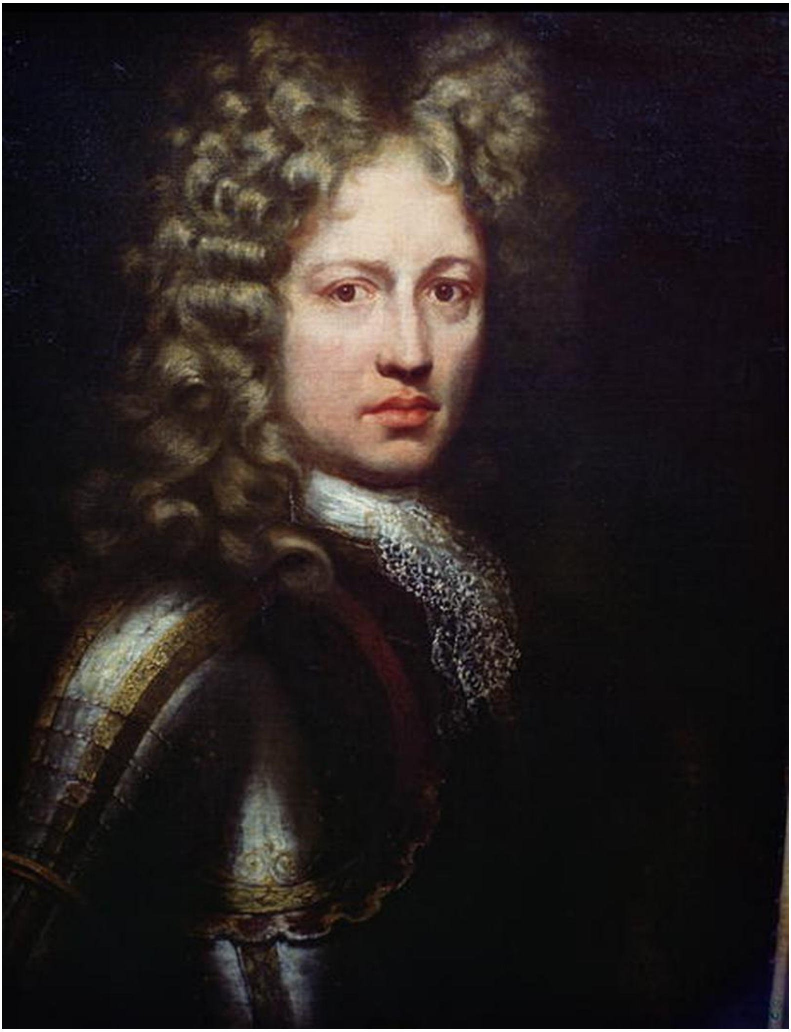
Sarsfield returned to London in 1681 where, evidently restless, he soon made trouble for himself. He was briefly arrested for duelling and was twice wounded while participating in duels. Worse was to come; it was a practice at the time for disappointed suitors to abduct young ladies, usually heiresses or wealthy widows, in the hope of persuading them to marry. Sarsfield was involved in two such escapades once on his own account and once when assisting a friend.

The Royal Succession and the Monmouth Rebellion

The Exclusion Crisis of 1678-81 arose from attempts to debar Charles II's brother James from ascending the throne on account of his conversion to Catholicism. Several attempts were passed through Parliament but Charles would not give his assent and ultimately prorogued Parliament and ruled without it. . Meanwhile there had been suggestions of legitimising Charles' illegitimate son Monmouth who was entertaining notions of becoming King.

In February 1685 Charles II died aged 54 and was succeeded by his brother James. Monmouth who was exiled in Holland attempted to gain the crown for himself. He landed in Dorset in June 1685 with a number of supporters and raised an army in the West Country. As King James' forces were assembling Sarsfield offered his services as a gentleman volunteer, he was assigned to a troop of horse under Colonel Oglethorpe.

Monmouth's army consisting mainly of inexperienced peasants was annihilated at the bloody battle of Sedgemoor and Monmouth was subsequently executed for treason. By contrast Sarsfield fared well. His performance during the campaign had been noticed by King James and, benefiting from James's removal of the ban on Catholic officers, he obtained a position in a newly raised regiment of horse.



Patrick Sarsfield

King James continued to antagonise his Protestant subjects by implementing a "Declaration of Indulgence" granting freedom of worship to Catholics and Dissenters. Matters were brought to a head when Queen Mary of Medina, James's Catholic second wife, gave birth to a son who would take precedence over James's Protestant daughters threatening a Catholic dynasty. James's enemys had been colluding for years with William Prince of Orange, who was married to James's elder daughter Mary. William, in response to an 'invitation', landed in England with his army of veteran Dutch and Danish soldiers. The bulk of James's army including its most senior officer, John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, deserted to William. James, who in his career to date had been a competent military commander, appears to have had some kind of mental breakdown, He handled matters badly ultimately fleeing to his cousin King Louis XIV of France who encouraged him to go to Ireland where the Lord Deputy, Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnell remained loyal to James and was raising an army.

James landed in Kinsale on 22 March 1689 with 400 French officers, James Duke of Berwick his natural son with Arabella Churchill sister of John Churchill, hundreds of English and Scottish Jacobites and numerous Irish exiles. He also brought modest quantities of arms, ammunition and money. In Ireland Tyrconnell and James's supporters had raised a large army; however the vast majority were untrained and too many had been recruited. Sarsfield was given the task of reducing the numbers. Reviewing twenty-two companies at Birr he found that most were without weapons, uniforms or boots. He selected the fittest and dismissed the rest. Sarsfield moved on to Portumna where the Earl of Clanricard had raised a large regiment. It was here that Sarsfield met the earl's fifteen year old sister Lady Honoria Burke and after a whirlwind romance the couple married.

The Jacobites were encountering strong resistance in the North where Derry and Enniskillen in particular were Williamite strongholds. The Enniskilleners were causing serious difficulties and Sarsfield was sent with a force to engage them. Encountering a force under Gustave Hamilton near Belleek he was outmaneuvered and forced to withdraw with heavy losses.

Following further Jacobite losses, culminating in the heavy defeat of a Jacobite army at Newtownbutler under Lord Moutcashel Sarsfield withdrew to Sligo. After withdrawing from Sligo in the face of advancing Williamite forces he eventually returned with reinforcements and drove the Williamites out of Sligo.

In August 1689 a Williamite Army under Marshall Schomberg landed in County Down to join up with the Ulster Protestant forces effectively ending the Jacobites' hopes of controlling the North. The Jacobite army was encamped at Dundalk but James disregarded the urging of his offices to engage Schomberg before he was reinforced and decided to fall back to a position on the Boyne. Schomberg continued to receive reinforcements and on 14th June 1690 William landed at Carrickfergus with a large army and moved to join Schomberg.

On 1st July the Jacobites, now commanded by a French general, the Duc de Lauzun, found themselves facing the Williamite army, superior in numbers and quality, across the Boyne a fordable river. Many of James' officers advised that they should withdraw and regroup in strong defensive positions west of the Shannon as Dublin had no strategic importance but because of Dublin's political importance James insisted that they hold the line of the Boyne.

On 1st July 1690 William's Dutch "Blue Guards" led the assault wading the river holding their muskets above their heads. The Jacobite cavalry performed well inflicting heavy casualties on the Blue Guards; the Jacobite infantry however made up of raw recruits and facing battle-hardened Dutch and Danish infantry, performed badly. Subsequently when it became clear that the Williamites had crossed the Boyne downstream at Oldbridge the Jacobites had to retreat to avoid being encircled. Sarsfied had been ordered to guard James and was stationed with two regiments of cavalry on a hill at the rear of the battlefield. When James decided to flee Sarsfield escorted him back to Dublin from where James travelled back to France.

The First Siege of Limerick and Ballyneety

In August 1690 William appeared before the walls of Limerick and demanded its surrender. After receiving a refusal he ordered his artillery to open fire. It soon became clear that the light cannon the Williamites had with the main body of the army were ineffective and that they would have to wait for their siege train, travelling some days behind, which had eight heavy cannon capable of reducing the walls to rubble.

A deserter from William's army had brought news of the siege train and its location to Limerick and Sarsfield who commanded the Jacobite cavalry decided to take action. At midnight on 9th August 1690 Sarsfield slipped out of Limerick with a company of horse and made his way to the main cavalry camp at Clarecastle where he gathered more cavalry and dragoons. Augmented by further cavalry which had been defending a ford on the Shannon he now had 500 horsemen. They made their way north along the west bank of the Shannon and crossed the river at Ballyvally north of Killaloe. Guided by a raparee "Galloping Hogan", they made their way through Torc, Rathfine and Rear Cross to Glengar where they lay low observing the dust cloud which marked the progress of the two mile long siege train. As dusk approached the siege train and its cavalry escort set up camp beside Ballyneety Castle.

Sarsfield and his men approached the camp in darkness they had been informed by an old woman who had been selling apples in the camp that the password was "Sarsfield". When challenged by an alert sentry Sarsfield is reputed to have shouted "Sarsfield is the word and Sarsfield is the man" as the Jacobites rode the sentries down and charged through the camp cutting down the half-awake Williamites; dozens were killed and the survivors fled. The Jacobites destroyed the guns, wagons and ammunition in a huge explosion which caused the walls of Ballyneety Castle to collapse. Williamite cavalry, which had belatedly been dispatched to engage Sarsfield, heard the explosion from five miles away and rode to Killaloo to intercept Sarsfield but he returned by a different route and crossed the Shannon to safety.

William who was under pressure to conclude the siege because of the approach of Autumn and unfavourable weather and of the need to return to his forces in Flanders had to await the arrival of a new siege train. After meeting further fierce resistance from the defenders he withdrew his army to Dublin and left Ireland.

After William's departure command of his army fell to Baron Ginkel the commander of the Dutch contingent. In the aftermath Sarsfield was created Earl of Lucan, Viscount of Tully and Baron of Roseberry; he was also promoted to the rank of Major General. On 21st September 1690 a Williamite army under the Duke of Marlborough landed in Cork and captured the towns of Cork and Kinsale . Contingents under Berwick and Sarsfield attempted to relieve the two towns but were driven back by stronger forces and both ports were lost to the Jacobites. However they were subsequently able to frustrate Williamite attempts to cross the Shannon at various points.

In September 1690 Tyrconnell appointed Berwick governor of Limerick and he and Lauzun, sailed from Galway to France. Sarsfied was ad hoc military commander during the winter of 1690-91 and carried out raids on Williamite forces supported by raparees. On 7th May 1690 Tyrconnell returned from France with a new French commander, Charles Chalmont Marquis of St Ruth.

In June Ginkel laid siege to Athlone and met with fierce resistance. On 18th June the Jacobite volunteers with heavy losses succeeded in destroying the bridge over the Shannon. An attack the hastily repaired bridge failed. At this point St Ruth made a fatal blunder, assuming that Ginkel had raised the siege and withdrawn he ordered his main force back to Ballinasloe leaving three battalions of raw troops to hold the town. St Ruth could not be persuaded that Ginkel had in fact not withdrawn. Sarsfield was incensed and in vain had a heated, bitter argument with St Ruth. Word soon arrived that Ginkel had stormed and taken Athlone; the Williamites had finally crossed the Shannon!

The Jacobite army at this point was very different from that which had been defeated at the Boyne. Its soldiers were battle-hardened and approximately equal in numbers to their opponents. St Ruth intended to fight a pitched battle and defeat Ginkel on ground of his choosing. St Ruth selected a site near Aughrim Castle which dominated the roads to the west. The main body of Jacobite infantry were positioned on Kilcommodan Hill, its slopes were lined with hedges providing cover for defending musketeers and faced difficult marshy terraine. The Jacobite flanks were guarded by two lines of infantry supported by two lines of cavalry. Sarsfield, perhaps because of his bitter argument with St Ruth, was commanding the reserve cavalry behind the right flank.

Ginkel initially attacked the Jacobite right flank where his infantry suffered heavy losses as they waded through the marsh attempting to take the Teiriean Bridge carrying the Laurencetown Road. At this point the Jacobites were winning the battle and Ginkel switched his attack to the Jacobite left flank which had been deemed the more difficult. This involved a desperate attack across a narrow causeway over which horsemen could only ride two abreast. Musketeers in Aughrim Castle were covering the causeway but running low on ammunition they opened their ammunition boxes to find that they contained French musket balls which were too large for the barrels of their English muskets. Carrying the causeway the Williamite cavalry attacked the Jacobites’ exposed left flank. Brigadier Henry Lutterell was close by with a regiment of dragoons for the express purpose of dealing with such a situation however he treacherously turned away and led his regiment off the battlefield. St Ruth observed what was happening and quickly moved to deal with it. However he was decapitated by a cannon ball and had not shared his intention with his subordinates; the subsequent confusion resulted in a rout as the Jacobite flank was turned. Jacobite dead numbered 7,000. Sarsfield's reserve cavalry were the only body whose discipline remained and he did his best to cover the retreat as the main group fled towards Limerick.

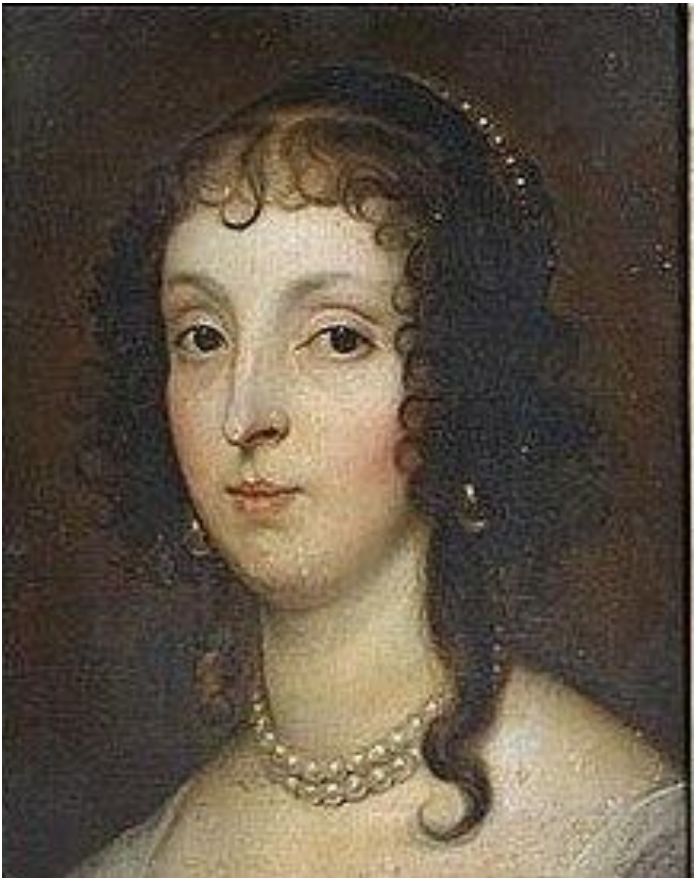
The Second Siege of Limerick and the Treaty

In the aftermath of the disaster of Aughrim Galway and Sligo surrendered on terms leaving Limerick as the last Jacobite stronghold in Ireland. On 30 August 1691 the siege began in earnest with heavy artillery fire from both sides. T he defences had been strengthened since the previous siege and ultimately Ginkel decided to attempt to cross the river by constructing a pontoon bridge upstream and surrounding the city. This should have been a highly risky enterprise but Brigadier Robert Clifford who was responsible for that part of the river affected not to notice the construction of the bridge and withdrew his force to Thomond Gate. Subsequently Ginkel's forces crossed the river in strength and blockaded the city cutting it off from the Jacobite cavalry which was based in Clare.

The Jacobites were now in a position where they could hold out for months with no realistic possibility of relief. Sarsfield who had previously opposed any negotiation now formed the view that a surrender where they were still relatively strong would obtain better terms than waiting until they were weaker when unconditional surrender might be the only option. Sarsfield was the main negotiator in the discussions with Ginkel who was under pressure to join the main theatre of war in Flanders. The treaty agreed contained "military articles" which addressed the disposition of the Army allowing soldiers retain their arms and to chose to go to France with their wives and dependants or to transfer to the Williamite army. The military articles were honoured and the vast majority who chose the former option were transported to France on French and English ships. This was not the case with the "civil articles" which dealt with freedom of worship and possession of land however. The Protestant Parliament in Dublin infamously rejected them and repression of Catholics increased with penal laws lasting for a century

The Last Days in France

In April 1692 Sarsfield was made a Marshal of France. He was killed on August 21 1693. by a musket ball. while leading a



Lady Honoria Burke (1675-98) wife of Patrick Sarsfield

cavalry charge at the head of a French regiment in the Battle of Landen. Sarsfield was probably buried in the graveyard of St Martin's Church in the town of Huys, Belgium. Sarsfield's wife Honoria was left destitute, aged 18, with an infant son and no support from her own people. However Berwick, now a general in the French army, supported her and she later married him. Sarsfield's son, James Francis Edward, became a colonel in the Irish Brigade. He died without issue of natural causes in 1719.

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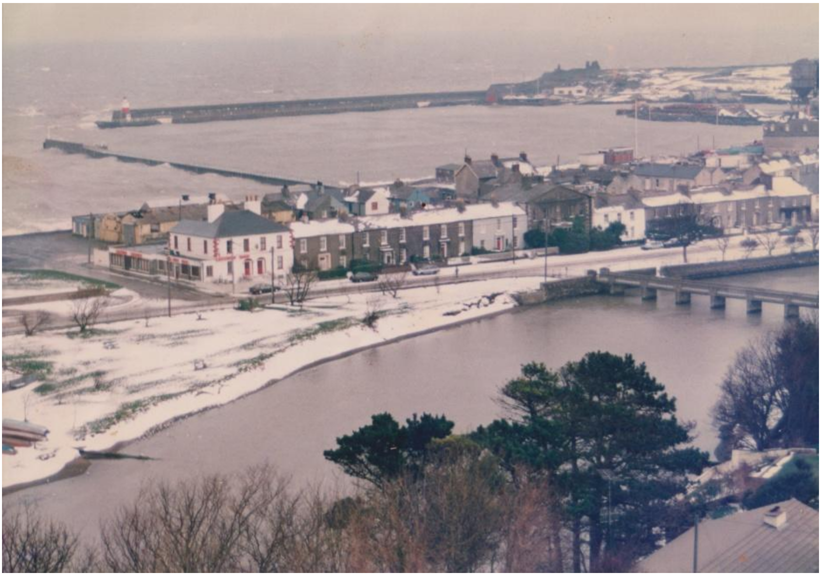
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF WICKLOW TOWN

Brendan Cullen

Since an article on the old historic Gaol in Wicklow Town was published in Coiseanna 2019 a number of readers who visited the Gaol indicated that their knowledge of Wicklow Town was very limited and they expressed a desire to know more about its history. It's in response to this request that the following article is presented here.



Wicklow Harbour showing the North and East Piers

That some form of settlement has existed on, or near, the present site of Wicklow Town from early historic times is certain. Legend attributes the foundation of settlement here to St. Patrick and one of his companions, St. Mantan, who built a church here and from whom the town gets its name.

In the 8th century the Norse landed and later settled at the mouth of the river. During this period the town formed part of the Norse Kingdom of Dublin which stretched south along the east coast as far as Arklow. That this Norse settlement was an important one is evidenced by the fact that during this period the place name was changed to Wykinglo, which still survives today in the anglicised form of Wicklow. However, it is with the arrival of the Normans and the establishment here of a Norman settlement that the origin of the town is to be sought. Evidence of the importance of the place in medieval times is found in the remains of a castle and a friary each located at opposite ends of the modern town. The castle, called the Black Castle is built on a rocky promontory overlooking the sea and is separated from the mainland by a large artificial fosse. The date of its construction is unknown but it is believed to have been commenced by Maurice Fitzgerald, Baron of Naas, ancestor to the Earls of Kildare, who accompanied Robert Fitzstephen to Ireland. The earliest reference to the castle is in 1174 "contained in a grant from Henry 11 to Earl Richard." The presence of the castle, occupying a prominent position overlooking the town from the east was paramount in the subsequent development and formation of Wicklow. After the Normans had settled the area and up to the 17th century the town's historical evolution is largely the story of the castle and its struggle for survival against the indigenous clans who inhabited the nearby mountains and who made many incursions into the lowlands with drastic consequences both for town and castle. Located in close proximity to the Wicklow uplands which were inhabited by the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles, the Norman fortification was the object of many bitter attacks by the Irish who resented the intrusion of an alien culture into lands they considered to be rightfully theirs. Wicklow town was part of the territory granted to Maurice Fitzgerald by Strongbow, along with the middle cantred of Offalan and Naas.

Gradually, the Norman conquest consolidated itself and by the time of Henry 111's accession to the throne in1216 all east Wicklow had been taken over by them. It was during this period of Norman dominance that the Franciscan Abbey of Wicklow was built. It was probably built by one of the Fitzgeralds who had possession of the town at the time. It later came under the Patronage of the Irish clans in the 14th or 15th centuries, who renovated it, thereby meriting the name of "founders" by contemporary writers. Unlike the castle, the monastery failed to attract settlement to its immediate neighbourhood.

The remains of the Black Castle

By the 15th century the O'Byrnes had extended their territory from Delgany to Arklow and west to Glenmalure while the O'Tooles had spread from Imaal to Glencree. It was during this period that the inhabitants of the town were subject to "Black Rents" by the Irish chiefs. Nevertheless, throughout these troubled times the town survived and trade flourished. Its harbour came into prominence principally on account of its trade in "Vycklow Boards" which were used for building purposes. It seems that the town at this time was divided into an Irish town and an English town. The name "Irishtown" survives locally today and is identified with Castle Street and the "Ballalley" areas both of which are located near the castle but outside its precincts.

Wicklow Town seems never to have been walled although after the fall of the Geraldines in 1535 many proposals were made to fortify it adequately. How the town was defended remains obscure and no ruins of ancient walls or gates survive to tell us. This is rather astonishing as Wicklow was located in hostile country and was the object of frequent raids by the clans. In the early part of the 16th century the town was in the possession of the O'Byrnes. It was during the reign of Henry V111 in 1543 with the recovery of the colonists once again to superiority in arms that the town and castle were surrendered to the king. The clans agreed "that the king shall have the town and castle free and totally exonerated from their impositions." Throughout the reign of Elizabeth staunch efforts were made to subdue the clans but with little success. In 1580 the town was again the object of attack. The castle was destroyed and the town burned to the ground. The castle was rebuilt and again garrisoned. It was once more burned in 1597 along with the town which suffered further destruction at the hands of the Irish. By the end of the 16th century the only place held by the English in O'Byrne's Country was the castle of Wicklow.

The ruins of the friary

The 17th century was a significant one in the historical development of Wicklow town. It witnessed the granting of a Charter to the town, conferring upon it urban status and it saw the final suppression of the native clans in their mountainous stronghold; thus giving the town a period of peace in which it could develop as an urban settlement and carry on the functions characteristic of such an establishment.

However, early 17th century Wicklow just emerging from the troubled period of 300 years was in decay as a result of the repeated burnings suffered by it at the hands of the clans. The opening lines of the Charter, granted in 1614 by James 1 are enlightening and give us a good picture of the town after the preceding eventful years.

"At the humble request of the inhabitants of the town of Wicklow as being willing to plant and inhabit the town of Wicklow being waste and unpeopled and to establish the same according to the republic of England."

The town was constituted a borough by the Charter and was placed under a portreeve and burgesses. It was granted the power of returning two members to Parliament; a privilege which it exercised until the Act of Union when it was disfranchised. The privileges conferred on the citizens by the Charter were confined solely to the English colonists and could not be attained by the native Irish inhabitants. Likewise the Irish were excluded from participation in trade and commerce which were controlled by the English residents. The limits of the borough as defined by the Charter included the town and surrounding countryside for a mile in north, south and west directions but excluded the castle with all its privileges. The townspeople were obliged to pay taxes to the castle annually. That early 17th century Wicklow combined the functions of a market town and a port is evidenced from an inquisition of the period which states:

"that the sixth part of all wood, timber or barque which should be brought to the key (i.e. quay) or market of said town of Wicklow every Saturday or any other day of the week at the election of the constable of the said castle hath been always paid to the constables of the said castle."

Eight years prior to the 1641 Rising Wicklow Town became associated with the name of Wentworth. Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, who first acquired Wicklow, was the second son of Sir William Wentworth, of Wentworth Woodhouse, Yorkshire. At the age of twenty one Thomas sat in the English Parliament as a member for Yorkshire and in 1631 was appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland. In 1636 he was granted the Manor of Newcastle and the Manor of Wicklow which were created out of the part of the O'Byrne Country belonging to the senior branch of the clan and called Crioch Brannach. Thus did Wicklow Town come under the ownership of the Wentworths and subsequently through marriage, the Fitzwilliams. The Wentworth – Fitzwilliam connection with the town is remembered today in the local street names. The Confederate wars broke out in 1641 and once again the castle and the town became prominent in the ensuing struggle. The castle was attacked and besieged by the clans under the command of Luke O'Toole but was relieved by the advance of Sir Charles Coote and his army who retaliated by the brutal massacre of a large number of townspeople in the part of the town now known as Melancholy Lane. From the latter part of the 17th century the castle never assumed its former importance and seems to have gone into disrepair and finally into decay.

With the advent of the 18th century Wicklow Town fades almost into oblivion from a historical point of view. Never does it regain the prominence it enjoyed in former times due mainly to the extinction of the clans and the decay of the castle, thus losing its function as a strategic centre. Brigid Redmond after describing in some detail the warlike past of the town dismisses its 18th century and subsequent history in one sentence; "Wicklow settled down at last and became a quiet provincial town noted in the18th century for its good ale." Its chief claim to fame lay in the presence there of a jail built in the 1700s and used for the detention and execution of the rebels of 1798. Despite rebel activity in the county, the town was relatively peaceful and suffered little damage in comparison with former burnings.

In the early part of the century settlement was still largely confined to the area formerly dominated by the castle. However, towards the end of the century it is probable that some settlement had grown up on the north bank of the river. Certainly the old part of the present town on the south side was taking shape and was gradually elongating along the shore.

Taylor and Skinner’s map of the town in 1777 shows the Main Street almost as it is today. The houses of all classes in the town except the ‘gentry’ were low, clay-walled, thatched dwellings aligned along several narrow, crooked and untidy streets. It was during this period that the first conscious efforts were made to transform the harbour into an artificial port capable of receiving large trading vessels of the time. For this purpose the Baronies of Arklow, Newcastle, North Ballinacor, South Ballinacor and Shillelagh joined in financial aid in an effort to provide the town with a harbour suitable to its needs. The attempt however, seems to have been a failure and the harbour appears to have benefited the town little.

As the 19th century progressed Wicklow gradually began to assume the shape so characteristic of it today and to acquire the function of a market centre for the surrounding countryside. As early as 1838 most of the present streets were in existence. Chief among these were Main Street and Market Square, Irish Street, Gaol Street and Malthouse Lane. However, territorially the town was small and unimpressive. The dwellings were mostly confined to the base of the hill on the south side with a scattering of settlement occupying the southern extremity of the Murrough on the north bank of the river. It consisted primarily of a Main Street and Market Square aligned parallel to the shore and several smaller streets at right angles to Main Street. Powell in his guide gives us a concise picture of it; “It is an old town with a good bridge, a long street, and some respectable shops, a prominent old church and a new chapel, also a courthouse, a gaol and two good hotels. That Wicklow, although the county town, was of little importance or significance to the 19th century traveller is illustrated by Wright in his guide; “*Nor would it be mentioned but that it is the county town.”* The town of this period was not an architectural gem. The streets were *“narrow, irregular, badly aligned and ill adapted to business or comfort and they may be regarded as but a degree superior to a group of lanes.”* The houses were of inferior appearance and *“the town in an architectural view is the poorest of the Assize towns of Ireland and even in general insignificance is exceeded only by Lifford.”* The streets were neither paved nor lighted and remained so until 1898 when the town was constituted an Urban Council with control of such matters.

The principal function of 19th century Wicklow was that of a market centre for the surrounding districts but it also combined the functions of an assize, garrison and port town. The market supplied the townspeople with farm produce grown in the vicinity and was held in the Market Square and Shambles where meat, poultry and vegetables were displayed. The Square then consisted of dwellings and the Market House and was the main commercial zone of the town. Here also were sold the fish caught by the local fishermen – mainly haddock, hake, plaice, sole, mackerel, lobster and to a lesser degree cod, gurnet, whiting and herring. There was no regular market for corn which was brought to the stores on any day of the week. Fairs were held four times a year; March 28th, May 24th, August 12th and November 25th. The Market continued up to the 1930s and the fair was in existence until 1950.

Wicklow was also a garrison town. The first Wicklow Regiment was the 37th Wicklow Infantry militia which was raised in 1793 but was disbanded in 1816. 1855 saw its reorganisation as the 92nd Wicklow Rifles and three years later the staff was moved to the town where premises were hired in the Main Street. In 1879 the regiment was encamped under canvas on the Murrough and the headquarters were moved from Main Street to the Marine Hotel which had been hired by the War Department and converted into a barrack. In 1909 with the introduction of new army regulations the regiment was dispersed. From 1918 to 1922 the old jail, now a tourist attraction, acted as the headquarters of the Chesire Regiment of the British Army and a prison for Sinn Fein and I.R.A. members.The presence of a relatively good harbour contributed much to the prosperity of the town in the 19th century. Traffic was confined to small vessels drawing between 7 and 8 feet of water in consequence of the sand bar at its entrance. Despite this handicap a considerable amount of trade was carried on. This was largely confined to the export of grain and copper ore and to the importation of coal, limestone, timber and iron. In 1835 the exports amounted to £86,000, consisting of 12,000 tons of copper ore and 3,700 tons of grain and its imports for the same year were valued at £15,671. The port continued to prosper and was in a healthy state towards the end of the century, due principally to the repeated improvement of facilities. These included the building of the East Pier in 1884 and the Packet Pier in 1886, the dredging of the sand bar and a general overhaul of the quays. The population of the period remained almost static. Large increases or decreases were uncommon and the total population never exceeded 4,000. The highest figure recorded i.e. 3,666, was in 1851 immediately after the famine when country people flocked to the town seeking work and food. The population rise was only a temporary affair however, and did not cause the town any serious problems of adaptation. From 1861 a steady decline was initiated and continued until 1936 when a small increase was noticeable.

Early 20th century Wicklow, although a small town was relatively prosperous. It still fulfilled the function of a market centre but its economy was also intimately linked with the commercial activities of the harbour. The prosperity of the town fluctuated with the rise and fall of trade there. However, after 1922 and the achievement of independence, the fortunes of the town declined and it suffered a long period of stagnation from which it was to recover only in the 1960s.

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MUSINGS ABOUT MEDIEVAL CASTLES: THE EVIDENCE FROM MILLICENT AND CASTLESIZE TOWNLANDS

Lorcan Harney

Introduction

Castles were fortified stone buildings built in Ireland between the late 12th and the late 16th/early 17th century. These took on many diverse forms. Some of the earliest were also the most impressive and these include the rectangular and cross-shaped donjons (central towers) at Maynooth and Trim (c. late 12th century), the latter of which still retains its fortified curtain walls and gatehouses. In the 13th century, the 'Romanesque' rectangular donjon steadily passed out of fashion as towers were more often built in the 'Gothic' tradition employing circular, semi-circular or polygonal fortified designs (O'Keeffe 2021, 115). Some of these castles consisted of central cylindrical donjons surrounded by curtain walls (e.g., Nenagh and Leixlip), others adopted a quadrangular plan with cylindrical corner donjons, curtain walls and gatehouses enclosing an open internal space (e.g. Dublin Castle), while a final set comprised of rectangular building with cylindrical towers at their corners (e.g. Ferns or Carlow castles).

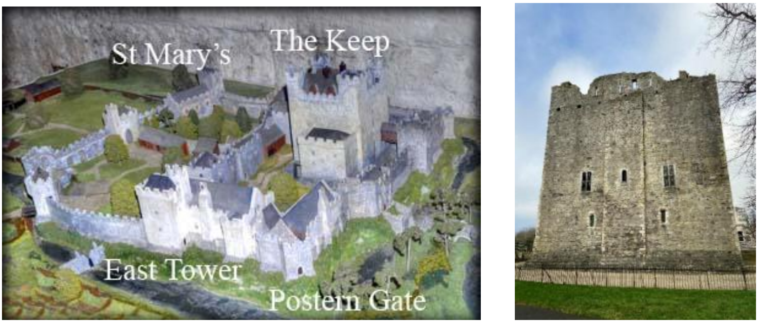

Photo 1 & 2: Above - Reconstruction model of Maynooth Castle with its surrounding curtain walls (left) & remains of central tower today (right - author)

Photo 3: Leixlip Castle (buildingsofireland.ie)

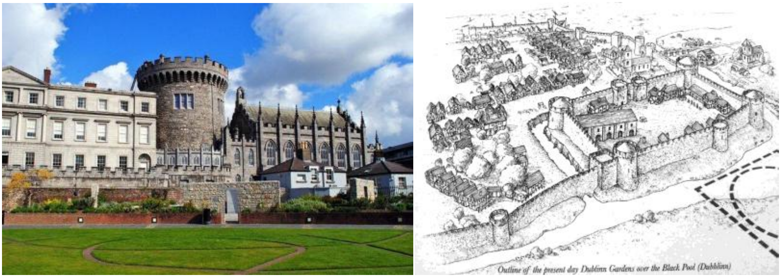
Outline of the present day Dubhlinn Gardens over the Black Pool (Dubhlinn)

Photo 4 & 5: One of the surviving corner towers of Dublin Castle

This wave of castle construction coincided with the expansion and consolidation of the Anglo-Norman lordship in Ireland. Both the Black Death and the revival of Gaelic power in many places on the island precipitated a contraction of the English lordship in the 14th century and a decline in castle construction in this period (O’Keeffe 2021, 184). A rapid proliferation of castle construction, however, took hold around the island during the 15th and early 16th century. This period witnessed the arrival of the ‘tower-house’ - fortified dwellings, typically rectangular in plan and at least three floor levels high. Although tower-houses had a smaller footprint than previous Anglo-Norman castles, they were much more numerous and their appearance reflected the growing ability of a wider range of societal groups (Gaelic Irish and English) to invest in fortified dwellings.

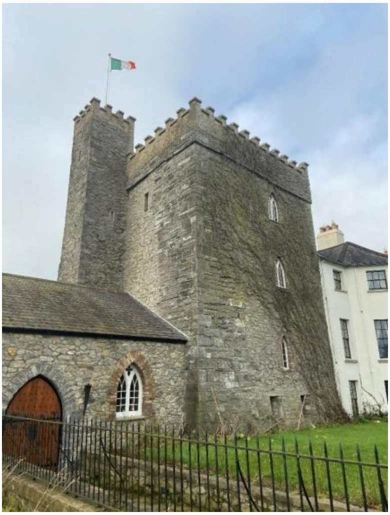

Photo 6: Barberstown Castle (author)

In the case of tower-houses, the door was invariably at ground level, opening into a basement, often vaulted. A staircase within the basement or sometimes in a projecting turret gave access to the residential spaces from the first floor level up (O'Keeffe 2021, 195-97). A fine example of a tower-house exists locally at Barberstown – the first (non-extant) building here was supposedly built by Nicholas Barby in 1288 from which the castle's name derives, but the existing tower-house was apparently built in the late 15th century by the Sutton family (Bourke 2016). Most castles in Ireland – including those from Clane – were most likely built in this period, but very few of these tower-houses are mentioned in the surviving contemporary written sources from this time (O'Keeffe 2021, 184). We would know little, if anything, about many of these buildings, including those from Clane, if it wasn't for 17th-to-19th century sources such as the Cromwellian Civil Survey records of 1654-56, the Census of Ireland, 1659, 18th century watercolours and the Ordnance Survey records from the 1830/40s.

This paper outlines the historical evidence for the now lost 'tower-house' castle in the townlands of Millicent/Castlesize to the south of Clane. Using available historical and toponymic (place-name) sources, it seeks to identify its possible location and to resolve a conundrum of whether two or just one castles were built in these adjoining townlands in this period.

The **case for a castle in Millicent**

The area we now recognise as the townland of Millicent appears to have been referred to as ‘Newtown de Clane’ in sources between the 14th and 16th centuries (Cullen 2013). These sources describe various land disputes and land grants in the townland, including that which involved the granting of the former possessions of the Franciscan Friary to Robert Eustace and Thomas Luttrell in 1542 following its dissolution (Cooke Trench, 1900, 131; Cullen 2013). The Eustace family retained possession of the townland into the 17th century with the Civil Survey of 1654-56 recording that the townland of ‘Newtowne’ was held by Christopher Eustace of Newland near Twomilehouse. The Civil Survey recorded two structures in ‘Newtowne’ and these comprised ‘one corne mill’ that had the letting value of £5 per annum in 1640 and ‘one castle with a hall thereunto adjoyning’ (Simmington 1952, 151). Petty’s Down Survey Map of 1656 shows the site of the castle in ‘Newtowne’ in the area of Millicent house today.

A few years later, the census of Ireland of 1659 recorded a population of 43 in ‘Newtown’ – four of these individuals were described as English with one of these named as Humphrey Mills described as belonging to the gentry class (Pender 1939, 398). His name would suggest he was an English-born Cromwellian adventurer granted land in the Cromwellian plantations in the aftermath of the Wars of the 1640s. From there, the lands of Newtown passed briefly into the possession of James Duke of York (later James II) before his flight from Ireland in 1690 and then to Colonel Robert Harman who served as High Sherriff of County Kildare and enjoyed a long parliamentary career following his retirement from the army in 1728 until his death in 1765 without issue (Saddlier, 1917, 400-01; Cullen 2013). By this point, the townland of Newtown was known as Millicent – the origin of this name is unclear, though the early 20th century owner of Castlesize House, R.M.

Maunders, did recall to Sherlock (1910a, 301-02) that an old corn mill known as Mullina-fooky formerly existed beside Millicent bridge. It was also known as Pucks Mill after a good natured Púca (ghost), whom in folklore used to grind any corn left at the mill overnight (*ibid*).

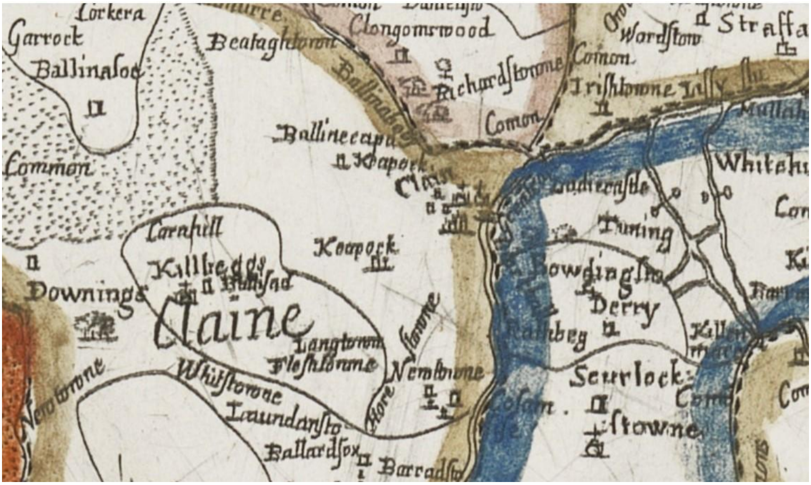
Corkera
Garrock
Ballinaslo
Beatagh
Clongomrwood
Wardstow
Straffa
Richardstowne
Comon
Irishtowne
Liffy
Ballinecapp
Whiteh
Common
Carahill
Killbeggs
Keapock
Downings
Claine
Langtowne
Fleshtowne
Newtowne
Whilstowne
Laundarstown
Ballardsox
Barradst
Horetowne
Tuning
Bowdingst
Derry
Rathbeg
Scurlock stowne

Photo 7: Down Survey Map of 1656-58 showing 'Newtowne' and adjacent townlands including 'Cosamsise' (Castlesize) to its right. 'Newtowne' does not appear to have comprised the total area of Millicent td. today as another townland 'Horetowne' is recorded within its boundaries in the Down Survey

The evidence from Petty's Down Survey Map of 1656 suggests that Millicent House was built in the vicinity of, if not on the site of, the medieval castle itself. There appears to be little or no surviving vestiges of this castle today, but what remains instead is an impressive two-storey 18th century Georgian building with under-basement (Photo 8) (Bence-Jones 1988, 206). Colonel Robert Harman may have been responsible for at least building the oldest part of the House in the first half of the 18th century as it is clearly shown as a large dwelling on Noble & Keenan's Map in 1752 (Cullen 2013- see Photo 9). Following Robert's death, the ownership of Millicent house passed to his close relative, Reverend Cutts Harman, Dean of Waterford, and then to a Michael Keating, originally from Tipperary (Saddlier, 1915, 71) as indicated on the Taylor

& Skinner Map of 1777 (Photo 10), before being purchased by Richard Griffith, MP and proprietor of the Grand Canal Company, in 1782 (McEvoy 1998, 106).

Photo 8: Millicent House

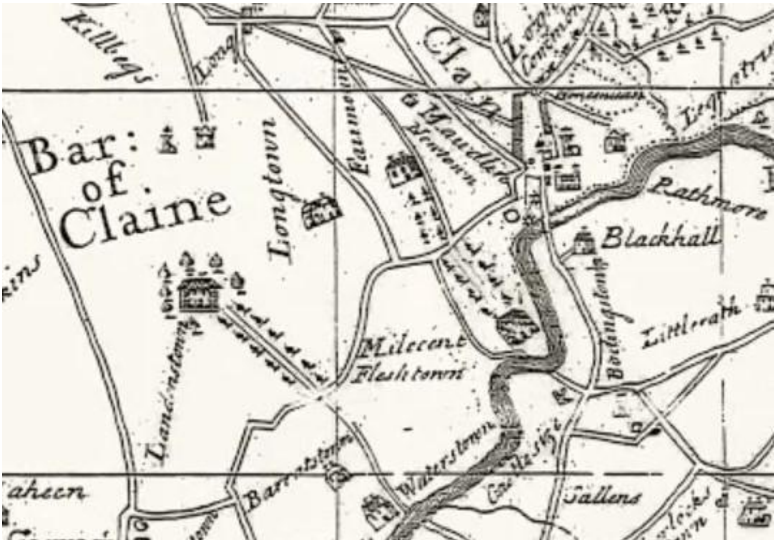
Killbegs
Long
Bar: of Claine
Longtown
Maudlins
Newtown
Rathmore
Blackhall
Littlerath
Milecent
Fleshtown
Landenstown
Barretstown
Waterstown
Castlesize
Tallens

Photo 9: Noble & Keenan Map of County Kildare of 1752 showing 'Milicent' House on left side of Liffey. Note the position of 'Castlesize' to the southeast on the right side of the river Liffey

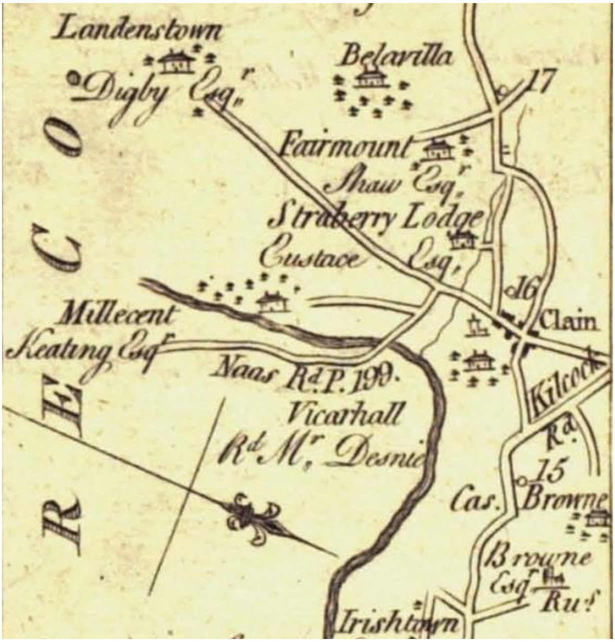
Landenstown
Digby Esq.r
Belavilla
17
Fairmount
Shaw Esq.r
Straberry Lodge
Eustace Esq.
16
Clain
Millecent
Keating Esq.r
Naas Rd. P. 199.
Vicarhall
Rd. Mr. Desnie
Kilcock Rd.
15
Cas. Browne
Browne Esq.r
Ru.s
Irishtown
R E C O

Photo 10: Taylor & Skinner Road Map 1777 showing 'Millecent' House, the then residence of Keating Esq.

Was there a 'castle' at Castlesize?

Based on the above evidence, it is logical to assume that the stately 18th century Millicent House was the successor of the 15th/16th century tower house – this is a pattern widely replicated, for example locally at Rathcoffey, where the remains of the medieval castle were in this instance incorporated into the ruined 18th century mansion. However, there is also tentative evidence for a castle in the adjoining townland of Castlesize on the far side of the Liffey. Support derives mainly from a note in the Ordnance Survey records by the fieldworker, Thomas O'Conor, who reported that in Bodenstown Parish c. 1837 'there was formerly a Castle, of which, a vestige does not remain now' in Castlesize (Herity 2002, 46 (141). The online SMR Files located this castle 'on the landscaped grounds of Castlesize house, *c.* 150m E of the River Liffey. There was no trace of the castle visible in 1985. (Conroy 2011).' Whether SMR fieldworkers speculated about its location or actually identified a structure at this site in the past was not sadly stated, but it is certainly worthy of another field investigation. Based on the assumption that the 18th century Millicent House was built on or in close proximity to Petty's castle of 1656, the maps would place this suggested castle in Castlesize about 350m to its east on the opposite side of the Liffey.

Photo 11: Rathcoffey (author): the 18th century house (left) incorporates the castle with a c. 15th century two-storey gatehouse (right) extant beside it.

At first glance, the name 'Castlesize' implies the presence of a former castle there. However, this view has never been taken seriously by most writers since the late 19th century – this position originated from Canon Sherlock's (1891, 25) opinion that 'the word castle has been erroneously substituted for *casán*' (path). In addition, he believed that the second part of the name 'Size' derived from the Irish word '*solas*', thereby meaning *casán na soilse*, the 'path of the light' – this path perhaps owing its existence due to the presence of 'a ford across the river, or that a path led down to it, where a light used to be shown to guide travellers on dark and stormy nights when the stream was in flood and dangerous.' In the same edition of JKAHS, the then owner of Castlesize house, R.M. Maunders supported this name origin, also adding that 'before Millicent bridge was built the river was crossed at the ford close by Castlesize House; the high road ended here, and was changed only in the time of the great grandfather of the present owner' (D.M, p. 42), the latter being R.M. Maunders himself.

If all this is correct, the construction of Millicent Bridge 600m upstream) could then have prompted the formation of the staggered crossroads that we recognise today, with the original (earlier) route from Bodenstown once extending in a direct line through the original entrance of Castlesize house ('path of light') to the ford on the river (Sherlock 1910a, 302; St. John Joyce 1920, ch. 23). In another article, Canon Sherlock (1910b, 229) reiterated his opinion (above) that the name Castlesize derived from *Casán na Soilse*, adding the pertinent comment to the subject of this article, that 'there has never been any castle on the spot.' Taking all this evidence together, one would presume that when the Ordnance Survey fieldworker Thomas O'Conor briefly visited the townland in c. 1837, the locals (or O'Conor himself) may have mistakenly located the former site of Millicent castle as in the vicinity of Castlesize house, particularly as the latter's townland name by that point boasted the 'castle' component in it.

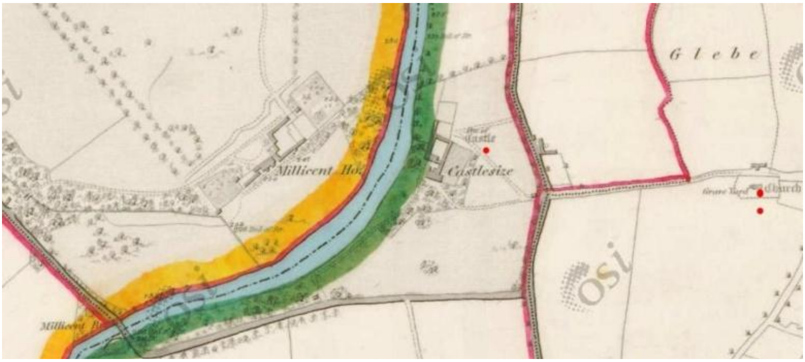

Photo 12: Historic 6-inch map (c. 1837-42) showing the staggered junction as it exists today as one drives from Bodenstown church (mid-right) to Millicent Bridge (bottom left)

However, despite Sherlock’s convincing argument, it appears that this townland’s story is a little more complicated. Firstly, researchers for *logainm* (place-names database of Ireland) remain unconvinced by Sherlock’s derivation of *casán na soilse* for the placename ‘Castlesize’. Instead, building on the prior work of Lord Walter Fitzgerald (1913a; b), they have identified the various earlier derivatives for the name ‘Castlesize’ townland in a series of different 16th and 17th century sources – these included ‘Causane-is-heis’ (1582), Casum Cease (1654), Cassenseyes (1664), Cossomcise (1668), Cosamsise (1685) to finally its present name ‘Castlesize’ in the Noble & Keenan Map of the area in 1752.

Over one hundred years ago, Lord Walter Fitzgerald was the first scholar to challenge Sherlock’s interpretation of the townland meaning. Instead, he suggested that the real meaning of the ‘Causane-is-heis’ from 1582 (Calendar of the Patent and Close Rolls of the Chancery of Ireland in the 24th year of reign of Elizabeth I – Fitzgerald 1913a, 185) was ‘simply ‘Cashen’s or Cossen’s fields or gardens’ (Fitzgerald 1913b, 188). As support for this, Fitzgerald (1913b) cited Portersize (e.g. Porter-is-heys) near Timolin as another example of this placename in Kildare. How he derived this conclusion was not stated, but it appears that he believed that ‘is- heis’ was a corruption of the old English word ‘hey or hye’, once used to refer to a garden, field or enclosure in parts of the medieval anglicised territories of southeast Ireland (See Poole 1867, 46). Here again another potential derivation for Castlesize!

Finally, we should make mention of the official Irish translation of Castlesize ‘Caisléan an tSaghasaigh’ in the placenames database of Ireland. Unfortunately, they provide no official translation for this name – but one might speculate ‘the castle of the Saghasaigh’ (a Gaelicisation of perhaps an English surname?) or less likely the Castle of ‘the Soldier’ (Saighdiúir) or ‘the English’ (Sasanaigh). It is noteworthy that the place-names database cites no medieval source as support for ‘Caisléan an tSaghasaigh’ so one might think it is a modern gaelicisation of Castlesize or an earlier version of it – the original Gaelic townland name prior to the Norman era now probably being lost. By now, it should be clear to the reader that the etymology of Irish place-names are often notoriously difficult to pin down with certainty, and this is certainly no different for ‘Castlesize’.

Concluding thoughts and a potential solution to the conundrum?

After delving into all this complexity in the place-name evidence, it is good to note that one 17th century source might help resolve our conundrum about the presence or not of a castle at Castlesize! This source is the Civil Survey of 1654-56 which records the townland of Castlesize as ‘Casum Cease’ (Simington, 1952, 61, 63). Here, James Cardiffe of Cardiffstowne (‘Irish Papist’) is described as the proprietor of the lands of ‘Casum Cease’, upon which ‘one stone house and one mill’ were then located. The use of the word ‘stone house’ as opposed to ‘castle’ – a word frequently utilised in the Civil Survey – is very instructive, pointing towards a smaller dwelling in this townland in the 17th century.

Perhaps vestiges of this stone structure still survived in the 19th century when the then O.S. fieldworker, Thomas O’Conor, may have mistakenly identified its ruins as forming part of a ‘castle’ – an assumption ably assisted by the ‘castle’ component in its name ‘Castlesize’? It is probable that Millicent castle protected a crossing point of the river Liffey in medieval times and that one role of this ‘stone house’ downstream in Castlesize might have been linked to controlling the crossing of this ford on the far side of the Liffey in this period. Or perhaps, it was simply the home of an independent farmer or important tenant working for the castle! Whether ‘castle’ or ‘stone house’ it’s irrelevant, it was the precursor to Castlesize house, a fine splendid building in itself, that can proudly share the vistas across the river with her very stately Georgian sister, Millicent House.

Acknowledgements

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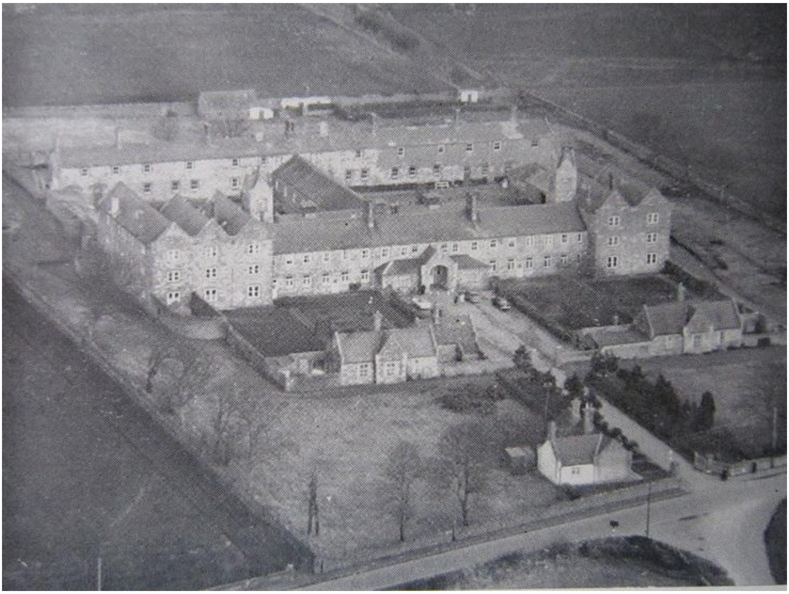
THE EARLY YEARS OF ATHY'S WORKHOUSE

Frank Taaffe

The first meeting of the Board of Guardians of the Athy Union was held in the Courtroom, Town Hall, Athy on Thursday, 29th April 1841. Present at that meeting were Lord Downes of Bert House, Sir E.H. Walsh of Ballykilcavan, Sir Anthony Weldon of Rahinderry, W.H. Cole of Moore Abbey, Monasterevin, Benjamin Lefroy of Cardenton and Edward Bagot of Kildoon. They were ex officio members of the Board, as was B.A. Yates of Moone Abbey and George Evans of Farmhill who were not present at that meeting.



Athy Workhouse opened in 1843, became the County Home in 1922 until 1973 when it became St. Vincents Hospital

Those attending also included the following guardians: Patrick Cummins, Athy; Gerald Dunne, Snugboro; P.C. Doran, Castlemitchell; John Butler, Athy; Thomas Fitzgerald, Kilberry; Robert Cassidy, Monasterevin; Edward Conlan, Monasterevin; John Hyland, Ballitore; Patrick Maher, Kilrush; William Pelan, Ballindrum; James Caulfield, Pilsworth, Castledermot; Joseph Lyons, Moyanna, Stradbally; Thomas

Budd, Timogue, Stradbally; Michael Dowling, Inch, Stradbally; Francis Roberts, Stradbally; Thomas Kilbride, Luggacurran; John Hovenden, Modubeagh and John Kehoe of Ballylinan. Elected guardians who were absent were Daniel Browne, Ashgrove, Monasterevin; John Dowling, Kildangan; Andrew Dunne, Dollardstown; William Caulfield, Levitstown; Major E.H. Pope, Carlow and William Tarleton, Stradbally [the last two representing Ballyadams].

At that first meeting of the Board George Evans was elected Chairman, William Caulfield Vice Chairman while Patrick Dunne was elected clerk to the Board at a salary of €40 per year. Arrangements were made for the Union area to be surveyed and valued for the purpose of fixing rates to finance the running of the Workhouse which would open in Athy in January 1844.

At its next meeting on 27th May it was agreed to admit the press to board meetings and to divide the union area into eight vaccination districts, with vaccination stations located at Athy, Castledermot, Monasterevin, Stradbally, Luggacurran, Nurney, Ballylinan and Moone.

On 20th July 1841 the Board received an order from the Poor Law Commissioners directing it to raise or borrow the sum of £6,700 for the building and fitting out of a workhouse in Athy.

On 10th March 1842 the Board met to decide applications from persons claiming the right to vote at the annual election for members of Athy Board of Guardians scheduled for 26th March. The only change following that election was the replacement of John Butler by John Peppard. The outgoing chairman, George Evans, retained his position following the first meeting of the newly elected Board when defeating Sir Anthony Weldon by one vote. However, his name is absent from the record of all subsequent meetings and on 11th October 1842 the Board unanimously agreed to elect Sir Anthony

Weldon as Chairman of the Board of Guardians on the proposal of Lord Downes, seconded by Captain Lefroy.

In July 1842 the salaries for the various officers of the workhouse were fixed by the Board. The Workhouse Master was to be paid £40 per year with furnished apartments, fuel and candles and a limited quantity of house provisions. The Matron was to receive £20 a year, with similar allowances, while the workhouse porter was granted £10 a year and allowances. The workhouse schoolmaster and mistress were to be paid £20 and £15 respectively in addition to the earlier mentioned allowances. Their duties were to include *'assisting the master in the management of the workhouse.'* The medical attendant's salary was fixed at £50 a year and his duties included the *'compounding of all necessary medicines.'* A *'nurse teacher'* was to receive £10 a year with the agreed allowances. However, the Poor Law Commissioners took issue with the Board of Guardians decisions and directed that the fixing of salaries was premature and consequently refused to sanction any appointments.

The dispute between the Board and the Commissioners was eventually resolved and on 7th February 1843 the Board proceeded with appointments of various officials to Athy Workhouse. William Bryan was appointed Workhouse master, with Elizabeth Quinn as Workhouse mistress and James Butler as the porter. The appointment of the Workhouse medical attendant appears to have been the only appointment which necessitated a vote, even though there were several applicants for each position. Dr. Ferris, Dr. Kynsey and Dr. Clayton submitted their applications and the position went to Dr. Kynsey who received 16 votes to 13 votes cast for Dr. Clayton. The hapless Dr. Ferris received no votes.

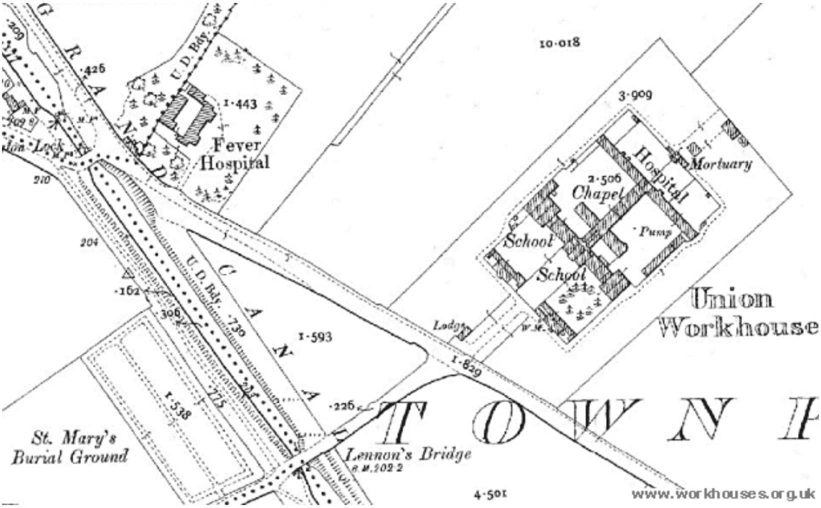
A rate of five pence in the pound was levied on all rateable properties in the Athy Poor Law Union area to fund the operation of the local Workhouse and John Mulhall was appointed to collect the poor rate in the Athy and Kilberry districts. Collectors were also appointed to the other areas of the union. As the opening of the Workhouse in January 1844 approached the preceding months were taken up with arrangements to purchase equipment, clothing and food products for which local businesses were asked to tender.

The clerk was directed to advertise *'for the different articles of clothing used by Gorey Workhouse paupers'* patterns for which had earlier been received and examined by the Athy Guardians. The members of the Board, while dissatisfied with the quality of the clothing, were nevertheless impressed with the clothing design or what the minute books describes as the *'kind of clothing'*.

Tenders for bed clothing for the Workhouse comprising blankets, sheets, coverlets, bolsters and bed ticks were approved by the Board and contracts awarded to Miss Kenny Scott, Mr. Potter and a Mr. Patrick Cosgrove. Kenny Scott was also the successful tender for 75 frieze jackets for men in three sizes at an average cost of 9 shillings and 11 pence each. Local shopkeeper, Mr. Duncan, successfully contracted for the supply of 50 suits in three sizes for boys at an average cost of 3 shillings and 6 pence. Shirts, petticoats, bed gowns, frocks, men's caps and men's and women's shoes were just a few of the assortment of wearing apparel purchased by the Board of Guardians.

The list of utensils acquired for the Workhouse makes interesting reading. Heading that list were 100 chamber utensils for which the Board of Guardians paid 3 shillings and 6 pence per dozen. 12 lamps and burners, 4 one quart ladles for stirabout, with two larger ladles with one pint capacity were also required. A stirabout scraper was purchased for 5 shillings and for 2½ pence each 100 quart tins were purchased with a similar number of pint tins for which 2¼ pence each was paid. Indicative of the work which the male inmates were expected to face was the purchase of 24 stone hammers.

At its meeting on 2nd May 1843 in anticipation of what the minute book noted as a *'collision between the ratepayers and* *the collectors'* it was resolved that the landlords should be q-- made primarily responsible for the Workhouse rates, while giving them power to recover from the occupiers, their proportion of the rates, as was the case with the rent charge. Later in the month of May the Board directed the newly appointed master and porter to take up residence in the Workhouse, although the workhouse mistress was not yet required to do so.


10·018
3·909
1·443
Fever Hospital
U. D. Bdy.
2·506
Chapel
Hospital
Mortuary
Pump
School
School
Union Workhouse
Lodge
W.H.
1·593
1·629
1·538
Canal
·226
TOWN
St. Mary's Burial Ground
Lennon's Bridge
4·501
www.workhouses.org.uk

Plan of Athy Workhouse showing St Marys Burial Ground

On 4th June the Board of Guardians accepted tenders for furniture for their boardroom. John Ryan of Carlow supplied the boardroom table with 36 chairs, one armchair *'with brackets'* and a metal fender and fire irons. At the same time furniture was required for the clerk's room, the master's apartment, the porter's room and the hall. The earlier mentioned John Ryan was also commissioned to build an altar for the Workhouse. Interestingly the clerk and the porter got deal furniture for their rooms, while the master of the Workhouse got American birch chairs for his apartment, as well as a mahogany table and other pieces of furniture.

On 12th September Miss Goold's tender to supply *'sweet milk at the rate of 7 pence per gallon'* was accepted. Miss Goold later emerged as one of the principal organisers of the movement to bring the Sisters of Mercy to Athy. The Mercy Sisters came to the town 8 years after the opening of the local Workhouse. She was also a generous benefactor to the Parish of St. Michaels, leaving some property to the parish on her death.

The eight ex officio members of the Board of Guardians were elected annually by local magistrates. On 29th September 1843 with Captain Lefroy in the chair, local magistrates Lord Downes, Sir Anthony Weldon and W.D. Frazier elected the ex officio Poor Law Guardians. Not surprisingly those elected included the aforementioned gentlemen in addition to John Butler, Edward Bagot, B.A. Yates and E.H. Cole. The remaining 24 guardians were elected each year by the ratepayers of the union area.

The appointment of a rate collector for the various districts in the Poor Law Union of Athy occupied almost every meeting of the Board of Guardians. Reasons were seldom given for the frequent changes in the rate collectors, although it might well have been prompted by the reluctance of the rate payers to pay for the operation of the Workhouse which in 1843 was still in the course of construction. The contract price for the building of the Workhouse was exceeded during the year, resulting in the assistant Poor Law Commissioner laying before the Board the accounts of the building contractor which indicated that a further £150 was required to defray extra costs incurred and an additional £150 to build boundary fences around the Workhouse.

As the construction work on Athy Workhouse neared completion the Board of Guardians advertised for the supply of Whitehaven coal, oatmeal, best cup potatoes *'free from clay or hazards'*, buttermilk, straw, beef and mutton. Three months before the Workhouse opened the clerk announced his intention to resign. At a subsequent meeting Jeremiah Dunne was appointed clerk, defeating Mr. Goodwin for the position by one vote. The suppliers to the Workhouse appointed in November 1843 included family names well known in the business life of Athy up to recent years. Mr. Cross supplied Whitehaven coal at nineteen shillings a ton, Mr. Dillon beef at 3¾ pence a pound and Mr. Keating straw at one pound five shillings a ton. In November the medical officer was instructed to fit up the Workhouse surgery and to procure the necessary appliances and drugs at a cost not to exceed £25.

In December 1843 work on the Workhouse was completed. The Board approved payments to the following craftsmen and traders. Samuel Sherlock, painter - three pounds. Thomas Blanc, carpenter - twenty pounds (I assume his full name was Blanchfield). Patrick O'Neill, basket maker - six pound two shillings. James Doyle, shoemaker - fifteen pounds. John Ryan, furniture maker - thirty pounds, with small amounts paid to Daniel Twomey, slater and Patrick English, smith worker. It was decided to open the Workhouse *'for the reception of paupers'* on 20th December 1843, with posters advertising this fact to be printed by the Leinster Express office. At the same time the Rev. J. Lawler was authorised *'to provide requisites for celebration of Roman Catholic worship at an expense not exceeding ten pounds.'* At its meeting of 19th December the Board of Guardians postponed the planned opening of the Workhouse because the small amount of lodgements made by poor rate collectors left the Guardians without adequate funds.

On 9th January 1844 the Board agreed on the diet for the Workhouse inmates. For adults of both sexes above 15 years of age breakfast would consist of 7 oz. of oatmeal made into stirabout and one pint of mixed milk. Dinner would consist of 3½ lbs. of potatoes and one pint of buttermilk. Young persons from 3 to 15 years of age were to be provided with a breakfast of 4 oz. of oatmeal made into stirabout and half a pint of sweet milk. Dinner would consist of 2 lbs. of potatoes with half a pint of buttermilk. For supper they received a quarter of a pound of bread and a half pint of buttermilk.

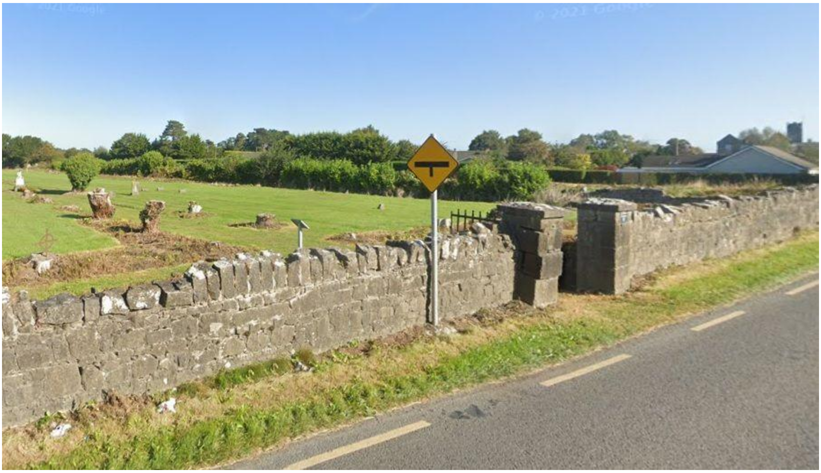
Infants from 1 to 3 years of age were to receive 4ozs. of oatmeal made into stirabout at breakfast together with half a pound of bread and one pint of sweet milk. Women nursing infants were to receive one pint of sweet milk every night in addition to their ordinary diet. Infants having no mothers in the Workhouse were to receive half a pound of bread and one quarter of sweet milk until they were one year old.

Adults were to have their breakfast at half past nine and dinner at four o'clock. Children got their breakfast at 9 o'clock, dinner at 2 o'clock and supper at 7 o'clock. The final decision of the Board of Guardians before the Workhouse was opened that day was to appoint Thomas Prendergast as contractor to build the boundary wall and gate piers in front of the Workhouse.

The Famine memorial in the grounds of St Vincents Hospital

On the first day of admission five men, four women, ten boys, five girls and one infant were formally categorised as paupers on their admission to the newly opened Workhouse. A week later a further six men, fifteen women, thirteen boys, five girls and two infants were admitted to the Workhouse.

Just six years previously a letter in the Athy Literary Magazine of March 1838 referred to Athy as *'completely neglected'*. The unidentified letter writer notes how *'during the late and present inclement weather ..... sickness and starvation visited* *alike the able bodied and the aged poor'* of the South Kildare town. No surprise therefore to find that within ten months of its opening the Workhouse was home to 297 paupers. The failure of the potato crop first noticed in the Athy area in October 1845 was to lead to widespread hardship in the local area. The construction of the railway line from Dublin to Carlow provided much needed employment for local men *'who had never (previously) handled a pike or a shovel, never wheeled a barrow and never made a nearer approach to work than to turn over a potato field with a clumsy hoe'.* That work ceased when the Dublin Carlow railway line opened on 4th August 1846 and many local families had no option but to enter the Workhouse. At one time towards the end of the famine period the Athy Workhouse system was home to 1528 starving family members, who were accommodated in the original Workhouse and two auxiliary Workhouses in the town. A total of 1205 deaths were recorded in the Workhouse during the years of the Great Famine.



St Mary's Cemetery where the Famine dead lie in unmarked graves

Those former Workhouse inmates lie buried in unmarked graves in the nearby St. Mary's cemetery where on National Famine Commemoration Day services are held to honour their memory.

NICKY KELLY AND THE SALLINS TRAIN ROBBERY

Introduction

On 31st March 1976 a gang of armed raiders stopped the Cork to Dublin mail train on the Sallins side of Hazelhatch Co Kildare, and got away with a huge amount of money. So began one of the most if not the most bizarre, extraordinary and controversial events in Irish Criminal History. It was to captivate public opinion for many years and to this day still poses many unanswered questions with regard to the role played in the case by the State, the Judiciary and the Gardai.

The Robbery

This is what happened on the day of the robbery. The gang who robbed the train was seventeen strong and as the train approached the area a flare was sent down the track to alert the other robbers to place detonators on the track. The detonators subsequently went off as the train passed over them and at that point the train immediately began to stop as was the regulation. The driver was obliged to stop as detonators were a signal that danger lay ahead. When the train stopped the gang, waiting in hiding and wearing balaclavas, boarded the train. Although the gang were aggressive no one was injured or hurt. Over the next twelve minutes twelve bags containing registered letters and old bank notes, eventually valued at € 200,000 were thrown from the train into the fields below. They were then lifted into a blue Volkswagen van which had been commandeered earlier in Palmerstown, Co Dublin. It was at that time the biggest ever robbery in the Republic of Ireland. It is ironical to note that two Garda patrol cars passed the robbers heading in the opposite direction from the crime scene without realising it was the robbery van. The Garda suspected the gang to be members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party which at the time included Tony Gregory TD who was a member of the party.

Kelly's Background

His father Nicholas and his mother Stella Brophy were married in 1948, he was from Murrintown near Wexford and she was from Graiguenamanagh, Co Kilkenny. After marrying they moved to Ferrymountgarreth near New Ross in Co Wexford. Nicky was born in New Ross on January 8th 1951, Edward Noel Kelly and known as “Nicky”. When he was two years old the family moved to Danestown near Tara in Co Meath and then back to Graiguenamanagh. Work was scarce and the parents went in search of work to Birmingham leaving the two kids with their grandparents, not uncommon at that time. The parents made regular visits home during the year and made sure all was well with the family. Nicky had a happy childhood, being a typical young fellow mad about fishing, hurling and the proximity of Brandon Hill beside him. His grandmother Brophy smoked a clay pipe, a Dúidin, and kept pigs. Nicky kept the bellows going in the huge fireplace to cook food for the pigs and another of his jobs was to collect two cans of milk every day from the creamery for the pigs. His parents returned to Graiguenamanagh in 1959 and soon moved to live in Arklow town in Tinnahast in the fishing part of the town.

Politics

No single individual had more influence on Nicky Kelly’s political views than Seamus Costello, Costello was a Sinn Fein County Councilor on Wicklow County Council and also Bray Urban District Council. He was a very dedicated community activist involved in the trade union movement and in county development groups. Kelly’s political activity developed and he was drawing closer to Sinn Fein, joining the local branch in Arklow in 1970. During the 1973 General Election he campaigned for Seamus Costello in Wicklow. At this time in 1974 a new political party, the Irish Republican Socialist Party was formed at a meeting in the Spa Hotel in Lucan. Kelly became a party member and subsequently became known to the Special Branch. The Party was not welcomed by the authorities and it was generally felt that the authorities were hell bent on destroying the party.

It should be remembered that this was a time through 1975 and 1976 that the so called “Heavy Gang” emerged in the Gardai. There were all sorts of stories circulating about people being beaten in custody and maltreated in many ways. Between 1970 and 1974 two people had died in the Republic in prison or in Gardai custody. Between 1975 and 1979 that figure rose to twenty and all were described as suicide.

Custody

On Sunday morning in June 1975 part of the railway was blown up near Sallins, coincidentally not far from the scene of the Sallins Train Robbery. A train carrying three hundred Sinn Fein members on the way to the Wolfe Tone commemoration at Bodenstown had just previously passed by. A local man, Christopher Phelan, who apparently happened on the bombers was killed, his body being found in nearby bushes. The Gardai decided that it was the IRSP who were responsible. However it later transpired that a fingerprint found at the scene belonged to a loyalist paramilitary who subsequently took part in the Miami Showband Massacre in July 1975. Kelly was actually in a pub in Arklow when on TV he recognised himself as one of the people the gardai wished to interview. `Six IRSP members were later arrested under Section Thirty and questioned in connection with the train robbery. The six included Seamus Costello and Nicky Kelly who were questioned and then released. The finger of accusation, however, had now been pointed at them. They were being questioned in regard to the gang of armed men who had stopped the Cork-Dublin mail train near Sallins at 3.00 am on the morning of 31st March 1976. Kelly was reported as saying , “I was in bed fast asleep at the time, but my life would be irrevocably changed by that train robbery.”

Nicky was arrested on the morning of Monday 5th April 1976 and taken to Arklow garda station. What happened next from then until the following Friday 9th April 1976 when he was released from Portlaoise Prison would remain a matter of deeply divided opinion. Nicky Kelly saying one thing and the gardai saying another. Kelly and his fellow defendants maintained that they had been subjected to abuse and beatings to the extent that one of them was detained in hospital overnight. In the transcripts later used in court they maintained that they had been beaten on the upper and lower arms, thighs, back of the thighs, inside of the legs and Nicky had his head banged repeatably against a locker. He also stated that the gardai had placed the front legs of a chair on the palms of his hand and then sat on it. They said that at times these beatings were administered by a leather strap known as a blackjack. Nicky Kelly was examined initially by Dr Pat McVey Deputy Medical Officer of Mountjoy Prison and afterwards by the Chief Medical Officer, Dr Samuel Davis; he was also examined by Dr Richard Burke at Portlaoise prison. All three doctors found evidence of injuries compliant with the areas where the defendants said they were beaten. The Gardai denied that any beatings had taken place and maintained that the injuries were self- inflicted or inflicted by the defendants on each other. According to official Gardai records fourteen Gardai had interrogated Nicky Kelly over a period of twenty-seven hours before he signed the confession. Nicky Kelly insisted that in fact many more were involved. In April 1976, as a result of this interrogation, Nicky Kelly subsequently confessed and was committed to trial along with his fellow suspects.

Trials

The story gets even more bizarre as there were to be two trials. The first trial began on 19th January 1978 before Justice James Mc Mahon of the High Court, Justice John Garavan of the District court and Justice John O'Connor of the Circuit Court. At the beginning there was great public interest in the case with detailed reports in the papers. Seamus Sorohan was Senior Counsel for Nicky Kelly and Brian Mc Nally and Paddy McEntee was Senior Counsel for Osgur Breathnach and Mick Plunkett. The Prosecuting Counsel were Noel McDonald and Robert Barr. The defendants wanted to fight the case supported by marches and protests highlighting unfair police behaviour while their lawyers wanted to fight it solely through the legal system. This proved to be a great point of contention and arguments with their lawyers were frequent. The trial stumbled on and one prosecution witness admitted that she had signed a statement prepared by the Gardai for signature eighteen months after the event. The real controversy emerged when it was remarked that one of the judges, Justice John O’Connor seemed to be sleeping. This in fact was true and it was queried whether Judge O’Connor’s condition might be a reason to have the trial stopped. Nothing happened and all the popular talk was about the “sleeping judge” which the criminal court ignored and the trial continued. Then farce took over in court, heavy books were dropped from a height, there would be sudden fits of loud coughing , doors would be banged and attempts would be made to accidentally nudge the sleeping judge. Under these circumstances Seamus Sorohan made an application for the court to discharge itself. The Judges adjourned and returned to state that Judge O’Conner was not sleeping. Several affidavits were sworn and presented to the High Court to stop the trial continuing but President of the High Court, Justice Thomas Finley refused. The trial continued but on the sixty fifth day on June 6th 1978 it was reported that Judge O’Connor had taken a heart attack and died. The trial was abandoned and it had now become the longest and most expensive court case in the history of the state.

The second trial began on 10th October 1978. The defendants were formally charged once again and Nicky Kelly replied, “framed by the Heavy Gang”, not guilty as did the other defendants. The whole case hinged on the confessions being admitted as evidence as there was no other credible evidence. The defence lawyers argued that the defendants had been forced to sign statements concocted by the Gardai . During the interrogations all the defendants were shown to have incurred injuries conductive to being beaten. The Doctors confirmed that the injuries were consistent with being beaten by something. The prosecution argued that the injuries had been self-inflicted and/or inflicted on each other by other defendants. The defence questioned the assertion by the Gardai that this was so. As far as Osgur Breathnach was concerned, he had spent the night in the Richmond Hospital as a result of injuries he had sustained and charged the following day. At no time was he held in a cell with anyone else. The bottom line is that the court accepted the Gardai statements and allowed the confessions to stand as credible evidence. It was now obvious that they would be convicted and were facing jail sentences. Faced with the conclusion that he would go to jail and there was little hope of it being quashed on appeal, Nicky made a decision. He walked out of the flat on Richmond Gardens in Dublin where he lived and he was now on the run.

Brian McNally, Nicky Kelly and Osgur Breathnach in 1993

On The Run

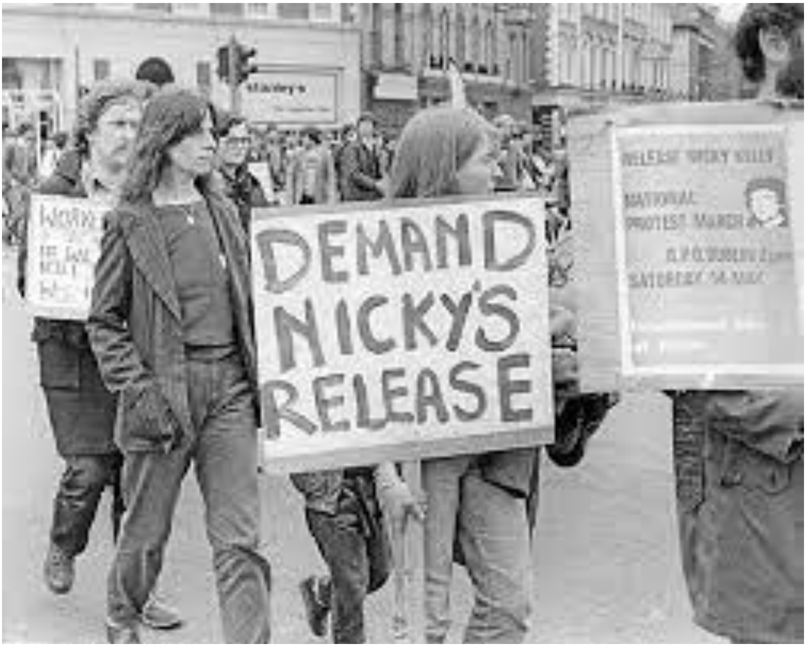
Nicky had been sentenced in absentia to twelve years penal servitude. After a spell in Ireland he travelled to Paris and Amsterdam and then to Toronto in Canada. He eventually went to Philadelphia in the USA where he befriended Jack McKinney, a journalist with the Philadelphia Daily News and they became great friends. A campaign in support of Kelly was starting to emerge and at this stage he was concerned for his health and that he might be heading for a nervous breakdown. He could not sleep properly, had constant headaches and was anxious and homesick. In Mid-April 1980 the Provisional IRA issued a statement in Dublin, saying that they were responsible for the mail train robbery in 1976. It described Kelly, Breathnach and McNally as “completely innocent victims”. For

Kelly this was even more encouragement to come home. On June 3rd 1980 Nicky Kelly returned to Ireland.

Home Again

On arrival he was confined to Portlaoise Prison but was confident his appeal would be accepted. During his time in Portlaoise Prison some frequent visitors were Christy Moore and TD Tony Gregory both of whom had supported him all along . Nicky's appeal was presented to the Court of Criminal Appeal and was rejected. The appeals of Breatnagh and McNally had been granted and it was thought that it was only a matter of time before Nicky would be granted one also. This however was not to be the case and appeal after appeal failed in the courts and the "Free Nicky Kelly" campaign was on the road. Amnesty International were now taking an interest and announced that it would be writing to the government about the case. Kelly had two options, serve out his sentence in silence or take action himself. He decided we would take his own action and he went on hunger strike on 1st May 1983.

The prison authorities kept him in isolation, Tony Gregory was refused permission to visit him and he had no radio, TV or newspapers. It was obvious they hoped the isolation would break him. Kelly was suffering greatly and his life was becoming in real danger. On 27th May Kelly was removed from Portlaoise to the Military Prison in the Curragh. Minister Noonan refused to intervene , to do so would be to accept that the Gardai had committed perjury and that the Judges had acted improperly. On June 3rd Jose Zalaquett, Secretary General of Amnesty, wrote directly to Minister Noonan expressing great concern about the case. Zalaquett would later say that his dealings with the Irish Government at the time were only equalled by his experiences with the authorities in Chile and South Africa. The hunger strike was now receiving a lot of attention, pickets were being mounted in Ireland, Canada and the USA, the Catholic Hierarchy , journalists and celebrities became vocal in the "release Nicky Kelly campaign". It became obvious that as a result of all this pressure the Government were looking for a solution. It was suggested that further legal action in the form of a civil case against the gardai, the Attorney General and Ireland could be explored.



A 'Free Nicky Kelly' demonstration

The thought of a jury was encouraging and when considering the breadth and depth of support from all the people at home and abroad he decided to come off his hunger strike. This he did on the 7thJuly 1983 after thirty- seven days.

Release

The civil action was lodged on 27th July against the Attorney General and Ireland. The same blocking tactics by the Government were evident and every move made by Kelly for release was stifled. There was an interesting aside story. While this was all going on, Kelly’s mother and sister had been to Rome to see the Pope. The Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Alibrandi who had been petitioning for Kelly’s release arranged for them to meet Pope Paul. This was arranged through Monsignor John Magee. The audience was arranged for 14th Dec 1983. The Pope made his way down the middle of the large hall where Mrs Kelly and Nicky's sister were introduced to the Pope. The Pope listened and asked about Nicky's health. They presented his holiness with a Celtic Cross made by Nicky when he was in Portlaoise Prison. The Pope agreed to write to Minister Noonan. Months later Mrs Kelly attempted to talk to Minister Noonan when on a visit to Shelton Abbey, Noonan said "I will see you in my office", it never happened. "It was easier to see the Pope". The government found a way to reject the civil action by resurrecting the infamous 1980 Demming judgement used against the Birmingham Six. As a last resort Kelly made a plea for clemency which was being considered. Also of great importance was a letter from Cardinal O'Fiaich, which he planned to publish as an open letter to the Government calling for Kelly's release. On 17th July 1984 at a cabinet meeting Noonan informed the then Taoiseach, Garret Fitzgerald that he planned to release Kelly. A letter to that effect was delivered to Gerry O'Neill at his office in Dublin saying that Kelly was being released on humanitarian grounds. Although delighted to be released, Nicky Kelly was far from happy with the "released on humanitarian grounds" as this did not clear his name. Regardless of this the celebrations were mighty. Two nights after Nicky's release Christy Moore, one of his most ardent supporters, was playing in the Wexford Inn in Dublin when Nicky arrived. They belted out "the Wicklow Boy" and the place went wild. In 1984 he attended the young FG'S Annual conference and the FF Ard Fheis. However, after all these lively months his main objective was to clear his name. In January 1986 Judge O'Hanlon rejected Kelly's civil action against the State using, the Demming judgement as used in the Birmingham six case, as a precedent for his judgement. Demming who later recanted this "appalling vista" judgement expressed wonderment when he learned it was being used against Kelly.

By the time of the O'Hanlon Judgement in 1998, nineteen of the foremost members in the State's judiciary had dealt with the Kelly case. They included seven Supreme Court judges: Chief Justice Tom O'Higgins, and judges Seamus Henchy, Brian Walsh, Frank Griffin, Anthony Hederman, John Kenny and Weldon Parke; seven High Court judges: President of the High Court, and later Chief Justice , Thomas Finlay, as well as Judges Liam Hamilton, (later chief Justice also), Donal Barrington, James McMahon, Mella Carroll, Herbert McWilliam and John Gannon; two Circuit Court judges: Gerard Clarke and John O'Connor (who died during Kelly's first trial); three District Court judges :President of the District Court, Cathal O'Floinn, John Garavan and Riobard O'hUadaigh. Some had been involved in the hearings of the Kelly case a number of times.

Campaigns

Kelly was now working as a journalist but decided to give it up to fight his case to clear his name. He was in Belfast in February 1987 and said he will always remember the spontaneous outpouring of genuine feeling he experienced on the Falls Road. He continued to work on his own case along with work on the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four and the Judith Ward case. In 1990 Kelly was invited along with Paul Hill and Gerry Conlon to attend a human rights congressional hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington. The momentum for Kelly's exoneration was beginning to gather pace again. There was the Parade of Light in Dublin in the summer of 1990 and in November Paul Hill and Nicky spent three weeks on a Birmingham Six lecture tour of US Universities, including Yale, Fordham and Columbia. Kelly made it into the House of Commons as "Irelands human rights problem" and there was a joint letter from the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four accusing the Irish Government of hypocrisy in Kelly's case. The heat was on. The likelihood of a Presidential pardon was looking more and more likely. However, Nicky was anxious for an enquiry to investigate what actually happened to make him confess to a crime he never committed.

On 28th April 1992 Kelly got word when at Dublin Airport that something important was going to happen and a phone call from East Coast Radio told him that he had been pardoned. As you can imagine there was great celebration. Kelly met with

President Robinson on 17th July 1992, the eighth anniversary of his release from Portlaoise prison, with his mother, fiancée Helena Caulfield and his solicitor Greg O'Neill. The meeting lasted about one and a half hours including a walk around the gardens of Áras an Uachtárain.

Nicky Kelly filed for compensation and was awarded altogether almost €1,000,000. In the summer of 1993. Nicky moved home to Arklow and was among his own again. He was forty-three. If as they say, life begins at forty, he had to wait a little longer than most. Nicky Kelly became a full time public representative serving as a councillor on Wicklow County Council and on Arklow Town Council. He was a member of the Labour Party for many years but left them in 2011. He also ran as an Independent. In the 2002 General Election he lost out by nineteen votes to Mildred Fox. During his time as a public representative he was very active in the community, serving on numerous local committees and boards. He stepped back from community representation in 2014.

Conclusion

The story of Nicky Kelly and the Sallins Train Robbery can't but make one wonder at the state of the Irish Judicial System, the questionable behaviour of an Garda Síochána and the hypocrisy of successive Irish Governments at the time, which allowed and upheld the incarceration of innocent people for crimes they clearly did not commit. Remember that there has never been an enquiry held into the case and the record of their convictions has never been addressed.

In September 1993, Amnesty International distributed a booklet in which Ireland was accused of "torture and other cruel treatment of prisoners". The reason Ireland was included in it was solely on the fact that there has never been an investigation into the circumstances surrounding Nicky Kelly's conviction and that of the others.

LEINSTER LEADER IN THE LATE 1950S: A NICE EARNER

Henry Bauress

It is not uncommon to read that the 1950s in Ireland were years of stagnation and failure. Some describe this as “a half truth” and from the point of view of the Leinster Leader one could not describe the second half of the 1950s as a failure. Between 1951 and 1958 in the Republic, alongside high emigration and unemployment, real productivity per person rose 2.2% a year and industrial output expanded at 2.8%. Output per farmer rose 3.4%, something appreciated by the Leader, whose Kildare readership had a strong, if declining, agricultural element. The owners of the Leader received regular dividends - they averaged 20-25% of net (after tax) profit from the company, which comprised a single newspaper/print works, covering mainly Kildare but also nearby counties. The company made sufficient profit to invest (after paying costs and dividends to shareholders) outside, including in Prize Bonds/Land Bonds. This investment policy was conservative and may fit the description by a Government secretary, T. K. Whitaker, of private capital in the Republic as being “scarce and timid.”

Leader shares remained largely with a small number of families (1) the only new shareholders being new directors and those granted to the managing director. Over the years only a small proportion exchanged for cash. Sixteen shareholders were listed in September 1942, the highest proportion of the 9,456 shares being held by women (62%), nearly all passed on to them by relatives. The board members were all male. A very large proportion of shares were inherited by the late Elizabeth O’Kelly, who received €24 million approx when the company was sold to Johnston Press in 2006. The UK relatives of early leading shareholder, Charles Gatty, formed a major rump of the shareholders as did the Tullamore based D.E. Williams family with John and Vincent Williams, the latter becoming a shareholder in July 1931, both serving as directors during that period in the 1950s. Board wise, in April 1948, the latter duo, along with businessman, accountant and director, Stamford Hoare Roche, solicitor, Desmond J. Collins (whose family had a long term link to the company) and the Leader's managing director, Robert Donaghy, comprised the board of directors. Ownership and direction remained closely linked. Nationally some critics expressed public dislike of trade and labour restrictions, anti-competitive cartel like behaviour and conservative investment strategies. Cormac O'Grada wrote in 1997 (3) that real Irish national income virtually stagnated between 1950-58 and net agricultural output rose only 7% over the same period. But, he wrote, in the late 1950s "something changed and Ireland entered a period of sustained economic growth." There was, he wrote then, no consensus, why. The Leinster Leader's economic story reflected many of these trends but financially the figures show it was relatively successful, getting many printing contracts for Roman Catholic (RC) publications. There was a strong RC ethos among top management, certainly at that point. The circulation of the paper rose from 12,912 in October 1954 to 13,444 in November 1955. For the year ending January 31, 1955, net profit of £11,605 was recorded up from £7,891 the previous year. Staff numbers rose from 31 to 39 between June 1954 and June 1960 at a time when, between 1956-61, the Irish national labour force fell from 931,000 to 820,000, a drop of 12%. Before taking into account inflation (it was 9.3% between June 1956-1960) there was an overall 53% rise in wage costs from £205 to £308 a week, partly due to extra staff. Excluding inflation, the Leader's average weekly wage rose 19% from £6.62 (5) to £7.91 and the median salary from £6.31 to £9.67, up 53% from mid 1956-mid 1960. Nationally average weekly earnings for all Irish industries rose from £2.10.4 to £3.4.9 over the same period. Tom Garvin noted in "News from a New Republic" that a decent family wage would be £7 per week but many had half of that and the unemployed got 35s or £1.75. The managing director's salary, along with bonuses from time to time, rose 33% over the period, to £19.23 a week or £999 a year. The top journalist earned £14.11 or £733 per year and the top printer was on £12.31 a week or around £640. Of the 39 staff in June 1960, 20 earned over £9 (£468 pa) and six of them were between £5-9 per week. Thirteen or a third earned under

£5 or £260 pa. The country had experienced an economic crisis in 1956 but started to get better in 1957 and in 1958, Garvin noted (4) that manufacturing industry had expanded by 5.5% in 1958. The Leader remained buoyant, paying out good dividends and investing good sums from profit. In November 1957 the Leader board was told there was "ample" work and it was "surprising how the advertising was keeping up." Wages seemed relatively good. To some extent these were driven by competition as the company had to pay extra for skilled printing staff, required for the newspaper and the printing side of the business. On the other side, some saw the printing trade as one restricted by trade union and family connections. The trade unions also played a role negotiating wage agreements which did not damage either profit or the sustainability of the company.

On June 7, 1955, the managing director, William (Bill) Britton, had said that it was difficult to keep staff due to the attraction of people to the printing trade in England. He also said he had taken on a boy ie. an apprentice, that morning, and was planning to see the print union head "with a view to getting permission to take on another apprentice." That August, the company had to refuse a book contract because it had no Monotype machine operator and that three Monotype machines could not be worked due to lack of operators. For some political commentators at the time, there was well expressed distaste for

Bill Britton

the role of unions in the workplace, including a role for the print unions in agreeing the number of apprenticeships. An issue here for unions was that a skilled apprentice could do the job of a qualified one for lower wages and some argued that the Irish apprenticeship period was too long, anyway, giving some businesses up to 6-7 years of cheaper labour. Overall, the company seemed to get on well with staff, working the print unions and the National Union of Journalists on agreed wages and practices. The late NUJ official, Jim Eadie, who passed away in December 2022, told this writer that he generally got on well with the Leader but that Bill Britton said that the latter would not tolerate bad language. A number of administrative staff had to negotiate their own wage rises and to a great extent the Board acceded to their requests and were thanked when they granted payments to staff leaving as a result of illness.

Chris Glennon

Journalism issues did sometimes arise at board level. They suggested that editorial control lay with the Board/owners rather than with the editor. In October 1958, then editor, Seamus O’Farrell, had a disagreement with the Board, for reasons which are not stated. Former Irish Independent political correspondent, Chris Glennon, who joined the Leader in the 1950s, told this writer that it was most likely over editorial control. O’Farrell told the board on October 14, 1958, that the Leader was printed too late on Thursday evenings leaving the Carlow Nationalist on sale earlier. He also said adverts were being accepted too late and articles were being removed as a result. Shortly afterwards, a barrister was hired to advise the board which was also told that the Rural Development Association was unhappy with the editor. O'Farrell had left by the end of the year. His effective replacement, Senan O'Carroll, from county Clare, was appointed as the top paid journalist but with the title not of editor but of sub-editor. The managing director was now, formally, the editor, suggesting editorial control was an issue.

One criticism of Irish business in those years was its propensity to collude and for competitors to agree prices. In October 1955, MD Bill Britton told the Board he would be meeting Marion Lavery of the Irish Provincial Newspaper Association with a view to an agreed across the board rise in advertising rates for all regional newspapers, particularly the Leader's rival in south Kildare, the Carlow Nationalist. In April 1956, an ad rate rise of around 5% was agreed. The Leader also agreed with the Carlow Nationalist on the price of the newspaper itself, when it raised the price to 4d from the start of August, 1959. Did they need the rise? Arguably not. Over the 1954-1960 period, the Board invested around £8,000 outside of the company (in Prize Bonds and Land Bonds). It also spent almost £9,000 on printing technology but clawed back some of this from sales of older equipment. In March 1956 there was plenty of work including a lot of school and religious related work from Christus Rex, The Furrow, the Newbridge Annual, the Clongownian, St Kieran's, St Jarlath's

Senan O'Carroll

and The Carlovian. The company also printed school books for Brown & Nolans. The Leader remained, substantially, a home business although it made an occasional small contribution to Irish exports with a contract from America for a textbook. From the list of payments to suppliers in 1956 an estimated 90% of non wage payments went to Irish companies, including Swiftbrook Paper Mills, Spicers (Ireland) Ltd, Drimnagh Paper Mills and A.S. Donaldson in Celbridge. Around 10% went to UK companies for printing related products.

In June 1956, the board agreed to buy the house and main premises it used at Main Street, Naas from Hubert de Burgh and others for £245.6s.8d. Arguably, it did very well in the late 1950s. Advertising from the newspaper, representing 41% of bank lodgements (ie. a proxy for turnover), rose 25% between 1954-59 (6). Printing income (50% of turnover) rose 39% and overall turnover rose 38%. Wages, representing a third of turnover, rose 27%. It paid dividends of between 20-25% of profits to shareholders each year. It also invested £8,000 outside the company in 1954-60. In early 1960, it opted to capitalise £9,456, (equivalent to €284,129 in July 2022) from its plant and machinery reserve and issue the money as a bonus to shareholders. Effectively, it took the money from its reserves or savings and gave it to the shareholders. This represented almost 57% of the total annual salary bill for its 39 staff (7) in 1959. The 1956 figures suggest that advertising provided 44% of turnover with printing accounting for 45% and newspaper sales 10%. Costs were around 75% of income with 34% of costs going in wages and the rest (around£16,700) in payments to suppliers. The latter included a £3,165 payment in tax to Revenue. Its net trading profit the year to the end of January 1957 was £10,413, up from £9,702. Its gross or pre-tax profit then was over £13,500 compared to an estimated wages bill of £14,500. In February 1957, it had net credit in its bank of £5,088.

TURNING BACK THE PAGES – THE NEWS FROM CLANE AND DISTRICT 100 YEARS AGO

Liam Kenny

The year 1923 was one of transformation in the political life of Ireland. Transformation in the sense that the Civil War which had brought conflict and destruction to many parts of the country tapered off in the spring of that year allowing some semblance of normality to emerge. The coverage in the local press reflected the change. The narrative of conflict was replaced by the mundane – but nonetheless meaningful – business of councils and courts and of fairs and markets. To reflect that change the presentation of this item will be in the form of snippets from the files of the “Kildare Observer” newspaper over the latter nine months of 1923.

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Illegal exposure of liquor – May 1923

Sergeant Finn of Clane Garda was involved in an unusual prosecution in May 1923 when he charged Henry Coyle of Celbridge with the illegal display of alcohol. The alleged offence occurred at a point-to-point fixture at Windgates near Barberstown Cross. Sergeant Finn said he was on duty at the races when he found a van with a porter barrel which was tapped. The sergeant asked the defendant for his liquor licence but the defendant replied that he had the barrel there for the convenience of some friends. This explanation did not go down well with District Justice Cussen who was presiding at Clane District court who said it was sufficient merely to expose alcohol without any money changing hands to cause an offence. The defendant was given two weeks to pay a fine of five pounds although he vigorously claimed that “Everybody in Celbridge knows I never sold porter in my life.”

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Clongowes Wood Cricket – May 1923

The crack of ball on bat echoed in Clongowes when the opening cricket match of the season took place on the college pitch with the home side hosting the Co Kildare club. However, the Irish weather intervened on the day's sport. Despite it being the first month of summer the chilblains in the correspondent's fingers could also be felt as he wrote: "the weather was bitterly cold, more suited for Rugby football than for cricket." The Co Kildare Club opened up the batting and immediately ran into fierce opposition from the college boys with R. Walsh capturing four wickets with his first four overs. However, Harrington and Reeves held the line for the county which had run up 156 runs until it was time for the College to take the stand. Alas! the weather intervened again and rain brought play to a stop resulting in a drawn match. Certainly, a bad May in 1923 with cold and rain sweeping across the plains of north Kildare.

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Painting the Cemetery Gate – May 1923

A letter from Mr P.Dunne, caretaker of Mainham burial ground, stating that the entrance gate required painting was considered at a meeting of Celbridge District Council. The members agreed and instructed that the gate be painted.

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Farmers mobilise in Donadea – June 1923

The civil war had left little room for political movements other than those concerned with the nationalism of Ireland. However, once the guns fell silent other political dynamics such as labour and farmers could emerge into public debate. This was true for the latter in Donadea. The monthly meeting of the local branch of the County Kildare Farmers' Union took place in the schoolroom in Donadea with H J Corbally (Chairman) presiding, and L Gaffney, Asst. Organiser, in attendance. An important task for any unit contemplating contesting elections was to scrutinise the register of electors to make sure all is in order. It was found that the number of fictitious claims or duplicate entries was small as compared with some other districts, the total number of dubious entries being fourteen.

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Mail car robbed near Clane – September 1923

The normally mundane news in the local paper took a dramatic turn when “the Kildare Observer” reported on a mail-car robbery at Blackhall. The driver of the Naas-Clane mail car, one T. Keogh, had just delivered letters to Captain Dunne’s stud premises at Blackhall when he was intercepted by two armed men. In what must have been a frightening ordeal for the postman, they took him into a field where they blindfolded him and warned him not to move. The assailants knew what they were looking for as they rifled through the mailbags to find the registered postal packets which likely contained money. It was believed that the robbers were hoping to secure old-age pension money. However, they were to be frustrated in that the old-age pension money was no longer being sent to the local post-offices in cash.

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Crime continues in the Clane area – October 1923

An October night brought terror to a family business at Hortland, Donadea, when the shop premises of the Colgans was raided at night by three men, two armed. The raiders ransacked the shop taking with them small quantities of tobacco and money. The senior Mrs Colgan was so traumatised by the invasion that she collapsed with the shock. Her sons insisted on forcing their way past the armed men to go to her assistance. John Colgan, proceeded in a pony-and-trap to Kilcock to seek what was described as “spiritual and medical aid” for his mother but even on his mission of mercy he was in danger. He had just gone part of the road when a shot rang out and a bullet hit the trap, piercing the cushion he was sitting on but, fortunately, leaving him unscathed. He made it to Kilcock and summoned Fr O’Connor, C.C., and Dr Cosgrove to return with him. Not taking any chances this time, he left his pony and trap in the town and took a lift in a motor car back to Hortland. The three-man gang was not finished its depredations as on the same night a young man named Rourke was cycling near Courtown, Kilcock when the bandits appeared out of the darkness and seized his bicycle as well as robbing two pounds from his pocket. The Civic Guard in Kilcock arrested two men the following morning as they attempted to contain the rampage of the gang in the locality.

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Civic Guard for Donadea – November 1923

Perhaps unsurprisingly, a Civic Guard station was established in Donadea with a sergeant and three men taking up quarters in a farmhouse belonging to Mr Taaffe.

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Tally ho!– Kildare Hunt closes out the year 1923

The penultimate edition of the "Kildare Observer" for the year featured a column of sport of seasonal kind – namely a winter hunt meeting of the Kildare Hunt, one of the most prestigious in the country. Their pre-Christmas hunt meet turned out at Betaghstown Cross in fine weather albeit some frost on the ground which in the early part of the day interfered with the scent of their quarry but as the day went on hunting conditions improved and soon the hounds were in full cry in pursuit of a fox heading towards Donadea demesne but he turned left and ran through Hodgestown straight to the Mount Armstrong gorse. Hunting fast towards Betaghstown bog the chase swung left before reaching the Clane-Donadea road and on past Clongowes Wood. Fortunately for him the wily Reynard had more stamina than his pursuers and the chase was given up when he circled back towards Rathcoffey.

And so, ends our review of the news from the wider Clane area for 1923. Not as full of combat and conflict as the previous years but illustrative of the normal affairs of life faithfully recorded in the pages of the local press.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A BOTTLE COLLECTOR

For this year's Coiseanna we met with bottle collector Neil Reid who is based in County Kildare. Neil has a very unique hobby in that he collects bottles from across Ireland. (Editorial Commtitee)

Neil Reid

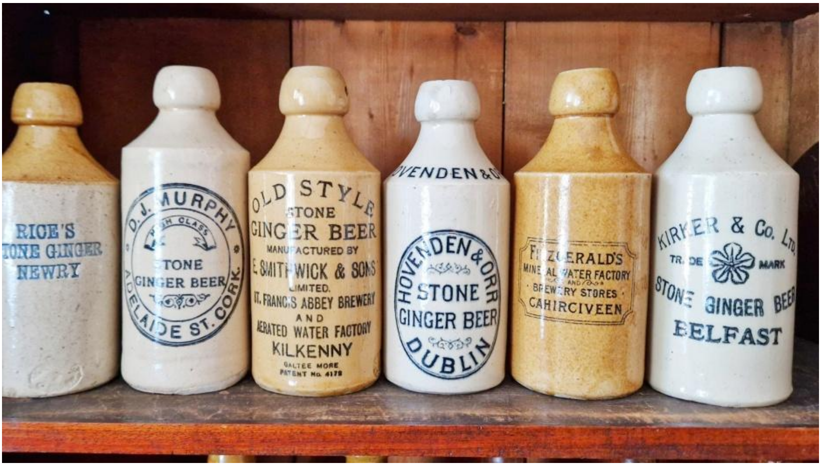
What got you started bottle collecting?

For as long as I can remember I have had an interest in local and social history and it has all stemmed from there. I was raised close to Banbridge in Co. Down (now living in Co. Kildare) and that area has a particularly rich history with flax growing and the production of linen and linen threads. The Bann Valley between Banbridge and Gilford was particularly busy during the Victorian Era, with a significant number of mills and related industries – bleaching works, scutch mills and the like. When you are surrounded by the remnants of these types of industries, you can't help but develop an interest in the heritage of the area. As I got older, I undertook more and more research into the history of what went before me and it really all developed from there. Mills needed workers, so these industries really helped the areas develop and thrive. With a lot of workers, comes all the essentials of life - shelter / furniture / clothing / food and daily household items. It has been that aspect of it all that particularly captured my interest. As I researched more and more into these aspects of life, I developed a passion to help find, preserve and hopefully tell the stories of the past.

I have a particular interest in items such as stoneware beer and stout bottles, flagons, cream pots and even ceramic toothpaste jars. These items served a dual purpose, to transport and protect their contents, but also to advertise the product and business. Most bottles, flagons, pots and jars of the era had a family or business name on them, an address and a description of their contents. So, what I am collecting now are the discarded advertising items of the past.

Tell us about your collection

I consider my collection a window into the past; my collection is quite varied but it is mainly focused around stoneware; that could be stoneware bottles, flagons, cream pots, pot lids, jars - really anything that is an advertising piece. Almost everything I have has a name on it and that could represent a bottler or a manufacturer, the names could be impressed or embossed onto


RICE'S
TONE GINGER
NEWRY
D.J. MURPHY
HIGH CLASS
STONE
GINGER BEER
ADELAIDE ST. CORK
OLD STYLE
STONE
GINGER BEER
MANUFACTURED BY
E. SMITHWICK & SONS
LIMITED.
ST. FRANCIS ABBEY BREWERY
AND
AERATED WATER FACTORY
KILKENNY
GALTEE MORE
PATENT No. 4178
VENDEN & C
HOVENDEN & ORR
STONE
GINGER BEER
DUBLIN
FITZGERALD'S
MINERAL WATER FACTORY
AND
BREWERY STORES
CAHIRCIVEEN
KIRKER & Co. LTD
TRADE MARK
STONE GINGER BEER
BELFAST

the bottles, alongside an address. I set out initially to develop a collection that covered all counties in Ireland, North and South; that is still very much a work in progress. As I'm based in Leinster, I have found the West of Ireland to be a bit more challenging to source items from – but I am willing to travel.

How do you go abour finding these items?

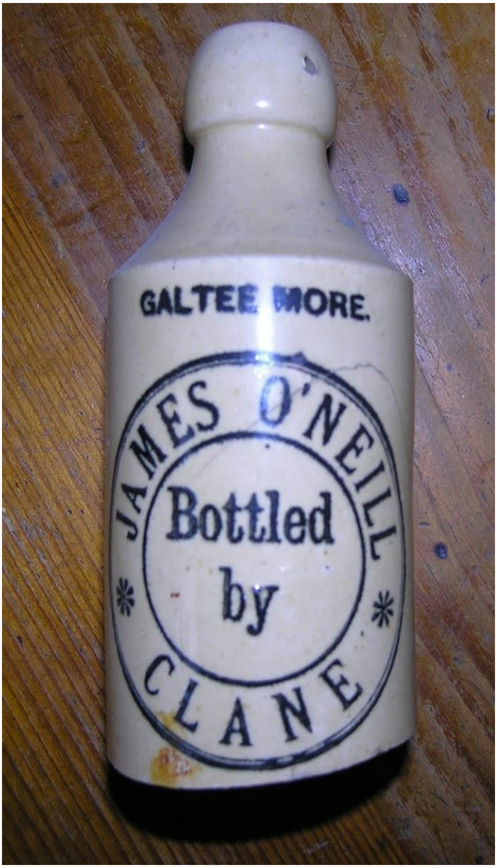
Starting out, I engaged with neighbours / local farmers and even historians; I got to hear their stories and they helped me tremendously. A local landlady gave me a bottle, which started it all; this was a stoneware bottle, one which contained ginger beer; it was given to me initially as a bit of a joke because I have ginger hair, but this really set me on a path to find more - I still have that bottle to this day.

I am very active in the collecting world and have undertaken a lot of interviews for local newspapers and radio, so if people search for bottles, my name usually pops up. I still visit car boots, flea markets, online resources in the hunt, but I have also built up a network of similarly minded bottle collectors; we usually try and meet up and swap / trade or help each other out, it can be quite a collaborative environment. You meet people from every walk of life, background and I have made some great friends though it all.

In terms of digging for bottles, initially it was by word of mouth; landowners could tell me of dumps at their properties and I was granted permission to dig and uncover the past. Modern online resources have helped remove the guesswork from a lot of it; being able to research old maps and assess where possibly a dump could have been located and where that is in today’s terms has been a great help. Every town had a dump site, probably several and once you have identified an area, best to start engaging with the local landowners. There are a few indicators of historic dumps, the presence of nettles is one; the reason for this is that they thrive in ash and that type of growing material. Of course, ash was one of the main items disposed from a house.

Tell me more about the bottles themselves

It really all started with a lump of clay… craftsmen utilised this to craft many items of the day – bricks, bowls, containers but also bottles. Glass itself dates back to approx. 1000 BC, however it was historically always an expensive and time-consuming item to manufacture. Clay or stoneware was much more prevalent, right through to approx. the 1930s. It was only around this time that glass bottles and containers became more of an everyday staple due to advances in manufacturing. The stoneware bottles, as they were used also as advertising, were either incised with usually a surname, location and product – this process was superseded by the development of ink stamps (copperplate and eventually rubber), these allowed for much



more intricate designs to be applied before the bottles was glazed and fired.

Health and Safety protocols were one of the final nails in the coffin of stoneware bottles. They were harder to clean, they couldn’t be seen into and also with the invention of refrigeration, it meant that the transition to glass was upon us and it went on from there. Manufacturing had moved on so much that it meant that bottles could be quickly machine made with similar advertising embossed on the bottles themselves or in fact added later in the form of paper labels.

Do you have any recommendations for potential diggers?
Yes, of course – do your homework; this will save a lot of time. Try and identify an area worth investigating through the resources I have mentioned. Come prepared – bottle digging is a very physical thing to do, come with spades / forks, gloves – ensure you have an up-to-date tetanus shot. Always ask permission from the landowner, this is fundamental. Be mindful of your health and safety, as a Chartered Civil Engineer, I am very mindful of this aspect. If you are digging, be very conscious of your depth, the earth around you and the weather. Stick with it…. You might investigate 20 sites before you find one broken bottle: that’s fine. When you do find that elusive thing you are hunting for, there’s great excitement; being able to unearth something that has been buried for maybe 150 years is a special treat.

Always reinstate the ground as you found it. Show your findings to the landowner, most of them will only be interested just to see what is there.

What else have you found in your digging for bottles?
Everything and anything… it depends on the history of the site; I have dug old military sites unearthing thousands of broken plates, belt buckles, brass buttons, bullet casings. A fellow digger was clearing some of the findings and stumbled upon a WW2 era unexploded hand grenade which required the security services to clear.

What are they worth?

Well, like any collectible, there is a value to them. I have never collected bottles based on their perceived value, it's what it means to me as a piece of local / social history. Some people will value a local bottle more than one which isn't from their area. I know for sure that on most occasions, I have probably spent more driving to collect a bottle than the value of the bottle itself. They can range from a few euros upwards; the value is in what they are, a view into the past,

What's your favourite bottle and what are you looking for next?

My favourite bottles so far are from Counties Down and Kildare, but I have many more to find. I am looking for any stoneware bottles / flagons with names on them from right across Ireland. The West of Ireland holds particular appeal as it is a bit of a blank spot in my collection, but also Co. Kildare – Clane / Naas / Newbridge for example; as you can see, it's a long list. If any of the readers have bottles / flagons / jars or pots in their shed / garage / attic or know of a bottle dump on their land, I'd love to hear from them.

Whats the long term plan with your collection?

It's still a hobby that excites me to this day; it can be a social thing and a personal thing all at the same time; I do it for the love of it and I've gotten to the point where I really want to share what I have with others, be that through storytelling / articles such as this, and who knows maybe one day I'll be able to take my collection to local television.

How do people get in contact with you?

Name: Neil Reid
Tel: +353 (0)86 600 6622
Email: neilreid76@gmail.com
Social: @Thegingerbottleman

TOM MCREERY

Tom McCreery who died on 21st August 2022 had a keen interest in Clane's history and was a regular attendee at our meetings. He always made a point of attending early to assist in setting up equipment and organising the room. The following eulogy was given by councilor Padraig McEvoy at the funeral of Tom McCreery on 26th August 2022.

Tom McCreery is a dear son and a brother, a brother-in-law and an uncle; he is a neighbour from Capdoo and a neighbour in Mainham and into the broader community, a generous, kind, and helpful friend to so many.

Tom's untimely death has been hard for his mother, Ann; his sisters Catherine, Nora and Mary; his brothers Peter and Willie;

his in-laws Rosario, Amanda, Lorcan and Michael; and for Tom's nieces and nephew, Aisling, Annabel, and Niall. The McCreery family's contribution to life in Clane, Kildare and further afield was something we recognised through Tom.
In many ways, Tom reflects his late father, Peter. Before Tom makes his trip back to Mainham to be laid to rest alongside Peter, as one of his many friends, I hope to echo some of the messages of appreciation and respect for Tom and some reminiscences of Tom's life. This person is a lived example of kindness and generosity.

A lot of people have commented on Tom's community spirit. His willingness to step forward to help with a task, take responsibility for maintaining something with Tidy Towns or repairing something in the Abbey Community Centre. He helped with Community Games, Christmas Lights, or with people who needed to meet up and talk about their lives and some of the difficulties that might partially evaporate through a conversation with Tom.

Heritage Week concluded at the weekend. Each year, he attended as many events as possible. A trip up Aylmer's folly on the Hill of Allen, the history talks in Clongowes, or into a library… hoping there might be a new book to borrow, another discovery about a gravestone. His interest in plants and animals may have been rooted in the rural landscape of Capdoo and the equine activity around the homeplace.

Tom's quick smile, helpful nature and generosity was widely known. He had plenty of friends… some a long time in the area and some new to the area. Tom would fix something, clear the garden, or get parts to solve the problem. He was well-known in the local hardware shops.

And he knew everyone's name! His gentle presence was warmly welcomed into many homes. With the jobs done, part payment was a coffee and a bit of anything on the kitchen table. Tom was interested in what was happening in people's

families, with their neighbours, and he'd have a few stories to share before meeting the next person on his long list of tasks.
Since his move to Mainham, Tom had poured his heart into the Old Royal Oak pub. His neighbouring friends will tell you about how he transformed it not only into a home but into a hub. Hours of sunlight were for drilling, chopping, hammering, assembly, painting, and any progress to be made on his latest project. His friends would pass in and out. As you would leave, others might arrive. His phone would ring… his latest phone after the other one dropped… a new phone into which the numbers had to be added… as there were always new people that he would agree to help.

Tom's neighbours and their interconnected lives were important to him. Each year, the Mainham Cemetery Committee welcomed the wider community to the annual cemetery mass. It is a big production. Tom's field would be trimmed and readied for parking, and many visitors would benefit from his generous but humble preparations. Yesterday, his neighbouring friends prepared Tom's final resting place. An opportunity to reciprocate the help and regard that Tom had for them.

Perhaps our shared sense of loss comes from the knowledge that some of Tom's activities in our community were what defined our community.

Although generously willing to help, Tom preferred to do so within a team. The team spirit was as valued as the effort to achieve the outcome. Many things around the town are extensions of Tom's fingerprints. Some of the bushes will go a bit wild for a while.

Tom came to this church. He attended mass here. And he would often mark the end of the working day by lighting a candle, perhaps thinking of his father and his family.
Today we think of you, Tom.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

MISCELLANY

Marbles and Conkers.

The following excerpt is from an article by the late Paddy Behan in “Clane the Village we knew” by Bryan Sammon**,** Paddy Behan and Liam Burke. Published in 2006.

The first game we played as children would have been marbles. There were different types of marble games.

Rings: where the players put say, four marbles each into a ring and took it in turns to throw a marble at the ring, hoping to knock a few out of the ring.

Holes: we would make three holes in an even and smooth patch of ground. Each hole would be two inches in diameter. The players would throw their marble at each hole in turn and the player who successfully got his marble into the three holes first was the winner.

Spanners: for this game a player with a wide span(A big hand) generally won out. The first player threw his marble on the ground, the second player tried to get his marble as close as possible to his opponent’s marble, close enough so that he could touch the two marbles with his fingers outstretched........................

The next game we played was **conkers**. We would go up to Clongowes Wood College and collect chestnuts that had fallen from the trees...................... We took the chestnuts home, hammered a hole through them and put a piece of string, usually an old shoelace, through the hole and played conkers.
Some of the lads would have a small conker but it would be very hard. When one would ask them “what’s your conker ?” they would reply “conker twenty”, which meant they had won twenty games so if you beat his conker twenty with your virgin conker you would be the proud possessor of a conker twenty-one and all the lads would be dying to have a go at beating you.

More Conkers.

James Joyce entered Clongowes in August 1888 and stayed until Christmas 1891. He was only six and a half years old and he was the youngest and smallest boy in the school. One of the games played in Clongowes in Joyce's time was conkers. In the following short extract from "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" Stephen Dedalus, the hero of the novel and Joyce's fictional alter ego is bullied by his classmate Charles Wells who is the proud owner of a lethal conker.

"He (Stephen) did not like Wells's face. It was Wells who had shouldered him into the square ditch the day before because he would not swop his little snuffbox for Wells's seasoned hacking chestnut, the conqueror of forty. It was a mean thing to do; all the fellows said it was. And how cold and slimy the water had been! And a fellow had once seen a big rat jump plop into the scum. 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."

The Battle of the Boyne; a note on the date of the battle. See article on Patrick Sarsfield in this issue.

The Battle of the Boyne took place on July 1st according to the Julian Calendar. In the new or Gregorian Calendar this is July 12th. The Gregorian Calendar was introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 to correct the old Roman Calendar, called the Julian Calendar, which had lagged 11 days behind time as determined by the sun. However, the Gregorian Calendar was not adopted in England until 1752. So from that year the Battle of the Boyne is commemorated on July 12th instead of July 1st.

Brendan Cullen

The bridge at Athlone

The following poem, written by Aubrey de Vere (1814-1902) is based on an incident which took place during the Siege of Athlone in 1691. It celebrates the bravery of 12 men who destroyed the bridge over the Shannon thus slowing the advance of the Williamite army under General Ginkel.

A Ballad of Athlone

Does any man dream that a Gael can fear,
Of a thousand deeds let him hear but one!
The Shannon swept onward, broad and clear
Between the Leaguers and worn Athlone.

“Break down the bridge”- Six warriors rushed
Through the storm of shot and the storm of shell:
With late, but certain victory flushed,
The grim Dutch gunners eyed them well.

They wrenched at the planks mid a hail of fire;
They fell in death, their work half done:
The bridge stood fast, and nigh and nigher
The foe swarmed darkly, densely on.

“O, who for Erin will strike a stroke?
Who hurl yon planks where the waters roar”?
Six warriors forth from their comrades broke,
And flung them upon that bridge once more.

Again at the rocking planks they dashed;
And four dropped dead, and two remained:
The huge beams groaned, and the arch down-crashed;
Two stalwart swimmers the margin gained.

St. Ruth in his stirrups stood up, and cried,
“I have seen no deed like that in France!”
With a toss of his head Sarsfield replied,
“They had luck, the dogs! ‘T was a merry chance!”

O, many a year upon Shannon’s side
They sang upon moor and they sang upon heath
Of the twain that breasted the raging tide,
And the ten that shook bloody hands with death!

Brendan Cullen

Jigginstown Castle. (See article on Wicklow Town in this issue). For a small country we have a unique history of country houses and this has been greatly influenced by the fact that we were an occupied country for so long and have had our fair share of landlords over the years. However, we have in Naas the remains of one such big house, unique in all of Ireland both for its design and the story it has to tell. Stretching along one side of the Newbridge Road it now presents a somewhat deserted picture but it does pose the question of what it must have been like in its earlier days. It made architectural history when it was built in the late 1630s, being the first large-scale brick building in Ireland and for that matter one of the largest buildings of its kind in either Britain or Ireland. The story goes, that the red brick used in the building was imported from Wales and that it was transported from Dublin to Naas, hand to hand by people forming a long human chain. "Why should the truth ever get in the way of a good story?". It was built by Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford who was then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and a favourite with the court in London. It was to be a residence "fit for a King" and it is reported that Wentworth had it built to please the King of the time, Charles 1. It was reputed to have cost £20,000 to build, but it is still not clear if in fact it was ever completely finished. The house did contain marble decoration as well as the red brick and still retains some very interesting architectural features like its vaulted underground cellars. It was a huge building, the frontage measuring over three hundred and fifty feet and consisted of two storeys over a groined vaulted basement. There are still remains of elaborate fireplaces, windows and staircases. The shape of a sunken garden can still be seen at the rear and one of the remaining pavilions at the bottom of the garden has been incorporated into a nearby farmhouse.

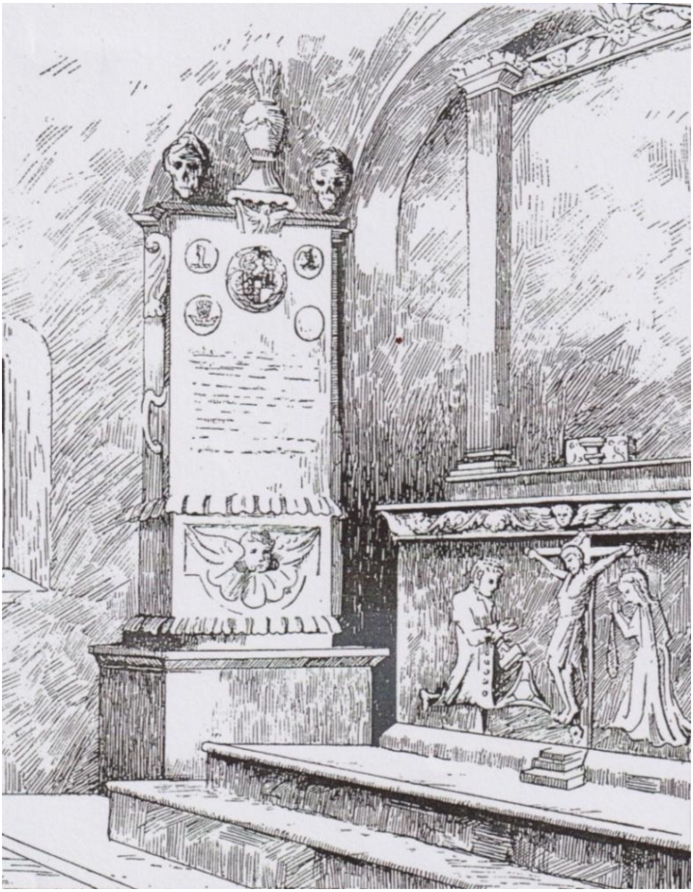
The story of its owner is a sad tale. Wentworth who had previously been well respected at court fell out of favour, with his enemies plotting against him whilst he was in Ireland. They accused him of treason and managed to have him tried for this supposed crime. He was returned to England, tried, subsequently convicted and executed at Tyburn in 1641. The ruins were declared a National Monument in 1969 and gladly are now being repaired for preservation by the Office of Public Works.

The above excerpt is from "Nas na Riogh, Reflections and Recollections" by Larry Breen.

Browne Mausoleum

The following extract is from The Buildings of Ireland, Central Leinster, Kildare, Laois and Offaly; a scholarly book by Andrew Tierney.

Just outside the churchyard wall. Built in 1743 by Stephen Fitzwilliam Browne of Castle Browne (Clongowes) who



The Browne monument in the mausoleum

reinterred his ancestors here from St. Audoen, Dublin. Very plain, roughcast, gabled-ended with slated roof and bellcote; flat limestone door surround with gate. Cogged brickwork under the eaves. An inscription above the entrance attributes its exile from the churchyard to a dispute over burial rights with the rector. As Browne was a Catholic, his mausoleum was no doubt deliberately provocative. It has all the characteristics of a chantry chapel and is perhaps the finest surviving Catholic monument of the Penal era in Ireland. Vaulted interior with plastered walls. Stone altar tomb carved in relief with the kneeling figures of Browne and his wife, Judith Wogan, flanking the crucified Christ. Behind it a stucco reredos with fluted pilasters and a frieze of seraphim. On the north wall a monument to Thomas Browne of Castle Browne 1693. Weighty and tall, with a large seraphim in a panel; surrounded by an urn and flanking skulls. Above the inscription, four heraldic medallions and a coat of arms. Also Christopher Browne 1736. Tomb-chest, the upper part cut into the shape of a coffin. Surrounding the mausoleum is a patched-up c1800 railing.

Brendan Cullen

Marjorie McCall – Died Once -Buried Twice.

Prior to the Battle of the Boyne many of the soldiers perished from disease and pestilence. Today we call it dysentery and once it catches hold in a group there is no stopping it. Many of these diseases were carried back home after the war. Shortly after the end of the Williamite Wars, locals recalled that Marjorie McCall, the wife of John McCall, who fought on the Williamite side, succumbed to fever in Lurgan around 1695. Marjorie was waked as usual but when the body was being prepared for burial, because it was in a swollen state, it was impossible to remove the dead woman’s ring. During the interment in the old Shankill Graveyard in Lurgan, a tramp of disreputable character, overheard from the conversation of the mourners, about the ring on the dead woman’s finger. That evening when the funeral was over, the tramp along with grave robbers, before the soil could settle, removed the shallow covering of earth which had been thrown in upon the coffin.

Soon he had uncovered the lid of the coffin. He broke it open and he placed a rope around and under the arms to pull her out; then drawing back the shroud he took a knife to the woman's ring finger drawing blood. Marjorie woke up and the robbers fled in a state of shock. Marjorie arrived home and knocked on her hall door. John, her husband, reportedly said to his family, "if we hadn't buried your mother this morning, I would swear that's her knock". You can imagine his shock when he opened the door and found Marjorie standing on the doorstep. Probably the action of heaving the body with a rope and severing the finger with a knife had brought Marjorie out of a coma. She eventually passed away peacefully in 1703. Her headstone has the inscription, "Here lies Marjorie McCall died once, buried twice."

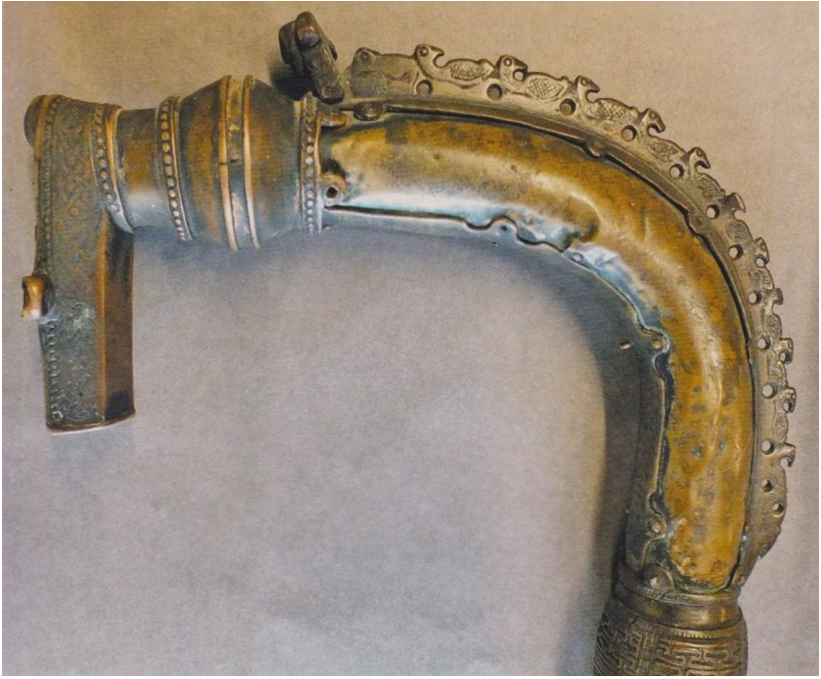
Larry Breen

The Prosperous Crosier.

The following excerpt is from an article by Dr. Griffin Murray which was published in the 2013 Clongownian.

The Prosperous Crosier is perhaps the most important artefact in the Clongowes Museum collection; it is certainly the most important when it comes to Ireland's ancient history and archaeology. Dating from the first half of the ninth century, it is approximately 1,200 years old, making it not only the oldest complete crosier in Ireland and Britain, but one of the oldest in Europe. Thus, as a particularly early example of an abbot's staff of office, it holds a significant position in the art and archaeology of the early medieval Christian Church. Despite this, it is not very well known outside of those familiar with the Clongowes collections and amongst a small number of specialist scholars. Although not as finely made or decorated as some of the greatest treasures of early medieval Ireland, it is contemporary with objects such as the Derrynaflan Chalice, the Moylough Belt shrine and the Book of Kells, and is a product of the same cultural environment.

Discovered during turf cutting in a bog near Prosperous around 1839, it was purchased from the finder for the College Museum. This was at a time before any national or public museums existed in Ireland and it has remained in Clongowes since then, with the exception of being included in a number of temporary exhibitions. ....The crosier last went on show in Dublin in 1932 as part of a special exhibition in the National Museum of Ireland for the Eucharistic Congress. The last time it left the College was during 1984-85 when it was sent to the Ulster Museum for conservation and where it was exhibited for a short time before its return. It is fortuitous that the crosier has not been moved too often since its discovery over 170 years ago, because, although it is complete, it still remains a fragile object.



The Head or Crook of the Crosier

Brendan Cullen

Some childhood memories from the 1940s and 1950s

Although I was a World War II baby most of my childhood memories from that time are happy ones. Our playground was the "Ballalley" – the remains of the old slum area of the town and consisted of a large rectangular green area surrounded by large grassy banks. It was overlooked by the twenty feet high walls of the old gaol on one side and by the Fever Hospital on the other. Here we amused ourselves endlessly according to the weather and the season.

During Summer cricket was the favourite pastime. Our version was a mongrel form of the game which would be unrecognisable to the purist. No fancy names like silly-mid-on or caught in the gully. In our game you were either "battin" or "bowlin". We had only one set of stumps made of small gnarled branches topped by bales made from bits of cheese boxes. The other end of the crease was marked by a large stone from which the ball was bowled. When we weren’t in the "Ballalley" we were out along the cliffs on the coast burning furze bushes and generally getting into trouble. On these wild occasions we were metamorphosed into the fierce and savage “Amonoki gang” – a bunch of untamed “baddies” led by our leader Futzers who always wore a long black cloak on these escapades. Other, more peaceful days were spent on the beach and the pier, ducking the girls and swimming in the harbour.

The climax of the summer season was the Regatta which took place on August Monday each year. This was a great festive occasion when the harbour exploded into life with skiff races, yacht races and swimming competitions. Hundreds of people thronged the sea front, many of them returned emigrants, who always made a great effort to come home to their families for the August weekend and the Regatta.

The day for us wasn’t complete without a visit to the “Amusements” which would be in full swing on Regatta Day. Our favourites were the bumpers, the swinging boats, the chair-a-planes and roll-a-penny, while our mothers favoured the delph stall and the Pongo tent. Towards evening there was usually a special event like the wall of death or the Great Zorro diving into a blazing cauldron from a height of a hundred and fifty feet.

The great day usually came to an end with a spectacular fireworks’ display, when the sky above the harbour was illuminated by thousands of beautifully coloured explosions.

When the fireworks were over the Regatta was over and when the Regatta was over local tradition had it that the summer was over. Once August Monday had come and gone, according to the townspeople the winter had arrived.

The dark, cold evenings of September and October were reserved for the game of hares and hounds. On such nights we congregated around the solitary street light on the road which looked down benignly on us from the top of an iron E.S.B. pole. After been given their instructions, the hares scattered into the night in search of dark, shadowy places to hide. After a short while they were followed by many hounds whose job was to catch the hares. When all the hares were caught we were summoned to the pole again by the loud banging of a large stone on the hollow metal. After a short rest the ritual started again.

Most Sunday afternoons were spent in the local cinema sitting in the “woodeners” or the “pits” as we called them and which cost us the princely sum of four pence (4d). There we thrilled to the adventures of Hopalong Cassidy, Roy Rogers, Tom Mix, the Durango Kid, the Lone Ranger and Tonto. Their antics on the big screen kept us in material for our games for the coming week. I remember we didn’t like Roy Rogers very much because he kissed the girls but we loved Hopalong Cassidy, because even though he saved the girls, he never kissed them. Towards the end of each film as the “calvary” (as we called them) were riding to the rescue the cheering from the pits rose to deafening proportions and reached its climax when the ‘good lad’ knocked the ‘bad lad’ off his horse and beat him senseless in the ensuing fist fight.

Brendan Cullen

The following story is included in the National Folklore Collection. The collection consists of folklore material collected by eleven to fourteen year old primary school children during 1937-38. This extract is from Kildare FolkTales by Steve Lally.

***The Devil and Doctor Foster by John Rooney, Kilmore, Enfield*.**

Once upon a time there was a doctor in Summerhill named Doctor Foster. He was very fond of the playing cards. One night a man was sick and needed a doctor. The man lived about two miles outside Summerhill. At about nine o' clock at night an urgent call came to the door. The doctor did not go at once because he was too well engaged playing his cards. When he had finished his game, which was about half an hour later, he told the groom to saddle his horse. When the horse was at the door he mounted him and rode away.

When he went about a mile of the road there was a barren and for quickness sake he took it and went that way. He was grumbling about being out in the cold and wished he were at home again. He was then about halfway through the barren but then all of a sudden the horse shied and the doctor looked to see what was it it saw. He saw two men sitting by a camp fire playing cards. They halted him and asked them to join them in a game. He dismounted and tied his horse to a tree and sat down to play. They were not too long playing when the priest came along also on horseback. They asked him to play but the priest refused and said he was in a hurry. He asked the doctor to come with him but the doctor said he was time enough. He priest then went on his journey. After a while the doctor let a card fall. He stooped to pick it up and he saw the cloven foot and he knew it was the devil. He immediately rose to go home. He untied his horse and mounted him but the horse would not stir. He dismounted and beat the horse but he would not go. He left the horse there and walked home. As he left he looked back and saw that the devil was gone. He then went to the priest and apologised to him for not going with him.