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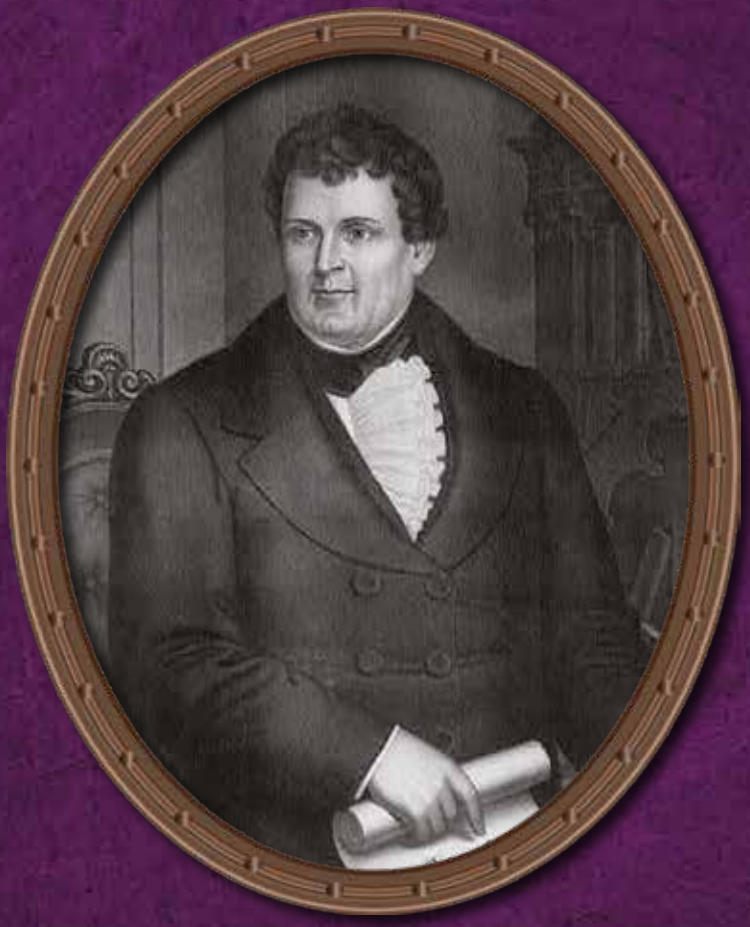
THE KERRY MAGAZINE

KERRY ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Celebrating the
250th Anniversary of his Birth



Daniel O'Connell
Born 6 August 1775

ISSUE NO. 35 2025

CUMMAN SEANDÁLAÍOCHTA IS STAIRE CHIARRAÍ

KERRY ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Kerry Archaeological & Historical Society (KAHS) was founded in 1967, with the stated objectives of the collection, recording, study and preservation of the history and antiquities of Kerry.

The Society offers lectures, outings to places of archaeological and historical interest, and publishes the Journal of the Kerry Archaeological & Historical Society and The Kerry Magazine annually. These are all included in membership.

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A Note from Our President

I am delighted to say it has been another busy and successful year for the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society as we continue in our mission to promote and preserve the history, antiquities and heritage of county Kerry.

The Society delivered another wonderful programme of talks and outings during 2025, and I would like to express my sincere thanks to our Programme Coordinator Isabel Bennett and her Committee, plus to all of our lecturers and outing guides throughout the year.

Our lectures addressed topics on history and archaeology, in Irish and in English, and celebrated important events such as 250th anniversary of the birth of 'The Liberator' Daniel O'Connell. In our outings we had the privilege of visiting sites across the county including Coomsaharn, Ballyheigue, Cahirciveen, Killarney and Kilflynn. We also continued with our now regular events such as the 'Curators Choice' visit to Kerry Museum, Architecture Kerry and the annual St. Brendan's Mass.

I would like to extend my thanks to all of the contributors to the Society's annual Journal and Magazine published in November 2025. Both publications are going from strength to strength. I would like to congratulate Edel Codd on her first edition of the Magazine as sole editor and thank Professor Maurice Bric who acted as co-editor of the magazine in recent years, and who stepped down from this position at the end of 2024.

We continue to partner with Kerry County Council and Kerry County Museum to run both the Kerry Young Historian and Heritage Hunters programmes for secondary and primary schools across the county. These programmes are continuing to grow and expand each year and provide an important link for our Society with the young historians and archaeologists of tomorrow. Congratulations to Lucy Griffin from Presentation Secondary School Listowel who won the Kerry Young Historian of the Year award for 2025. Many thanks to Claudia Kohler and Victoria McCarthy for their ongoing work in fostering these important initiatives.

On the financial front, I would like to thank our Treasurer Tom Roche for his sterling work in managing and administering our Society's accounts so efficiently year on year. I would also like to thank all of those who helped to promote the Society, update our social media and maintain our website during the year, led by our PRO Dr Owen O'Shea.

This is my final year as President and it has been a great honour to serve in this role, and represent the Society, during my term. Over the past three years the Society has maintained its strong membership and has continued to develop and deliver our successful publications and comprehensive annual programme of events. I would like to extend my thanks to all our Officers and Council members for their support throughout my term and for their ongoing voluntary commitment to the Society. I would also like to acknowledge Kerry Library and County Librarian Tommy O'Connor for their support.

The Kerry Archaeological & Historical Society plays a very important role in supporting the heritage and culture of County Kerry and I feel the future of our Society is very bright. This is very much dependent on our members and our volunteers, and I would like to thank all members for playing a part in helping the vibrancy of the Society – from attendance at lectures and outings, contributions to our publications or the simple act of paying your annual membership subscription. All of this makes a difference. Working on the Society's Council is a very rewarding experience and I would strongly encourage members who have an interest in helping the continued growth of the Society, to consider volunteering on the Council in 2026.

Finally, I would like to remember former members of the Society who passed away during the year – Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

Kerry Heritage Award 2024

Donal O'Sullivan being presented with the 2024 Kerry Heritage Award by Tony Bergin, KAHS President at the Society's annual social event, 1 December 2024.

Gáirdín Cuimhneacháin Lios Póil / Lios Póil Garden of Remembrance

Tony Bergin

The parish of Lios Póil has recently developed a community memorial garden. The purpose of the garden is to commemorate people and events from the past, celebrate the archaeological heritage of this area and provide a welcoming social space for the community and visitors.

Lios Póil is a small parish in West Kerry with a proud tradition for promoting and cultivating Irish language, culture and heritage.

Situated a few miles east of Dingle town, the parish is rich in archaeological monuments and historical sites from the Bronze Age to modern times. Wedge tombs, standing stone alignments, rock art, and ogham stones dwell side by side with medieval churches, tower houses and more recent historical architecture such as the Lios Póil Railway viaduct.

Over the past two years, the community has come together to undertake a local heritage project to develop a Garden of Remembrance to celebrate this heritage and provide a welcoming social space for locals and visitors.

The new garden is situated just off the main N86 road in Lios Póil, close to Keane's shop and Séipeál Naomh Eoin Baiste.

The initiative to develop the garden began during centenary commemorations for the Lios Póil Ambush which had taken place in the area during the Irish War of Independence in March 1921.

Garden View

A Celtic cross was erected to commemorate this event in 1962 on the side of the main Tralee to Dingle N86 road, near the ambush site. The monument has served as a wonderful memorial to West Kerry's involvement in the War of Independence; however, during the commemoration in 2021, it became clear that safe access to the site had become an issue due to its proximity to the busy N86 road.

A solution to this problem became a possibility when Annette Glavin, former post mistress of Lios Póil Post Office, gifted a nearby field in trust to the parish for the purpose of transferring the cross to a safer location. The field is a very appropriate location as it is the original site of Arda Mór National School (1841-1911) which was the focal point for activity during the ambush. In addition, the location is accessible from a quiet side road, is still visible from the main N86 road and provides a larger, safer space to visit and view the memorial.

The local Coiste Cuimhneacháin Thomáis Ághais (a volunteer committee that has organised centenary events and publications on Tomás Ághas and the Lios Póil Ambush) took on the project, expanding its scope to act as a broader Garden of Remembrance, as well as a memorial to the events of the Lios Póil Ambush.

Work on the new garden commenced in May 2024.

The site was, at this point, totally over-grown with brush and scrub, so a mini digger was engaged to clear and level the site. Due care was taken to safely conserve any trees on the site, and mature ash and conifer trees were worked around so they could form a part of the garden.

With the site cleared, a garden layout was designed by the committee to make the most of the space and to enhance visibility from the N86 road, the local church and the adjacent Kerry Camino route.

Work now continued with the laying of gravel paths, removal of stones and the erection of fencing and gates. The stream and deep glen adjacent to the western side of the site was also cleared and cleaned, as this played an important role in the events of the Lios Póil Ambush.

The original Arda Mór school had been demolished many years ago so the committee researched where it

was originally situated in the garden. As well as being a central location in the ambush, the patriot Tomás Ághas (1885-1917) studied and worked as a monitor in this school, which adds to the building's historical significance. The footprint of the school building was marked out with gravel chips to indicate its location and to aid visitors in interpreting the events of the ambush. The original name stone of the school was located and moved to the site along with one of the original windowsills from the school that was discovered when clearing the nearby glen.

Detailed planning and great care were taken in moving the Lios Póil Ambush monument from its original site, overseen by an expert stonemason.

The Celtic cross was detached from the base of the monument and taken away for cleaning. The base was then carefully freed and moved to the garden. A tree was planted on the old site of the cross using a tree slip that has historical links with the patriot Tomás Ághas. The cross and base were reunited with great care at the new location, and an impressive stone wall was constructed behind the monument by local stonemasons.

To commemorate the gift of the garden to the parish, a local craftsman constructed a bench from Minard stone which was placed beside the memorial. The inscription on the bench remembers the O'Cathasaigh family from Lios Póil Post Office, original owners of the field and valued members of the Lios Póil community throughout their lives.

Moving the Celtic Cross: Malcolm Curran and Pat Lovett

Some finishing touches then had to made to the garden: raking and stone picking, spreading of new grass seed, fence painting, final grass cutting, and the erection of temporary flag poles.

The result was then unveiled as part of a gathering of the Lios Póil community in August 2024.

With Phase 1 of the project complete, the next phase of work commenced to introduce new features on the site and provide information to visitors.

A bilingual information board was erected on the site with the assistance Údarás na Gaeltachta. The board introduces the local area, outlines the purpose of the garden and details the significance of the memorials in the garden. This is very useful for both the local community and visitors – many of whom are walking the Kerry Camino which runs adjacent to the garden.

To further commemorate the War of Independence, three trees were planted at the entrance of the site in honour of the three casualties of the Lios Póil Ambush. In addition, a representative bust of the patriot Tomás Ághas was installed on the site. This memorial was previously located at the patriot's homeplace in Kinard but replaced by a new bust in 2017.

Replica Wedge Tomb

To celebrate the local archaeological heritage of the area, two replica monuments were added to the garden. A miniature standing stone alignment was erected, using lintel stones from a ruined cottage in Greenfields, to represent the nearby Ardamore standing stone alignment. A replica wedge tomb was also constructed, using the plan of the Púicín a' Chairn wedge tomb in the nearby townland of Doonties.

The garden so far has proven to be a popular and valuable space for the parish.

It has hosted a number of community get togethers, including music and storytelling events during the local annual festival of Féile Lios Póil in August each year.

The local Lios Póil National School, Scoil Naomh Eoin Baiste, also utilises the garden. Pupils from the school visit the garden as part of field trips and supported the planting of daffodils around the garden in autumn 2025.

The garden has proven to be popular with visitors and walkers who have taken time out of their journeys to explore its contents or to stop and sit to enjoy their lunch break.

Finally, the garden offers a quiet, welcoming space for an individual visit to take time out and explore their own personal mindfulness.

Completed Lios Póil Monument and memorial seat

List of Features and Monuments

- **Information Board:** Bilingual (Irish & English), explaining the site's significance and purpose.
- **Ardamore National School:** An outline of the footprint of the old school, along with the school's name stone and an original windowsill from the building.
- **Lios Póil Ambush Monument:** A Celtic Cross dedicated to those who participated in the Lios Póil ambush (sculpted 1962).
- **Memorial Bench:** Remembering the Casey family, Lios Póil Post Office, original site owners.
- **Tomás Ághas Bust:** A bust representing the patriot Tomás Ághas (1885-1917), who attended Ardamore School and served as a school monitor. Ághas commanded the Fingal Battalion during the 1916 Rising and died on hunger strike in Mountjoy prison on 25th September 1917.
- **Native Fauna:** Three native Irish trees dedicated to the members of the West Kerry Volunteers who lost their lives in the Lios Póil Ambush: Maurice Fitzgerald, Tommy Hawley, and Thomas Ashe.
- **Archaeological Replicas:** Stone replicas of the nearby Arda Mór standing stone alignment and the Púicín a' Chairn wedge tomb.

Official Opening, August 2024: *Back (L to R) Mike Ferriter, Matthew Griffin, Tony Bergin, Risteard Mac Eoin. Front (L to R) Mary Devane, Annette Glavin, Donnacha O'Sullivan*

Gratitude and Acknowledgements

There are many people to thank for the development of this wonderful space: Annette Glavin who generously donated the site; Údarás na Gaeltachta who strongly supported the project - míle buíochas le Anne Marie Nic Gearailt agus Seosamh Ó Beaglaoí; Arkil quarries who provided materials for the pathways.

We would particularly like to thank the many volunteers who have given their time and effort over the past two years: Risteard Mac Eoin, Matthew Griffin, Tony Bergin, Mike Ferriter, Malcolm Curran, Pat Lovett, Mike Jim Fitzgerald, James Begley, Thomas Devane, Denis Rayel, John Begley, Marie Griffin, Brian Keane, Seán Keane, Miriam Ní Shúilleabháin, James Begley, Tom Brosnan, Thomas Herlihy, Thomas Curran, Fergal Griffin, Chris Hickson and many, many more.

We would also like to remember fondly our former principal of Lios Póil National School, Mícheál Ó Móráin who was the driving force behind Coiste Cuimhneacháin Thomáis Ághais for many years. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h'anam dílis.

The goodwill, enthusiasm and generosity of the people of Lios Póil and West Kerry were very visible throughout the project and great drivers for everyone. Míle buíochas do gach éinne a thug cabhair leis an obair! Ní neart go cur le Chéile!

A Modernist Kingdom: Twentieth-Century Architecture in Co. Kerry, Part I (1900 – 1950)

Peter Luddy

Kerry's wealth of architectural heritage spans many centuries, offering an important reflection on the socio-economic, political and cultural history of this place and its people. The ring forts, monasteries, churches, castles, and estate houses dotted around the county — monuments to our earliest history — are undoubtedly our most renowned landmarks.

However, recent architectural history — that of the twentieth century — is often overlooked. The buildings of this foundational period are most significant in chronicling our relatively young nation's story. Considered 'old-fashioned' by today's standards, it is critical that we appreciate the legacy of these artefacts which were once regarded truly 'modern' and the epitome of experimentation or innovation. This brief investigation will use various building typologies to reveal the seismic transformations that occurred in Kerry in the first half of the twentieth century.

The 1800s were a tumultuous time, witnessing radical change in the Industrial Revolution's wake. Humanity moved rapidly towards an urban existence and the machine age. Sean O'Reilly posits that Ireland's peripheral location, away from Europe, meant that new ideas and advancements were absorbed slowly.[1] Kerry, the island's furthest remote edge, was perhaps even less receptive and it certainly remained dependent on its agrarian economy.

Despite modernisation's headlong rush, inequalities remained. Widespread death and emigration during the Great Famine catalysed a dramatic contraction in Kerry's population. Census records note a decline of 135,000 people between 1841–1911.[2] Endemic poverty drove rural migrants towards urban centres and overcrowding led to pollution, squalor, and disease. Ultimately, the magnification of society's ills provoked a conscious response in the following century. Progressive ideologies would reform politics, economics, science, and education, shifting the social landscape.

Society's upheaval was mirrored by spatial change. Nineteenth-century architecture had been dominated by historicism. Take for example: the ordered symmetry of William Morrison's Neoclassical Tralee courthouse (1834) or the fanciful Gothic features of Augustus Pugin's cathedral in Killarney (1840). Twentieth-century architecture broke from these authoritative traditions. Modernism aspired to reflect the spirit of the time, rather than simply recalling the past.

A rising tide of opposition against British occupation and the fight for self-governance defined the century's beginning. Nationalism's surge was felt in a wider cultural revival. A distinct architectural identity required economic and political independence 'to be implemented on any meaningful scale'.[3]

However, small powerful acts of declaration did occur. Listowel's commercial architecture mirrored the political as its shopfronts became a battleground for national identity. The red brick and fine limestone detailing of the bank at 38, The Square, Listowel (c.1910) is typical of the prevailing Queen Anne Revival style fashionable throughout Britain.[4] Mere doors away was a profound effort to de-anglicise Ireland. Local plasterer

The Maid of Erin, 12 Main St., Listowel (1912) — Pat McAuliffe. Credit: Author's own photograph.

Pat McAuliffe's decorations found inspiration in the Celtic Revival: using indigenous motifs to recreate the glory of Ireland's ancient past. This echoed the National Romantic spirit sweeping through Europe.

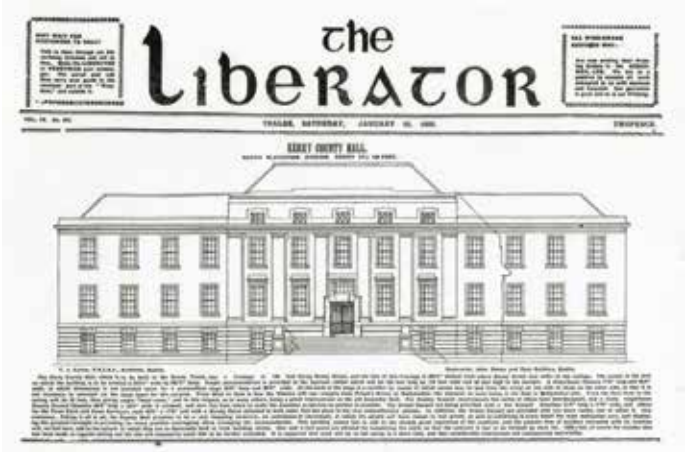
McAuliffe's renovation of the Central Hotel's façade at 12 Main Street (1912) illustrates overt political iconography. Celtic knotwork pilasters, crafted of stucco, frame a central plaster embellishment of Erin: a robust woman in Celtic attire wielding a harp. This female personification of Ireland is flanked by a wolfhound and a round tower: symbols of refuge and defence against foreign invaders.[5] The plaster below bears the phrase 'Erin go Bragh' ('Ireland forever') and the prospect of a new dawn rises behind her. Moulded off-site at McAuliffe's workshop, it was hung from the stone walls with cement and metal brackets.[6] The Maid of Erin, regarded as McAuliffe's most well-known work, has a monumental presence in the town.

McAuliffe's 'extraordinary and exotic' chromatic compositions remained firmly within the realm of ornamentation.[7] Unlike historical styles however, his work evoked the past to express a utopic vision of the future. The immediate political commentary captured the growing embitterment of the local community.[8]

McAuliffe's propaganda was soon rendered physical. The destruction of colonial symbols —barracks and estate houses — suggested violent separations from the old order and its outdated styles. The national architectural agenda lay in the grasp of an independent Ireland. However, the fledgling Irish Free State held limited financial resources and often opted for prudence rather than risky experimentation.[9]

Local and urban government enjoyed increased powers after independence.[10] The seat of Kerry's local authority was relocated to the old Denny demesne as a deliberate symbol of the transfer of power. Kerry County Hall, later dedicated as The Ashe Memorial Hall, was one of the new country's first civic buildings.[11] Funded by British reparations, it was constructed between 1924–8 by John Kenny & Sons to the designs of Thomas J. Cullen. The building's square plan accommodated perimeter offices around a central public theatre.

Designed to be seen in the round, this thirteen-bay building adheres to classical architecture's order and symmetry.[12] It emphasises the state's tentative architectural approach. A channelled stonework base and flush walls of snecked blocks of red ashlar sandstone celebrated local masonry techniques and echoed traditional use of monolithic stone to convey severity and strength in civic buildings. Five bays of pilasters and entablature form the monumental northern elevation protruding from the building's bulk. Approached by concrete steps with candelabra piers, this triumphal entrance addresses the heart of the town and the vista of Georgian Denny Street.


the Liberator

North elevation of Kerry County Hall, Tralee (1924–8) — Thomas J. Cullen. Credit: T.J. Cullen, 1925, drawing in "Kerry County Hall", The Liberator, January 10, 1925, 1. Reproduced courtesy of Kerry Library.

Despite its classical tendencies, County Hall contained some modernist impulses. The material excess of the past was abandoned as ornamentation was muted to form sharp and clean lines. Influenced by Adolf Loos' writings on 'Ornament and Crime'[13] and the 'truthful' minimalism of the Bauhaus school, this stripped-back aesthetic became more prevalent as the century progressed.

The 1932 election saw power transition from Cumann na nGaedheal to Fianna Fáil. Eamonn De Valera's party resolved to transform Ireland into a 'self-sufficient, bucolic, Gaelic utopia'.[14] Architecture offered the means of realisation and the 1930s witnessed an ambitious and extensive building programme. Of chief concern was the upgrade of the nation's communication and infrastructural network. Kerry's rural communities required improved accessibility in particular.

In March 1932, the wrought iron suspension bridge across the Kenmare sound was demolished out of fear of collapse. This wonder of nineteenth-century engineering would need a suitable replacement. Kerry County Council appointed London-based engineers L.G. Mouchel & Partners and contractors A.E. Farr to the project. However, prominent Irish civil engineers Pierce Purcell and Cornelius J. Buckley provided consultation and the labour force was sourced locally. Work was largely carried out by hand and without plant assistance which greatly reduced costs.

The proposal saw a double-span bridge built across the estuary, incorporating existing stone piers to carry the replacement structure and road deck. The largest public

works project undertaken thus far — the Shannon Hydroelectric Scheme at Ardnacrusha — had awoken the state to the possibility that our cement-rich country could become self-sufficient in concrete production.[15] This is also reflected in the pioneering use of concrete at the new Kenmare bridge. It was cast-in-situ and reinforced to form the immense arches, secondary ribs and beams which support the carriageway. This eye-catching curvaceous structure of two 46 metre (150-ft) parabolic arches leapt from shore to shore, passing through the road deck. When it opened to traffic on 25 March 1933 Kenmare held claim to one of the largest concrete bridges built in both Ireland and Britain.[16]

State-building continued under successive Fianna Fáil cabinets. Financed by the Irish Hospital Sweepstakes, the government proceeded with a major overhaul of the country's health services in the 1930s.[17] Alongside renovation and extension works to existing facilities, new district hospitals were constructed in Kenmare and Killarney, a sanatorium was built at Edenburn House and a 150-bed county hospital was completed in Tralee.[18] Architects Donald A. Tyndall and John J. Winters were primarily responsible for this Kerry campaign.

However, the outbreak of World War 2 interrupted progress as the rationing of 'The Emergency' saw construction slow to a trickle during the 1940s. Winter's 20-bed District Hospital in Listowel, first designed in 1933, was eventually completed with great difficulty in June 1941. Its spartan, utilitarian design typified the impoverished operating conditions of the county's hospitals. Yet, this clinical aesthetic followed contemporary trends as Ellen Rowley suggests that modern architecture 'fit' with modern medicine.[19]

Society had awoken to the benefits of 'clean, well-lit, and properly ventilated' environments for physical and mental well-being. Buildings were executed on a scientific basis, emphasising function rather than form. The dusty, non-essential clutter of ornamentation was replaced by the sterile, 'plain surfaces and organisational clarity' of modernism.[20]

Listowel hospital's distinctive gate-lodge presents perhaps a more positive image of modernism. A pair of fluted pilasters support a thin concrete canopy which follows the curvature of the low, flat-roofed building, sheltering door and window openings. A porthole window recalls the sleek, streamlined design of a cruise liner — a reoccurring theme of the modern industrial aesthetic which glorified 'the machine'.

Gate lodge at Listowel District & Fever Hospital (1933–41) — John J. Winters. Credit: Author's own photograph.

The abstracted geometry of modern hospitals helped spread the language of modernism throughout the country.[21] The Kerry facilities were certainly not as delightful as hospitals completed elsewhere. However, the installation of these resources proved timely as Ireland weathered a Tuberculosis epidemic in the late 1940s.

Our Lady's 'New' Bridge, Kenmare (1932–3) — L.G. Mouchel & Partners.
Credit: Fáilte Ireland, 1962, photograph, Digital Repository of Ireland, https://doi.org/10.7486/DRI.w950jg07m.
Reproduced courtesy of Dublin City Library & Archive.

A new era dawned as the Irish Free State became a republic in 1949 and diverse coalition governments ushered in unprecedented economic prosperity. The cultural insularity caused by Ireland's neutrality in the previous decade was cast aside and Irish architecture engaged openly with the global modern movement.

The introduction of free national school education meant that Kerry had 200 new schools by 1911.[22] The eager patronage of religious institutions resulted in conservative designs based on the vernacular or parochial.[23] Basil Boyd-Barrett's appointment as the Office of Public Works (OPW) chief schools' architect in 1947 saw significant stylistic turns. Modernism had embraced the efficiency of the assembly line and Boyd-Barrett's rational constructions drew from kit-of-parts construction. Each school adhered to minimum sizes and standards but flexible arrangements, in response to site context, allowed for greater variety.[24] These Generic Repeat Design schools were easily built by local labour and rolled out countrywide.

The presently-abandoned Church of Ireland school at Arabella, Ballymacelligott (1952–5) was one of 654 schools built between 1952–62.[25] This modest, L-shaped structure catered for 40 pupils in a single desegregated classroom. An entrance colonnade extends to form a canopy over a playshelter and fuel store. The double height classroom rises behind this low horizontal service block. Its cubic, flat-roofed idiom is characteristic of international trends but atypical of later OPW models which favoured pitched trusses and clerestory glazing. Red brick piers and planters contrast with the otherwise raw palette of concrete and rough-cast or plaster walls. Post-war material shortages compelled builders to innovate and concrete's versatility was celebrated. In block and render form it lent itself to modular construction and the minimalist aesthetic.[26]

The comfort, health and hygiene of staff and students was greatly considered. Three large south-facing windows filled the classroom with light and air while a stove provided heat in winter. A free-standing water tower and indoor plumbing also facilitated novel but convenient internal lavatories. Boyd-Barrett's iconic towers remain a recognisable feature throughout the Irish landscape today.

Arabella, N.S., Ballymacelligott (1952–5) — Basil Raymond Boyd-Barrett. Credit: Author's own photograph.

Life in Kerry in the first five decades of the new century was characterised by the hardships of conflict and cycles of recession, austerity and mass emigration. Yet, the building blocks of statehood established through the materialisation of national identity, construction of significant public buildings, the upgrade of infrastructural networks and the development of functional health and education systems helped provide some stability in a turbulent and evolving world. Although it contrasted significantly with preceding styles, the emerging architecture in Kerry was bound by the realities of economics and conservative tastes. It was moderate, influenced more so by 'the surface of modernism rather than by its substance'.[27] However, the fragile economy recovered in the 1950s and the arrival of foreign industry and investment to Kerry's shores later in the mid-century signified the young nation's growing confidence. Ultimately, the transformation and optimism evident in the second half of the twentieth century would find its expression in a more truly modern architecture than heretofore.

Article adapted from a lecture delivered for the Architecture Kerry Festival, September 2021. Available to view at: https://youtu.be/EU-q4VlqV60.

NOTES

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Helen O'Carroll, Curator, Kerry County Museum, speaking to members about the history of the Thomas Ashe Memorial building

DANIEL O'CONNELL

Fr Seán Quinlan (1920 -2001)
Priest of the Kerry diocese

My first encounter with Daniel O'Connell, at a higher level than the pieces of information most people had, was when a teacher in secondary school quoted the classical French novelist Balzac.

Balzac, and it shows how far and how quickly O'Connell's reputation had spread, said of O'Connell: 'He incarnated a people.' That can well be translated by saying that he gave the Irish people an identity, a genuine sense of being human and with rights, and that O'Connell found in the Irish Catholic people a sense of his own role, in religion and politics to liberate, to give dignity, to create a new Irish being.

If you look backwards, Hugh O'Neill is the only figure who might have realised some element of O'Connell's ideal. The names that follow his - Parnell, Davitt, Pearse, Collins, De Valera — are largely unintelligible without the great sweep of O'Connell that had stamped the words 'Irish' and 'Catholic' on the civilised world.

Years later, I was travelling on a train in Switzerland and met a Swiss priest, a school chaplain, and when I said I was Irish, he said, 'Daniel O'Connell'. I asked him how he had heard of him, and he said: 'As a boy in school. We were told that he was the real creator of democracy.'

The words 'the masses', 'mass movements' are common to-day. But not even television could have handled O'Connell's Monster Meetings. Hundreds of thousands, and many must have walked, were at those meetings. They were in fact so large that the people at the fringes can hardly have heard him. To be present was enough, an act of faith.

That phenomenon was unknown until then, and is an image, a symbol, of the birth of each person's right to be heard in all that constituted his personal destiny.

A German traveller was at the meeting in Dundalk: 'I saw nothing but heads .... Never did I hear anything like that prolonged, that never-ending "Hurrah" for O'Connell. He descended from his carriage and instantly a large broad path opened for him, and as instantly closed when he had passed. It was the passage of Moses through the Red Sea to the very life.'

The reference to Moses reminds me of a famous cartoon in Punch. It was later than Catholic Emancipation in 1829, and Jews could not enter Parliament. The cartoon shows O'Connell and another man with their shoulders to the door of the House of Commons. In the caption O'Connell says: 'Another push, Moses, and we are in.' The Moses was Moses Montefiore, the leading Jew of England of the time. O'Connell was ecumenical, to use a word of our time.

O'Connell was a revolutionary, but a constitutional one. It is said he was revolted by the savagery of the French Revolution. In this century, in Ireland, the popular view was to underline revolutions of blood like 1916, and O'Connell lost some of his lustre. The fact, however, is that all who followed him, either way, were standing on his shoulders.

It would be interesting to speculate how, in that dark time in our history, a man from South Kerry could attain to a French education, the English Bar, and a towering place in the history of Europe. A sense of justice, massive self-confidence and considerable acumen and subtlety were his armour.

The main events of his life are well-known: his Chairmanship of the Catholic Committee, The Fitzpatrick Trial, the Doneraile Conspiracy, Lord Mayor of Dublin.

Among the people of Iveragh he was known for his love of the beagles. On his last visit there, when the famine was at its worst, there was scarcely a hare left on the ancestral mountains.

Few things in our history are as moving as his last cry in the House of Commons for the starving people of the Irish Famine: 'Ireland is in your hands .... She is in your power....If you do not save her, she cannot save herself. And I solemnly call on you to recollect that I predict with the sincerest conviction that one quarter of her population will perish unless you come to her relief.'

Ironically, Ireland's principal street is O'Connell St., Dublin. It was the 1916 street.

He left for Rome. He raved in Genoa in bed. 'I have', he said, 'it safely locked in a box.' 'What?', his chaplain asked. 'The Repeal,' he said. He played in fancy with his children.

He called out: 'Jesus! Jesus!', and at four in the afternoon he said they should take his heart to Rome.

The Great O'Neill is buried in Rome; a son of Brian Boru is buried in the Church of Santo Stefano Rotondo, and about two hundred yards east the heart of O'Connell reposes in the Irish College, Rome.

More than in any other city, except Dublin, does such illustrious Irish dust await the Resurrection.

Fr Seán Quinlan
May 1997.

Bryan MacMahon speaking to members at our visit to Ballyheigue Castle

Bryan MacMahon and a couple from Patagonia, Argentina, who came to Ballyheigue to meet Cantillon relatives

Isabel Bennett describes the interesting features of the sundial at Kilmalkedar

Isabel Bennett speakiing to members in a small chapel at Kilmalkedar

Forged in the Kingdom: Kerry's Historic Iron

Victoria McCarthy

If you stop and look around, Kerry's rich tapestry of historic iron becomes apparent throughout the urban and rural built environment. Before the mid-nineteenth century, Kerry's ironwork was predominately wrought iron forged by blacksmiths, its malleability and great tensile strength allowing for flexibility of shape and design. In the blacksmith's forge, iron bars were heated over a fire and hammered into shape. Decorative elements including scrolls, leaves, and decorative gate latches were attached once the main structure was created. Each leaf on period iron work, from large acanthus-type leaves to smaller specimens, was individually executed; its delicate form unifying beauty with function. In contrast, cast iron became more popular in the nineteenth century when mass-produced cast products were available. Cast iron was made by pouring molten iron into a mould and is more brittle than wrought iron. If damaged, cast iron cracks or breaks, whereas wrought iron typically bends.

Distinctive wrought iron gate latch in Killarney

The use of iron ranged from structural components including columns and beams, to the more decorative, including gutters, downpipes, hoppers, boot scrapers, handrails and balconies. In urban areas, historic railings were employed to connect the private to the public space and typically comprised straight vertical stands, set into lead pockets on top of a low plinth or stone cap, tied with a crossbar with decorative finials at the top of each vertical upright. Used also in the county's graveyards, historic iron was employed to identify and protect burial plots. It is similarly visible

Cast iron entrance gate at Muckross House, Killarney (image by Valerie O'Sullivan)

in our historic street furniture, including post boxes, historic manhole covers, and water pumps. It also contributes to the county's agricultural built heritage, where the design of field gates with looped uprights and robust hinges was elevated by the blacksmith's flourish, including scrolled handles or decorative collars. Similarly, while demarcating entrances to the county's grand residences, the use of ornate railings and cast iron piers elevated the beauty of roadside entrances beyond simple utility. The legacy of historic iron throughout our towns, villages and countryside, serves to remind us of the enduring quality of Kerry's iron craftsmanship, art and creativity. As custodians of this finite heritage, we have a duty to ensure its conservation and endurance for future generations.

Wrought iron Celtic revival motif used in a pedestrian domestic gate outside Lixnaw.

REVIEW: The Papers of Maurice FitzGerald, 18th Knight of Kerry 2 vols.

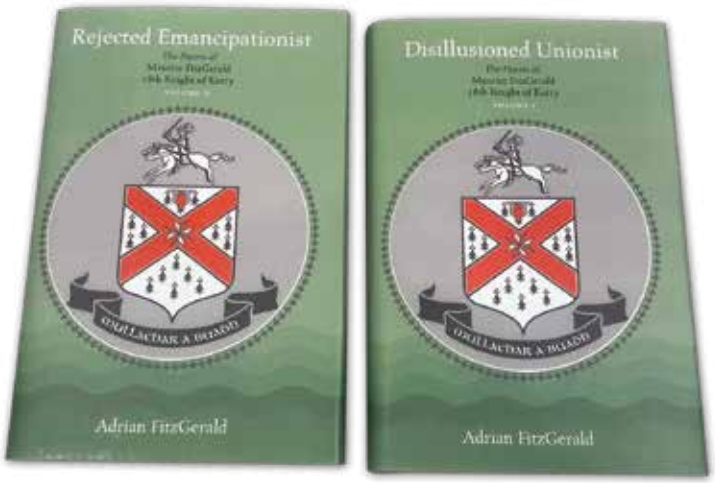
Vol. 1: Disillusioned Unionist and Vol. 2: Rejected Emancipationist (Kingdom Books, Dublin, 2025)

Muiris Bric

At the Listowel Writers' Week in June 2025, I had the pleasure of launching Sir Adrian FitzGerald's latest publication about the career and influence of one of his ancestors, the 18th Knight of Kerry (1772-1849). Even allowing for a natural curiosity about his family, Adrian presents a character who not only lived during a time of great change and challenge but who helped to shape the public debates on some of its major events of the time. These included the American and French Revolutions, the 1798 rebellion, the enactment of the Act of Union, the campaign for - and the achievement of - Catholic Emancipation, the Reform Acts, the Poor Laws, and the Great Famine. As is clear from Adrian's edition of Maurice's papers, letters, interviews and memoirs, the 18th Knight had something to say about them all.

But then, he had a forum. After all, he was MP for Co. Kerry both before and after the Union and from these volumes, we get an inkling of what that involved: the constant flow of letters between Maurice and the county's leading families - particularly of North Kerry - about everything from the management of elections - and where these families stood with respect to them - to the day-to-day affairs of the county. Indeed, there was a whiff of the ever-alert eye of *The Skibereen Eagle* about all this as these families watched one another, sometimes as friends, sometimes as foes and then again, sometimes as friends who became foes or vice versa, foes who became friends. While this might sound confusing, it suggests that there was nothing dull about Kerry's late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century political culture even before it was opened out to greater participation by a wider public.

It could be said that while things are different today, there are also continuities. For example, most MPs - whether of the past or the present - never left their re-election to chance. Moreover, although Maurice was a member of an 'ascendancy' - in his case, of 'the Protestant Ascendancy' - he also believed that if 'Ascendancy' was to survive, it always had to be ready to accommodate itself to a changing world. For him, and above all else, that meant not only Reform in a



general sense but a Reform which would promote Catholic Emancipation. For Maurice, this was not just a matter for legislation. Emancipation should also encourage Catholics to see the Irish Parliament as an assembly which could and would represent them as well as the elites of the past.

And so, in the first of Adrian's two volumes, we can see how Maurice's thoughts on this issue evolved into one which saw him refusing to vote for the Act of Union of 1800 unless Catholic Emancipation was included as part of the proposed constitutional rearrangements. He continued to hold that view even after George III refused to endorse Emancipation believing it to be incompatible with his Coronation Oath. And so, once again, the letters flowed not just between the political leaders of Co. Kerry but between them and a number of correspondents in England, some of whom were at the highest levels of political society. From this, it was clear that the influence of the Knight - for all the supposed remoteness of his constituency - reached far beyond the county bounds and into the upper echelons of British as well as Irish society.

The fact that Maurice's promotion of Catholic Emancipation was seeded well before 1800 was also a reminder that as important as O'Connell's Catholic Association was to the eventual success of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, it was complemented in its

work and organisation by a coterie of liberal-minded MPs who argued the case in the Palace of Westminster. It is also clear from Adrian's volumes that as one of these MPs, the then-Knight of Kerry was also advising O'Connell on parliamentary tactics and which MPs to lobby. Indeed, such was O'Connell's regard for FitzGerald as a parliamentary manager that in 1815, he asked him to table the petition on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland in the House of Commons.

By then, Maurice was spending time not only in Ballinruddery - the Knights' ancestral base near Listowel - but also in Glanleam, on Valentia Island. Indeed, after his defeat as an MP in 1831 - largely as a result of a dispute with O'Connell - he lived there permanently until his death in 1849. That defeat caused Maurice great 'disillusion', to quote from the sub-title one of Adrian's two volumes. More controversially, O'Connell's dispute with the Knight - and as a consequence, his estrangement from several other erstwhile supporters among Kerry's liberal Protestants - suggested that O'Connell had forgotten his pre-1829 parliamentary supporters and that by default, he encouraged a more confessional image for Catholic Emancipation.

The implications of this for inter-Church relationships after 1829 are also traced in these volumes. So is the highly controversial election of 1835 in which FitzGerald again confronted O'Connell's political machine. Although the Knight was again unsuccessful, the hustings proved to be among the most vitriolic in the history of Kerry - and these volumes suggest why.

By that time, Maurice was living in Valentia. And while these volumes do not include much about the estate per se in either Ballinruddery or Valentia - the Introduction tells us that the relevant data do not survive - they do offer (at least for Valentia) a picture of a landlord for whom his estate was not only a source of rents but an asset which would be 'industrialised' (his word) as well as made more productive by crop rotation, more 'scientific' (again his word) fertilisation, and enhanced by growing a variety of root crops, not just potatoes. For similar reasons, we also find him encouraging a busy linen industry, fishing and a much-celebrated slate quarry. For Maurice, the last two - slate and fishing - were untapped local resources which - as he saw it - with proper management, investment and encouragement, would enable his tenants to supplement their incomes from land and thus, to make them more prosperous.

This belief in developing untapped local resources also led Maurice to befriend one of the great public planners of early-nineteenth-century Co. Kerry - Alexander Nimmo - to whom we owe the construction of any number roads, piers and bridges, some of which still survive in South Kerry. Indeed, Nimmo went on to plan what is now the purpose-built town of Knightstown on Valentia Island as well as to inspire Maurice during the early 1820s to see Valentia as the Irish anchor point of a transatlantic packet station. Maurice also saw the potential of the railway, even before the Dublin & Kingstown Railway was inaugurated in 1834. And indeed, even at the height of the Great Famine, we find him trying to convince the taxpayers of South Kerry to support the idea of a railway to Valentia Harbour. As a result, he argued, Valentia would become the commercial entrepôt between Ireland and America, a point which was to be made more successfully by Maurice's son, Peter, the 19th Knight.

Finally, Adrain's two volumes open a window into what is often called 'sociability' and 'club life' which for Maurice, revolved around Brooks's in London. 'Such was the excited conversation there', he wrote, 'that one could become easily intoxicated without wine'. And so, the volumes chart the comings and goings of all sorts of people, including Thomas Moore, a close friend of Maurice. From them, we can also imagine the clubbers making preliminary drafts of what would later become important speeches or how political alliances and friendships could be made, extended, and broken on the issues of the day.

Adrian has sub-titled the papers of the 18th Knight as those of 'a disillusioned unionist' and 'a rejected emancipationist'. While these are very thought-provoking sub-titles, I would like to think that for all that, the life and times of Maurice FitzGerald, 18th Knight of Kerry, were also those of a landlord who was enterprising and much-respected and into whose different worlds we can - thanks to his descendant - get a glimpse of a world which was as local as you can get, yet as national and international as you could hope for and all, set against a background of great challenge.

The O'Rahilly

Pádraig Ó Concubhair

> O, Ireland when the glancing rays of freedom round you shine
> Forget not those brave hearts and true, that still in darkness pine,
> When glory guards your glittering throne, and wreaths your glowing brow,
> Remember then the dauntless brave, who droop in bondage now.

It was the Friday of Easter Week,1916, and Pearse and Connolly had decided that their position was no longer tenable. At four o'clock the first incendiary shell landed on the roof of the Post Office and when a large hose was turned on the flames the effect seemed to be rather to spread them than to quench them. The fire began to surge rapidly along both sides of the building, threatening to engulf everything. The O'Rahilly, as was his wont, had taken charge of the efforts to fight the fire and he can be seen in this role in Paget's famous print of the GPO in flames with the wounded James Connolly in the foreground. Suddenly some of the volunteers began to retch and vomit as sickening fumes started to fill the main hall. The O'Rahilly realised that the water from the hoses was reacting with the store of gelignite explosive in the basement and he at once abandoned his hosepipe and organized a working party to move the gelignite to the annex of the building. As the young John McLoughlin came up the stairs with his package of gelignite, the O'Rahilly picked up the hose and sent a stream of water down the steps. McLoughlin slipped and fell, face down on top of the parcel. He thought his last hour had come. The O'Rahilly helped him up. 'It's quite harmless,' said he, 'without the detonator.' 'I believed him at the time,' said McLoughlin later.

The O'Rahilly volunteered to lead an assault party to take the barricade at the top of Moore Street and set up a new headquarters in Williams & Woods' soap and jam factory in nearby Great Britain Street. But there was another task to be undertaken first. He had been put in charge of the small party of British soldiers which had been on guard in the GPO and the Wireless Telegraphy office across the street, and who had been captured on Easter Monday. Now he led them to the Henry Street exit and after shaking hands with each one advised them to keep to the wall and in single file to avoid being shot by their own side. In fact, they had to take shelter in a cellar off Henry Place and wait there until the fighting was over.

Michael Joseph, The O'Rahilly
Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

When the word of command came, he led thirty men into Henry Street. First, they opened a way through their own barricade and then at Moore Street corner they sorted themselves into two parties, one on each side of the street. He himself led the charge on the left-hand pavement but after twenty-five yards he dropped to the ground wounded and dragged himself into Sampson's Lane on that side. The military blazed away from the barricade at the top of Moore Street, but eventually there came a lull. At once O'Rahilly rose to his feet and, firing blindly towards the barricade, led another advance. He was hit again and, mortally wounded, managed to drag himself into the nearby Sackville Lane. Realizing he had not long to live, he wrote a last note to his wife.

> Written after I was shot. I was hit leading a rush. I got more than one bullet, I think.

There were at least two other Kerrymen in his group. One was Pat Shortis from Ballybunnion, a friend

of his sister, Anna. The other was Dennis Daly from Cahersiveen, who survived 1916 and all that followed and lived to be chairman of the Kerry County Board of the GAA. How, then, had it come to pass that a Ballylongford man, the son of one of the most prosperous merchants in Kerry, educated at Clongowes Wood, the exclusive Jesuit boarding school in Kildare, was to be the only member of the Volunteer executive to die in combat? For many years the family believed that The O'Rahilly and his nephew Dick Humphreys were the only combatants from Clongowes on the Republican side but we now know that Arthur Neilan, another past pupil was part of the Four Courts garrison under Ned Daly and he too survived. In one of the many ironies in which our history abounds, his brother Gerald, who had joined the Dublin Fusiliers, was shot dead by a Volunteer sniper from the Mendacity Institute, as he led his men on a bridge across the Liffey to relieve the Dublin Castle garrison.

Michael Joseph O'Rahilly was a most unlikely revolutionary. Descended from a Sliabh Luachra family, his great grandfather came to Ballylongford as a member of the Peace Preservation Force, his grandfather founded the family business and married a MacEllistrim — the family still live in Ballylongford. When her son, Richard, inherited the business she gave him good advice: 'To pay attention to the shop, give out no credit and forward the dockets to her.'

What, then, was it like, the Ballylongford that Michael Joseph grew up in? It was a thriving and prosperous village of three bakeries, fourteen grocery shops, eight of which were also public houses, three harness makers, three carpenters, four blacksmiths, three tailors, a dressmaker and milliner, and a wheelwright, two churches, three schools, and a petty sessions courthouse. There were four big fairs every year: May, July, October and December, but the centre of the village was the O'Rahilly business. Richard O'Rahilly ran a successful grocery. He also bottled the black beer that was good for you, he had a wholesale wine and spirit store, and a bakery. He engaged in milling and corn dealing, he ran a wool and linen drapery — he had an agency for corn, grass and turnip seed, with Goulding's fertilisers, super-phosphate and dissolved guano. He sold timber, deal and planks, hardware, he was an ironmonger and also a substantial farmer. He was involved in fish curing and exporting salmon and also an emigration and shipping agent. The O'Rahilly's son Aodogán tells us that his sister Anna wrote to Michael Joseph when he was in Clongowes boasting — justifiably — that her father had brought in the largest ship ever to the nearby Saleen Quay carrying 200 tons of coal.

Michael Joseph's uncle and namesake was a naval surgeon who died at the age of twenty-eight from cholera contracted in the West Indies and it was the family's wish that he would also pursue a career in medicine. Two things prevented this — first a dance in Ballydonoghue House in Tarbert, where he met and fell in love with a young American girl, Nancy Browne. He followed her to Kilkee and later — thanks to a lucky double on the horses — to Paris, while he was supposed to be at the University having given his cousin various letters and cards to be sent to Ballylongford — 'Working hard — starting on dissections this week.' Unfortunately the cousin posted them in the wrong order, so that some of them arrived in. Ballylongford before they were supposed to have been written.

The second thing was the totally unexpected death of his father from pneumonia in 1896. He returned to Ballylongford. His mother and two sisters had moved to Quinnsboro House near Ardnachrusha in County Clare where Nell had married Dr. David Humphreys. We may imagine his mother's feelings when he told her that he wanted to dispose of the business and travel to America to marry a young lady whom she had never even met. Nevertheless, she could see his mind was made up, and he got his wish. In 1898 the shop and surrounding buildings were sold to Michael Finucane and within two years the 'fine three-story house fronting the market square,' built by his father and the flour and meal stores had been acquired by James Bannatyne, the Limerick milling firm. His mother settled on him a capital sum of £5000 and an annual income of £450, both on condition that he did get married, which he did.

He and Nancy returned to Ireland and settled in Bray and there in 1903 they suffered a great tragedy, when their young son, baptized as Michael Joseph but always known as Bobby, died. His memorial window can be seen in the hallway as we enter the church of St Michael, Ballylongford. Another son was born — Risteard McEllistrim O'Rahilly — before the family moved to Brighton and thence to the United States. Two other sons were born during this period, Aodogán and Niall, and their father was determined all three should have an Irish education — though not at Clongowes Wood! The family returned permanently to Ireland in 1909 and settled in Dublin. There were two other children, Maolmhuire (Myles) born in 1911 and Rory (baptized Michael Joseph) who was born after the death of his father in 1916.

But while in America he still felt the call of Ireland. He named his house in Philadelphia, 'Sliabh Luachra' after that part of Kerry from which his family originated. Encouraged by letters from his sister Anna, he developed a renewed interest in the Irish language, which according to his school-fellow Jack Jones he had first learned in the after-school classes taught by

the headmaster of Ballylongford Boys School, a native of the Corca Dhuibhne Gaeltacht. This love of Irish was to become a major part of his life and he began to sign his name in Irish — 'Ua Rathghaille' (The O'Rahilly). He still kept in contact with his friends and schoolfellows from Ballylongford, Jack Jones, Con and Mike Creedon, and later on with Roger (Baker) Mulvihill and Brian O'Grady.

The O'Rahilly, as he now became known, threw himself into the 'Irish Ireland' movement. He supported the Sinn Fein party of Arthur Griffith and he became an active and fervent member of Conradh na Gaeilge. He bought a site in Cuan near Ceann Trá in the Corcha Dhuibhne Gaeltacht and there he designed and built a bungalow which is still used by the family. He became business manager of *An Claidheamh Soluis,* the Gaelic League newspaper, and introduced a simplified Gaelic type-face. He became friendly with Harry 'Tractor' Ferguson — both had an interest in aviation and he persuaded Ferguson to transport an aeroplane — minus its wings — to the annual Aonach na Nollag in in Dublin, charging sixpence to visitors to view this futuristic machine and another sixpence to sit in the cockpit.

In 1913 the direction of his life would change. The O'Rahilly drafted and dispatched the invitations to the meeting which took place in Wynn's Hotel in Abbey Street, Dublin, on 11 November 1913 which laid the foundation of the Irish Volunteer movement. This is confirmed by Eamonn Ceannt, one of the signatories of the proclamation, writing in the newspaper *The Irish Volunteer.* 'O'Rahilly was Treasurer and later Director of Arms for the new organization. His motto was "Sell your shirt and buy a rifle," and he was disgusted with those volunteers who did not go along with this. "One man won't buy a rifle because they will be cheaper after the war. He should remember that it is easy to buy tickets for the All-Ireland the day after the game."'

The O'Rahilly was a member neither of the IRB nor of the military council which planned the rising for Easter Sunday 1916, but he was well aware of their strategy and according to some accounts he drove to Kerry in his car — Wicklow registered NI 2, a red car which he had repainted green — on the Monday of the week preceding, i.e., Holy Week, to coordinate the plans for the landing of arms which would be the signal for the start of the rebellion. When the news reached Dublin that the arms ship, the *Aud,* was scuttled, O'Rahilly agreed with Eoin MacNeil's decision to call off the Rising and on Easter Sunday he took a taxi to Limerick, where he met representatives of the Munster volunteers, to reinforce MacNeil's countermanding order published in that morning's newspapers.

On returning to Dublin, he found, much to his surprise, that the Rising was going ahead. He was determined to participate. He loaded up his car with whatever weapons were in the house and accompanied by Anna drove to Liberty Hall and from there to the General Post Office. The car was eventually parked in nearby Princes Street, where it became a casualty of the Rising. Found by the police in a 'very disabled and burnt condition,' it was removed to the Lower Castle Yard by eight men, a horse and a float hired from John Wallis & Sons, Carriers, of Bachelor's Walk. At the end of May 1916 O'Rahilly's wife received a bill for £1/10 from the military for its removal. She refused to pay it.

Anna O'Rahilly writes: 'After the surrender we were told that my brother and his nephew had been killed. We went down to the morgue to identify the bodies, one was Michael's but the second was that of Paddy Shortis from Ballybunnion. Corrigan's were the only undertakers who would take on Michael's funeral and he was buried in Glasnevin. My sister Nell, myself and Austin O'Donoghue, later appointed a District Justice, were the only people there. We later moved his body to the Republican Plot.'

For many years history was not kind to Michael Joseph O'Rahilly. The executions of those who signed the Proclamation of the Republic and the other prominent leaders, and the arrest of so many republicans who had not been involved in the fighting were the catalysts that swung public opinion behind the Volunteers. Perhaps, then, it was not unexpected that those who actually died in the fighting should occupy a secondary place in the story of the Rebellion. This was redressed in Ballylongford in 1966 and again in 2016, thanks to the co-operation of our GAA Club, named after the patriot, and the Ballylongford Enterprise Association.

After the 1966 commemoration his youngest son, Rory, wrote to my father on 2 May 1966: 'It is wonderful to think that The O'Rahilly is remembered by so many sixty-eight years after he left his native town. I am sure his grandchildren will cherish his memory even better now, since they have seen the surroundings he grew up in, the fields in which he played and the chapel in which he prayed as a young boy.'

But for many years it was left to that unlikely Republican , W.B. Yeats, to recognise the birth of the 'Terrible Beauty' in 1916, and to 'Sing of the O'Rahilly!'

> Sing of The O'Rahilly
> Do not deny his right
> Sing a 'The' before his name
> Allow that he, despite all these learned historians
> Established it for good.

He wound the clock and helped to hear it strike.

Memories of the Revolutionary Period 1914-1921: A Collection of School Projects from 1966

Patricia O'Hare

Muckross House Research Library holds several interesting local history folders and scrap books, which were compiled by school pupils in 1966. They relate to a local history project, organised by Kerry County Library, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Easter Rising.[1] The aim of the project appears to have been to encourage pupils to collect first-hand accounts of the revolutionary period from c. 1914 to c. 1921. This hand-written material is interspersed with photographs, published material and, occasionally, medals, badges and other ephemera. The accounts are mostly written in English and some repetition occurs. Several different areas are covered within each volume. The pupils of *Meán Scoil Mhuire, Tobar Muí Doire, Tráilí,* achieved the first prize of £10 for the three volumes of material they submitted.[2] The pupils of *Meán Scoil Treasa, Clochar na Trócaire, Cill Áirne,*[3] achieved the second prize of £7, while those of *Meán Scoil Naomh Eoin Bosco, Cathair Saidhbín* received £3 for third place.[4] Two Primary Schools from Tralee, *Bun Scoil Eoin, Balluamhnach*[5] and *Scoil Mhuire, Tobar Muí Doire,*[6] divided a prize amount of £5 between them; their entries are also here at Muckross.[7]

The aim of this article is simply to draw attention to the existence of this local history material. It is not possible to describe in detail the content here, nor is it possible to weigh up the accuracy, or bias, of individual accounts. Clearly caution must be exercised when reading the material and one must allow for exaggeration and embellishment.[8] Nevertheless, it appears that many of those who supplied information often had families who were closely associated with the events of the revolutionary period. The material and extracts included below have been chosen simply to provide a flavour of the content.

The scrap books include numerous references to the Gaelic League, Sinn Fein Clubs, Sinn Féin Courts[9] *Aeridheachtaí,*[10] events before and after 1916, Conscription and the War of Independence. Many accounts mention the establishment and training of various Volunteer[11] Companies throughout the county and often include the names of participants. For instance, there is a list of the men from the Killarney area who were standing by for mobilisation on Easter Sunday 1916. There is also a listing of the available arms and ammunition.[12] One account, by David O'Sullivan, recalled the tragedy at Ballykissane pier, near Killorglin, on 21 April 1916, which resulted in the deaths of three Volunteers. O'Sullivan described the part his

Ballyhar Sinn Féin Flag. Mercy Convent, Killarney, MHRL 060.095.

family played in rescuing the sole survivor, Tommy McInerney.[13] The three men who died are usually considered the first casualties of the 1916 Rebellion.

Sean Connolly was the first of the rebels to die in Dublin during the Easter Rising. Born into a fiercely republican family in April 1882, Sean became a prominent trade unionist and member of the Citizen Army.[14] He was also a gifted actor and he joined the Abbey Theatre in January 1913. On Easter Monday 1916 Sean was in charge of the second company of the Citizen Army, which entered Dublin Castle, while another small detachment of the company entered City Hall.[15] Connolly's daughter Mrs M. Murray, of Marian Park, Tralee, provided the following, which she had received from her mother.

> Easter Monday: My father Sean Connolly called to see my mother and told her he was going on a route march. He marched with a company of 30 persons, five of whom were women, five boys and the rest men. They took the Castle guard room after my father had killed the guard at the gate. They then divided up, some on the Evening Mail office and some on the City Hall roof. . . . Sean Connolly was a well- known Abbey actor in his spare time. He was at the time appearing in a play, "The Memory of the Dead." In it he played the part of a soldier who was killed and died in the arms of an actress (Helena Moloney).[16] Miss Moloney accompanied my father to City Hall.
>
> After a few hours occupation of City Hall where there was continuous fire from Dublin Castle, Sean Connolly was seen to stagger. He walked the length of the roof and said, "I am shot and hand my command to Lt. O'Reilly." As he sank slowly to his knees he was

heard to murmur, "May the Lord God have mercy on my soul," and Miss Moloney reached to catch him. He did in actual fact die in her arms, as he had done for many performances in the Abbey Theatre. After the surrender of the City Hall some hours later my father's fifteen year old brother Mattie was found asleep across Sean's dead body. On Tuesday morning, when the office staff entered City Hall, the breast of a white marble statue of Thomas Davis was noticed to be covered in blood, the life blood of Sean Connolly which had come through the skylight. He admired Thomas Davis above all other writers.

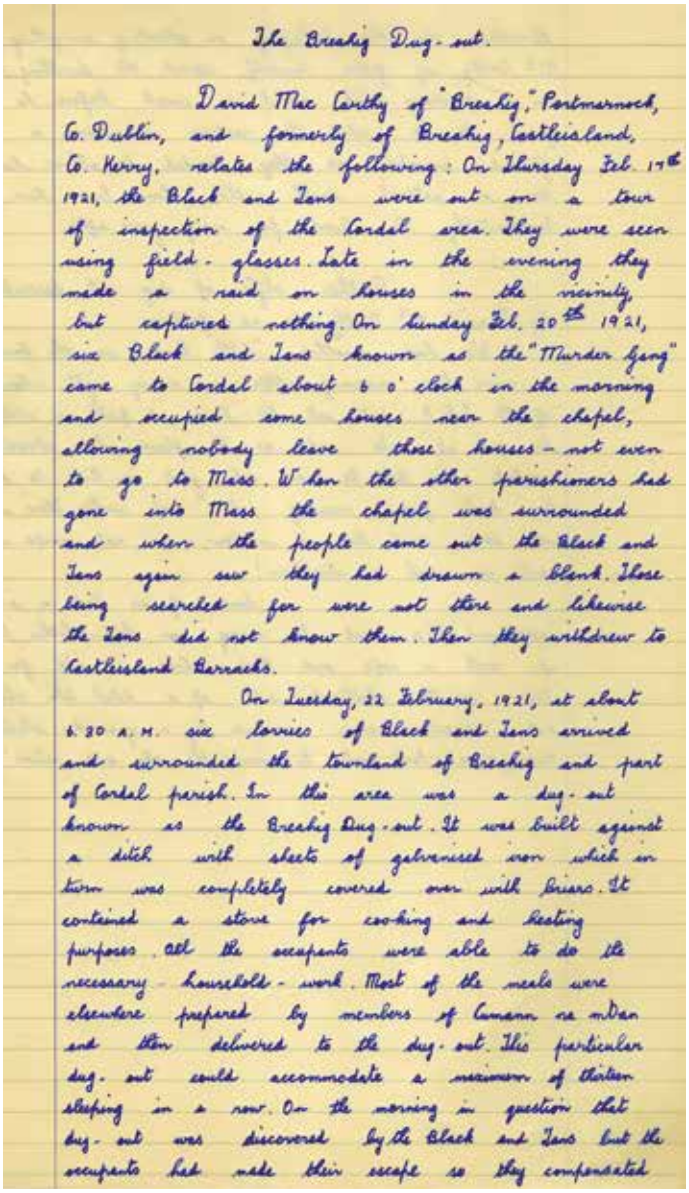
For days my mother was unaware as to the true fate of my father. My aunt Nanno, a girl of nineteen years, elected to cross the city from Fair View where we lived, to the City Hall. Though unable to get right to the City Hall she got to Capel Street amid intense fusillage. There she learned my father was definitely dead. Courageous girl that she was she proceeded to the morgue and examined many bodies, most notably the O'Rahilly's. The morgue attendant said, "ye can have that one for 6d, we don't want blasted rebels here."

Sean Connolly's body was dug up from the Castle yard, some ten days after his death. He was identified by some false teeth (he was a very fine hurler, had three All Ireland medals and had had six teeth knocked out during a match) and his height 6ft 11 inches.[17]

Resistance to British rule grew significantly, as did support for Sinn Féin, following the execution of the 1916 leaders. Several accounts suggest that a level of quiet resistance was employed against the authorities by at least a proportion of the population. The following humorous account probably reflects the period c.1918.

A National School Inspector named Donal O'Lehane, who resided in Killarney, was transferred to Cork as a punishment for not preventing his children from wearing Sinn Féin badges. It was also reported to authorities in Dublin that some of the children attending the Convent of Mercy School in Killarney were wearing tri-colour badges and the result was that an Inspector was sent down from the Department of Education for the sole purpose of suppressing this menace to the stability of the British Empire.

It happened that the school was closed the day the said official called, so he was unable to take any action in the matter. When the townspeople heard of the object of his visit, some wise-acre among them thought it would be a great idea to substitute the wearing of daisies for the badges because God had dressed them in the tri-colour. This suggestion, however, did not appeal to Mrs Fleming, St Mary's Terrace. She figured out something more lasting. Being an adept needle-woman, she made a new dress for her daughter, Kathleen, the bodice of which was green, the skirt yellow, with a wide white belt joining



The Breahig Dug-out.

David Mac Carthy of "Breahig", Portmarnock, Co. Dublin, and formerly of Breahig, Castleisland, Co. Kerry, relates the following: On Thursday Feb. 17th 1921, the Black and Tans were out on a tour of inspection of the Cordal area. They were seen using field-glasses. Late in the evening they made a raid on houses in the vicinity, but captured nothing. On Sunday Feb. 20th 1921, six Black and Tans known as the "Murder Gang" came to Cordal about 6 o'clock in the morning and occupied some houses near the chapel, allowing nobody leave those houses - not even to go to Mass. When the other parishioners had gone into Mass the chapel was surrounded and when the people came out the Black and Tans again saw they had drawn a blank. Those being searched for were not there and likewise the Tans did not know them. Then they withdrew to Castleisland Barracks.

On Tuesday, 22 February, 1921, at about 6.30 A.M. six lorries of Black and Tans arrived and surrounded the townland of Breahig and part of Cordal parish. In this area was a dug-out known as the Breahig Dug-out. It was built against a ditch with sheets of galvanised iron which in turn was completely covered over with briars. It contained a stove for cooking and heating purposes. All the occupants were able to do the necessary household-work. Most of the meals were elsewhere prepared by members of Cumann na mBan and then delivered to the dug-out. This particular dug-out could accommodate a maximum of thirteen sleeping in a row. On the morning in question that dug-out was discovered by the Black and Tans but the occupants had made their escape so they compensated

Account of the Black and Tans, Mercy Convent, Killarney. (MHRL, 2016.6.1)

the two colours. The first day she appeared in school, everyone stood and stared and saluted her, but she was far too young then to realise that she was both the national flag and the flag-staff while the dress was wearable.[18]

Another account recounts gleefully how the authorities were hoodwinked about the location of a prohibited *aeridheacht*, which took place just outside Killarney.

An *aeridheacht* was to be held on Whit Sunday in 1920 and was proclaimed by the British. It was announced for the cricket field to the south of Killarney and hundreds of military and police held the exits from the town in that direction.

As it happened, three funerals were going to Aghadoe, to the north west of the town that day and it was surprising the number of mourners who accompanied those funerals, part of the way anyway. . . . When the crowd returned that evening from the *aeridheacht*, held at Allen's Field, on the way to Aghadoe, the

disgust of the British authorities was complete.[19]

Unsurprisingly, the activities of the Black and Tans often receive a mention. One account described the curfew conditions in place in Castleisland on the night that IRA Volunteer Richard Shanahan was shot on 10 July 1921.[20] The burning of Abbeydorney by the Black and Tans later that year was also recorded.

> I remember the night of October 21st 1920. The Black and Tans fired into every house, including ours, along the road to Abbeydorney. My mother got us children out of bed at two o'clock am November 1st to take us across the fields away from the road. Before we left I went out on the road and I could see the village of Abbeydorney ablaze. I could hear the bombs which had been thrown into the building[s] exploding. We found shelter in an out-house in the fields. The Tans went as far as Ballyduff and burned many houses. We could see them with their search lights. They still kept firing into every house and shouting "Come out now." The ceiling board with bullet holes is still to be seen in my old home.[21]

There are accounts relating to the attacks on Gortatlea RIC Barracks, in April 1918 and February 1920.[22] There are also often several different accounts relating to many other ambushes including for example: the Rathmore Ambush,[23] Ballinclare Ambush,[24] Clonbannin Ambush Co. Cork,[25] the Headford Ambush[26] and the Castlemaine or Ballymacandy Ambush.[27]

The locations of safe houses, as well as the uncomfortable hide-outs and dug-outs used by those IRA Volunteers involved in active service, are sometimes recorded. Near Annascaul, fear of the supernatural appears to have prevented at least some men from using a souterrain, within a ringfort, for shelter.

> The men also used an old fort known as Ferriter's Fort, which is situated on the right side of the Maum road. There are two apartments under the fort large enough to keep three or four men. Many men slept there at night. Some would not sleep there because they were afraid of the fairies, but Pat T. Kennedy says he would have preferred the fairies to the Tans.[28]

The activities of Cumman na mBán are frequently mentioned. One account from the Fossa area, near Killarney, recognised the often hazardous nature of their work.

> Cumann na mBan did very dangerous and useful work. They did first aid and prepared food for the men and also carried guns and ammunition and delivered despatches. Their captain was Annie Sheehan. Without the help of the women it would have been very difficult for the men to carry out their work.[29]

On 11 July 1921 the Truce came into effect between the IRA Volunteers and the British forces. However, it appears from many accounts that military training by the former continued unabated; indeed the opportunity was often taken to reorganise and regroup.

> During the Truce there was a battalion training camp established at Aghadoe and Volunteers attended it in relays. Field training was carried out and included rifle range and bombing practice, field engineering, signalling, tactics, physical training, etc. Night operations were carried out also.[30]

On the Dingle Peninsula another account stated that,

> The Camp Company of Volunteers gladly accepted the Truce. During the truce period they made dug-outs, they drilled and practiced fire-arms. They had a training camp in Glenfield.[31]

An interesting glimpse into the administration involved in organising these camps is provided by a copy of a page from a Roll Book. It lists the names of IRA Volunteers and the frequency of their attendance at training at "Healy's Camp," Knocknagoshel, between 30 October 1921 and 16 April 1922. The training took place several times a week up to mid-December 1921, followed by a lapse until 18 February 1922; it appears to have been less intense thereafter.[32]

The scrap books are currently undergoing conservation. The intention is to eventually make some of the material contained within them available on our website, Muckross House Research Library.

NOTES:

[1] There appears to be no record of how, or why, the material was deposited in Muckross House Research Library (hereafter MHRL).

[2] Mercy Convent, Moyderwell, Tralee. MHRL, 60.093; 60.094; 60.096. These first of these, 60.093, includes: Annascaul, Camp, Ballyheigue, Causeway, Abbeydorney, Lixnaw, Ballyduff. The second, 60.094, includes: Tralee, Ballymacelligott and Scartaglen. The third, 60.096, covers: Firies, Currans, Knocknagoshel, Ardfert, Lixnaw, Castlegregory, Blennerville and Curraheen.

[3] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRl, 60.095. Includes: Killarney, Kilcummin East, Gneevegullia and Rathmore, Tuogh, Currow, Fossa, Ballyhar, Firies and Listry. A second, less ornate folder of material from this school was donated in 2016 (Accession No. 2016.6.1). The text (no illustrations) appears to be a copy of 60.095.

[4] Presentation Convent, Caherciveen. MHRL, 60.099. Caherciveen area.

[5] Mercy Convent, Balloonagh, Tralee. MHRL, 60.098.

[6] Mercy Convent, Moyderwell, Tralee. MHRL, 60.097.

[7] Other schools, as well as Macra na Feirme, also participated. Their entries are not in MHRL.

[8] The scrap books are un-paginated. Here, the referencing convention includes the school name, MHRL reference

number, source, with address, if available. References to a particular subject are not exhaustive.

[9] Apparently Lord Kenmare (Valentine Charles Browne, d. 1941) made use of local Sinn Féin Courts and was pleased with the results. Mercy Convent, Killarney. MRHL, 60.095. Source: account compiled from notes etc., of Michael Spillane and Michael O'Sullivan, Killarney, et al.

[10] Open-air social gatherings, celebrating Irish language and culture.

[11] The Irish Volunteers was a military organisation, established 1913, by Irish Nationalists during the Home Rule crisis. It evolved into the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in 1919, as the official army of the newly declared Irish Republic.

[12] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL 60.095. Listed as: 52 Martini Enfield single shot rifles, 3 magazine rifles, 10 shot guns, 15 revolvers, 1,700 rounds of 303 ammunition, 500 rounds of revolver ammunition, 300 ball cartridges and 4 miniature rifles. Source: Michael Spillane and Michael O'Sullivan, Killarney, et. al.

[13] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095. Source: David O'Sullivan, patient, District Hospital, Killarney. The Volunteers were travelling to Cahersiveen to establish radio communication with Sir Rodger Casement and the Aud, a German ship carrying arms. The car accidently took a wrong turn and entered the water.

[14] https://www.dib.ie/biography/connolly-sean-a1959 (accessed July 7, 2025).

[15] https://www.storiesfrom1916.ie/1916-easter-rising/sean-connolly (accessed July 7, 2025).

[16] Actress, Republican, Trade Unionist and Feminist, Helena styled her surname 'Molony', thoughout her life (1883–1967). https://www.dib.ie/biography/molony-helena-a5874 (accessed 10 July 2025).

[17] Mercy Convent, Moyderwell, Tralee. MHRL, 60.094. Source: Mrs M. Murray, Marian Park, Tralee, daughter of Sean Connolly.

[18] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095. Source: Charlie O'Brien, St Anne's Road, Killarney.

[19] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095. Source: Michael Spillane and Michael O'Sullivan, Killarney, et. al.

[20] Mercy Convent, Balloonagh, Tralee. MHRL, 60.098. Source: possibly Mrs Mary Gallavin née Griffin, (no address).

[21] Mercy Convent, Balloonagh, Tralee. MHRL, 60.098. Source: David Nealon, Caherslee, Tralee.

[22] Mercy Convent, Moyderwell, Tralee. MHRL, 60.094. (Ballymacelligott). Source: Thomas McEllistrim TD, Ahane, Ballymacelligott.

[23] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095. Source: Patrick Moynihan, The Park, Killarney. Ambush took place May 3, 1920.

Competition Entry, Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095.

1966 Commemoration at Mercy Convent Killarney. MHRL, 060.095.

[24] Mercy Convent, Moyderwell, Tralee. MHRL, 60.093. (Annascaul). Source: Pat T. Kennedy (no address). Ambush took place August 19, 1920. Two days later Paddy Kennedy, a local IRA Volunteer and a participant in this ambush, was shot dead by the Black and Tans in reprisal. Account of the inquest into the shooting was provided by Patrick Donnelly, Annascaul. Several small, black and white photographs of Paddy Kennedy's funeral are included here.

[25] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095. Sources: Eilís Nic Eochaidh, granddaughter of John Keogh Intelligence Officer 4th Battalion, Kerry No. 2 Brigade. Ambush took place March 5, 1921.

[26] Mercy Convent, Moyderwell, Tralee. MHRL, 60.094. (Ballymacelligott). Sources: Thomas McEllistrim TD, Ahane, Ballymacelligott. Also Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095. (Tuogh). Source: Daniel Coffey, Gortcullinane, Gap of Dunloe, Beaufort. Ambush took place March 21, 1921.

[27] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095. (Tuogh). Source: Daniel Coffey, Gortcullinane, Gap of Dunloe, Beaufort. Ambush took place June 1, 1921.

[28] MHRL, 60.093. Mercy Convent, Moyderwell, Tralee (Annascaul). Source: Pat T. Kennedy (no address provided).

[29] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095. Source: Jack Myers, Gap Road, Beaufort, Killarney.

[30] Mercy Convent, Killarney. MHRL, 60.095. Source: Michael Spillane and Michael O'Sullivan, Killarney, et al.

[31] Mercy Convent, Moyderwell,Tralee. MHRL, 60.093. (Camp). Sources: Dan Scannell and Michael Crean (no addresses).

[32] Mercy Convent, Moyderwell, Tralee. MHRL 60.096. (Knocknagoshel). Source: Uncertain.

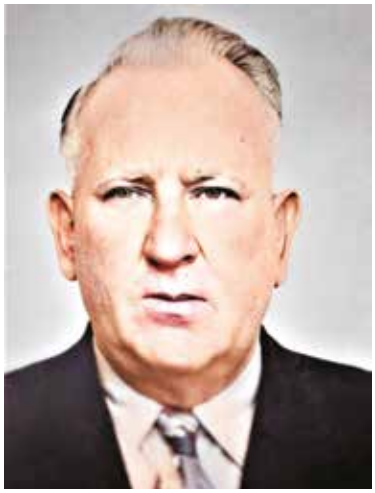
The remarkable story of Kathleen O'Connor of Clann na Poblachta

The Kerry TD who was too young to vote for herself

Owen O'Shea

At a time when the debate about the dearth of women in electoral politics in Ireland continues, it is worth recounting the fascinating story of one Kerry woman who blazed a trail by being elected a TD when there were even fewer female representatives in the Dáil.

Kathleen O'Connor (later Fitzgerald) was born on 30 July 1934 and grew up at the family home at Poulawaddra near Farmers' Bridge. She was a daughter of Johnny O'Connor, a member of the Kerry No 1 Brigade of the IRA during the War of Independence and later a member of a Flying Column with the No 2. Brigade under the legendary IRA leader, Dan Allman. Taking the anti-Treaty side in the Civil War, he spent time on hunger strike while in jail. After some years in the United States, Johnny returned to Farmers' Bridge. He married Margaret Corkery of nearby Ashill and took up employment as a clerk of works for the Board of Health.



Johnny O'Connor, Clann na Poblachta TD for Kerry North 1954

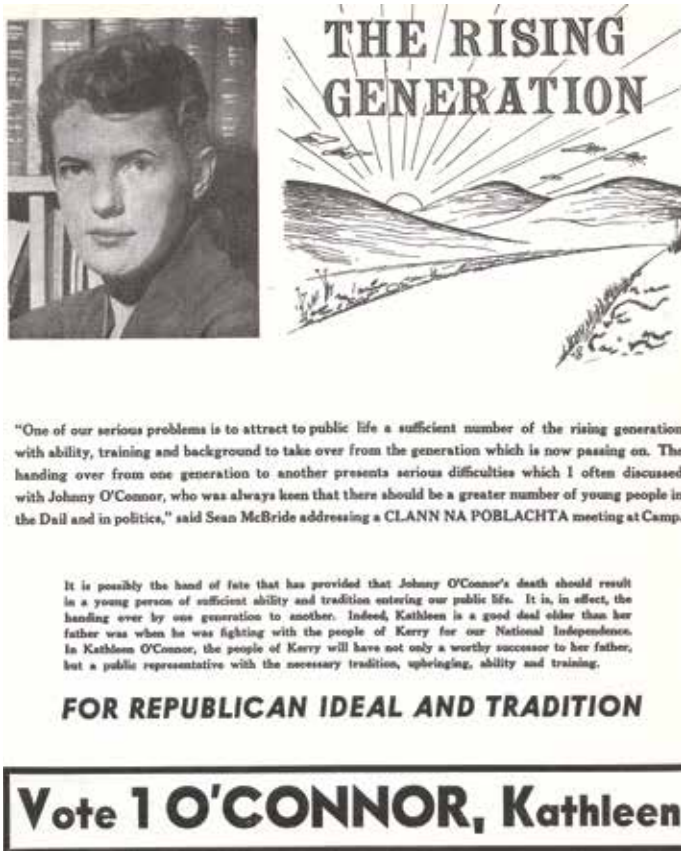
Johnny (often better-known as simply Johnny Connor) remained active in the IRA and was jailed in the Curragh in the 1940s. Kathleen O'Connor recalled it being a 'very political household.'[1] Her father gave her books on the revolutionary period and the writings of IRA men like Dan Breen. The house was often raided by police during the 1940s. Johnny became involved in politics and joined the socialist republican party, Clann na Poblachta, winning a seat for the party on Kerry County Council in 1948. He won a Dáil seat in Kerry North in 1954. Kathleen was in teacher training college at this time and the first she heard of her father's election was when three of her fellow students ran towards her in the corridor, shouting 'He's in, he's in.' Kathleen was completing her studies in Dublin when Johnny took up his seat in the Dáil and she regularly visited his Leinster House office to assist him with his political work: 'It was great to be there seeing some of the biggest names in politics like De Valera and Cosgrave.'

Johnny O'Connor was tragically killed in a car accident on 11 December 1955 on the main road between Abbeyfeale and Castleisland, as he returned from a party meeting in Dublin. For Kathleen, the funeral was to bring a memorable encounter with the Clann na Poblachta leader. Seán MacBride came to the family home to sympathise: 'He was a towering figure – you knew you were in the presence of greatness with him,' Kathleen recalled in an interview in 2010. MacBride tried to convince Johnny's widow, Catherine to contest the by-election, which was set for 29 February 1956, but it was Kathleen – who had just taken up a teaching post at Meen National School in Knocknagoshel – who was eventually persuaded to stand. She had just turned 21 and had not yet been listed on the Register of Electors.

The only other candidate in the by-election was Fianna Fáil councillor Dan Moloney from Listowel. Kathleen's party, Clann na Poblachta, was supporting a coalition government at the time, which included Fine Gael, Labour and Clann na Talmhan, and as a result, the by-election was a critical one for the stability of the government. All three of the coalition party leaders visited the constituency to rally support for O'Connor. Fine Gael's John A. Costello, Labour's Brendan Corish and Joseph Blowick of Clann na Talmhan addressed pre-election rallies in Listowel and Tralee. They placed advertisements in *The Kerryman* encouraging support for the young teacher.

A Clann na Poblachta campaign message in *The Kerryman* on 18 February 1956 declared: 'Is it possibly the hand of fate that has provided that Johnny O'Connor's death should result in a young person of sufficient ability and tradition entering our public life?'[2] Fianna Fáil hit back, however: in a pointed message just days before polling, the party suggested that 'sentiment' – code for sympathy – shouldn't come into people's minds when voting. Under the heading

Kathleen O'Connor



Election message from Kathleen O'Connor

'Reality or Sentiment?' and beside a picture of Dan Moloney, a message from Fianna Fáil's Seán Lemass read 'Politics is, or should be, a matter of principles and not personalities. Candidates should be elected to the Dáil mainly because of their views and politics.'[3]

Lemass' rhetoric and Fianna Fáil's tactics failed to reap a reward. When the ballots were counted at the Ashe Memorial Hall on Denny Street in Tralee on 1 March 1956, Kathleen O'Connor outpolled Dan Moloney by 18,176 votes to 15,828. O'Connor has become the third youngest deputy elected since the foundation of the State.[4] In his concession speech, Dan Moloney remarked that success was always going to be difficult because 'there was a four-pronged attack on them [Fianna Fáil] the whole way through' from Fine Gael, Labour, Clann na Talmhan and Clann na Poblachta. 'Miss Kathleen O'Connor speaking in Irish and English,' *The Kerryman* recorded, 'thanked the people of North Kerry for electing her and the other parties and all the gallant workers of Clann na Poblachta. She hoped she would be able to look after their interests as well as her father had done.'[5]

'A small, slight girl, too young to have cast a vote in her own favour, became a new TD for North Kerry yesterday…' declared the *Cork Examiner* on the morning after Kathleen O'Connor's election. 'Clad soberly in black, the brown-haired Miss O'Connor's face was lighted with gladness … when the Returning Officer of the election, Mr TG Clarke, County Registrar, declared the result.'[6] Just a week later, on 7 March 1956, the new deputy, accompanied by her mother, was welcomed at the gates of Leinster House by Seán MacBride and took her seat in the Dáil the following day. The *Cork Examiner* captured the moment she entered the Chamber:

> Twenty-one-year-old Miss Kathleen O'Connor received a friendly welcome from a fairly full Dáil to-day when she took her late father's seat in the House. Before she was introduced to the Leas Ceann Comhairle, Mr Cormac Breslin, she chatted gaily to Mr Seán MacBride, TD, in one of the lobbies while waiting for question time to end. All was quiet when she came down the stairway and crossed the soft Dun Emer carpet to the Chair. Then as she was being escorted to her seat a storm of applause burst from the benches of the Government supporters. Some gallants in the Fianna Fáil benches joined, as did people in the crowded public gallery. Miss O'Connor, who looked very chic in a black tailored costume and wore a tight-fitting black hat, smiled winningly.[7]

The *Daily Express* observed that O'Connor was 'the slip of a girl who is too young to have a vote herself.'[8]

Kathleen O'Connor (r) with her mother Catherine and party leader Sean Mac Bride on her first day in the Dáil on 7 March 1956

Apart from being the youngest TD in the fifteenth Dáil, Kathleen O'Connor was one of just seven women deputies at the time – one of whom was Fianna Fáil's Honor Mary Crowley of Kerry South – and she was only one of just three Clann na Poblachta TDs.

Some of the press coverage was laden with the type of sneering misogyny which was, sadly, typical of a different era. Dublin's *Evening Mail* published a condescending editorial:

> The shouting in North Kerry is over, and the pleasant-looking young school teacher steps into her dead father's place in Dáil Eireann … the Inter-Party forces have no cause to be wildly jubilant. In a poll as near as makes little difference to that of the 1954 election there were nearly 3,000 fewer votes cast for them. It may be suggested that these lost or missing votes are due to displeasure on the part of individuals in regard to the obvious appeal to unthinking sentimentality implicit in the very choice of a young lady of 21 altogether without political experience, merely because she happens to be her father's daughter … We must not expect great things of Miss O'Connor in the Dáil, at any rate not at once. If she is at hand with reasonable regularity to trip into the division lobby when the bell rings it will be all that will be required of her until she decides for herself whether she will be a real politician or a permanent rubber stamp …[9]

The *Evening Mail* was, however, prophetic in recognising the daunting task facing a young woman from a rural constituency. The task of servicing a constituency of the size of Kerry North and the requirement to be present in Leinster House so regularly became too much for the 21-year-old deputy before too long. Not long after her election, she realised that the political life was not for her and she decided not to contest the 1957 general election. Before leaving the Dáil however, she played her part in collapsing the coalition government, signing on 28 January 1957, with her colleagues MacBride and John Tully, a motion of no confidence in the government, which precipitated its end. Her constituency colleague, Paddy Finucane (from Moyvane) of Clann na Talmhan had also withdrawn his support for the coalition.

At the Clann na Poblachta selection convention in Kerry North, Seán MacBride announced that when Deputy O'Connor had agreed to contest the by-election, it was on the clear understanding that she would not be expected to stand at the following general election.[10] During her short time in the Dáil, she tabled less than a dozen parliamentary questions on constituency matters but she never spoke in a debate. Remarkably, Deputy O'Connor was involved in a car accident not far from where her father had died in December 1955. While travelling between Abbeyfeale and Newcastle West in September 1956, she was part of a pile-up of five vehicles but she and all others involved escaped serious injury.[11]

Kathleen O'Connor's decision to leave politics in 1957 left Clann na Poblachta in the lurch and they decided not to field a candidate in Kerry North. By failing to nominate a successor, the party, according to Kevin Rafter, 'abandoned the north Kerry seat' which her father had battled to win.[12] O'Connor's by-election opponent, Dan Moloney, headed the poll as Fianna Fáil swept back into government. O'Connor returned quietly to her teaching role and never again played a role in politics. She later married Eamon Fitzgerald and lived at Oakpark, Tralee. At a gathering of former female TDs in Leinster House in December 2008 to

Kathleen O'Connor being welcomed to Leinster House by Ceann Comhairle John O'Donoghue in 2008

mark the 90th anniversary of the election of the first woman to the Oireachtas, she was the oldest former female member present.[13] Kathleen O'Connor-Fitzgerald died on 13 December 2017 at the age of 83.

NOTES

[1] From an interview with the author in 2017. For more see Owen O'Shea and Gordon Revington, *A Century of Politics in the Kingdom: A County Kerry Compendium* (Merrion Press, 2018)

[2] *The Kerryman,* 18 February 1956

[3] *The Kerryman,* 25 February 1956

[4] Kathleen O'Connor was just three months short of her twenty-second birthday when she was elected, making her the third youngest TD elected by 1956 and the fourth youngest person ever elected to Dáil Éireann, after William Murphy (Cork West, 1949), Joseph Sweeney (Donegal, 1921) and Lorcan Allen (Wexford, 1961).

[5] *Kerryman,* 3 March 1956

[6] *Cork Examiner,* 2 March 1956

[7] *Cork Examiner,* 8 March 1956

[8] *Daily Express,* 2 March 1956

[9] *Evening Mail,* 2 March 1956

[10] *Cork Examiner,* 15 February 1957

[11] *Irish Independent,* 3 September 1956

[12] Kevin Rafter, *The Clann: the story of Clann na Poblachta* (Mercier Press, 1996), 175

[13] *The Kerryman,* 10 December 2008

Attendees at the KAHS 2024 Annual Social and Heritage Award Presentation in the Rose Hotel, Tralee

KAHS Council members at the Launch of The Kerry Magazine 2024.

Nicholas Madgett and John Sullivan: Translation in a time of Revolution and War

Dr John Gleeson

From County Kerry to Revolutionary Paris

In 1738, Nicholas Madgett was born in County Kerry into a Catholic family with Protestant ancestors. His uncle of the same name was born in 1703 in the townland of Ballinorrig near Causeway and served as the Bishop of Kerry from 1753 until his death in 1774. The Bishop's father, James Madgett, was a Protestant who had sent his son to Paris to study medicine only to find to his surprise that his son had converted to Catholicism and was ordained a priest.[1] James himself is alleged to have converted to Catholicism on his deathbed. [2]

The younger Nicholas Madgett ('Madgett') was sent to Paris in 1749 at the age of eleven to attend two well known academies in Paris, the Collège du Plessis and the Collège de Navarre, where he was immersed in Latin and Greek. His uncle, the Bishop, may well have arranged his nephew's education. Both studied theology, the older Madgett in Paris University, and the younger Madgett in Toulouse University, where he obtained a doctorate in 1764 and was ordained a priest in 1767. After teaching Philosophy and Mathematics in Bordeaux University for twenty years, Madgett returned to Paris during the 1780s before the French Revolution began.

In the early years of the Revolution, Madgett sided with radical students in the Irish College in Paris who clashed with the conservative elders of the College. By 1792, Madgett was consorting with political activists from France, Ireland, England and America. He attended the famous dinner of radicals in White's Hotel in Paris in November 1792 which celebrated the newly declared Republic in France. There he mingled with Thomas Paine, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

John Sullivan was born in 1767, according to the records of his employer in 1795, the French Foreign Ministry.[3] Catholic baptismal records in the parish of Tralee, County Kerry begin in 1772, so no record of John Sullivan's baptism survives. However, an examination of those records for the parish of Tralee, County Kerry in the 1770s has revealed close connections between the Madgett and Sullivan families. Ellen Madgett and Patrick Sullivan had two children baptised in that parish in 1773 and 1774. Reverend John Madgett is listed as a godparent at the christening of Catherine Sullivan, born on 18 April 1773 to Patrick Sullivan and Ellen Madgett.[4] The same John Madgett is subsequently recorded as the officiating priest at the baptism in Tralee on 22 August 1774 of Patrick Sullivan, born to the same parents, Patrick Sullivan and Ellen Madgett. Other records from the same parish disclose a number of ceremonies involving and witnessed by members of the Madgett and Sullivan families (NLI/mf 04270/05).[5] John Madgett was a brother of the translator Nicholas Madgett, as De Brun points out from the records of Toulouse University where both Madgetts were educated (De Brun 1985: 100).[6] Accordingly, it seems likely Ellen Madgett was John Sullivan's mother and a sister of the translator Nicholas Madgett. Sullivan was probably born in the parish of Tralee, County Kerry.

The first documented proof of Sullivan's existence comes in 1785 when he arrived at a well known French Military School in La Flèche near Angers where he taught English and later Mathematics to future French army officers. It seems likely he had received some prior education in France, though the only record of this in French national or regional archives is correspondence from Sullivan in 1795 to the effect that he had arrived in France at the age of sixteen in 1783. The Military School in La Flèche was run by the *Doctrinaires*, an enlightened Catholic order whose members swore the oath of loyalty to the new political order ushered in by the Revolution. Sullivan also got a political education in the local Jacobin Club in La Flèche where he took part in political debate and was praised for his loyalty to the Revolution. He became a French citizen and volunteered for military action on the government side against royalist counter-revolutionaries in the internal conflict in La Vendée.

Nicholas Madgett's republican credentials and bilingual skills resulted in his recruitment into French government service in 1793 as a translator in the Navy Ministry. He broadened the translator's mandate to include propaganda and intelligence which were useful bilingual services for a French republican regime at war with Britain. He organised a network of secret agents who undertook missions to England and Ireland to report on the appetite for political revolt. By 1793, he

had come to the attention of the British intelligence service which described him as follows:

> His principles are said to be violently inimical to Monarchy, and his designs to foment Discontent and Insurrection in England and Ireland.[7]

He understood the power of the printed word and repeatedly called upon the French government to print propaganda in English. He devised a template for a French military expedition to Ireland which always included printed republican proclamations in English. He informed the French Foreign Minister, Lebrun, that Paris was full of English spies and suggested that a team of republican activists would hunt them down. He became answerable to the Committee of Public Safety during The Terror in 1794.

In 1793, John Sullivan was, like his uncle Nicholas Madgett, recruited as a translator into the Navy Ministry. He was immediately despatched to the port towns of Brittany where his 'translation' duties extended to the interrogation of English prisoners of war, smuggling republican propaganda into England on board prisoner exchange ships, and even indoctrinating English and Irish prisoners to change sides.[8] He declared himself to be a sworn enemy of the English government.

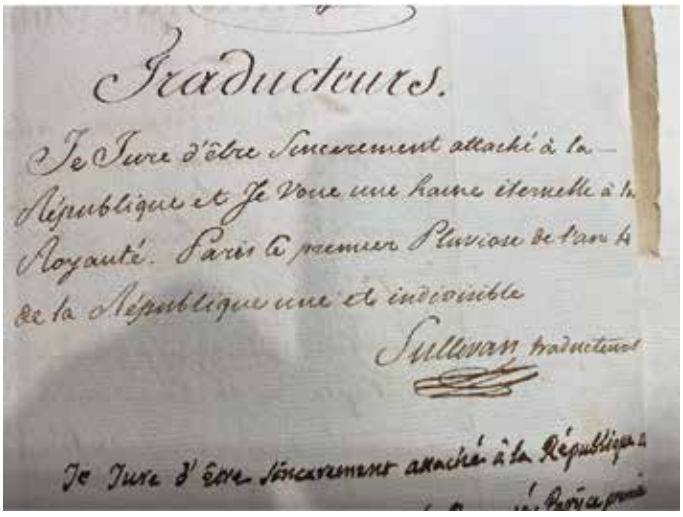
These were volatile times in France and foreigners had to be particularly vigilant as political orthodoxy was subject to sudden, unpredictable change. Both Madgett and Sullivan were arrested during 1795 on suspicion of being foreign spies. This did not however prevent them from entering the French Foreign Ministry in late 1795 with Madgett appointed as Head of Translation and his twenty-eight-year-old nephew enrolled as the youngest of seven translators reporting to Foreign Minister Charles Delacroix.

Madgett had by this time become a trusted political adviser to the French leadership, especially on Irish affairs, which he consistently projected up the French political agenda. His political submissions from 1794 to 1796 contained highly rhetorical denunciations of British rule in Ireland. Madgett and Sullivan's diverse bilingual activities on behalf of the republican regime in France would have been treated as sedition had they ever returned to Ireland which Madgett never did. Sullivan returned only once, in disguise as a French army officer with Humbert in 1798, which nearly cost him his life.

Uncle and nephew were working in close proximity to and supported the work of the Foreign Minister's Bureau Intime [Private Office].[9] This included a detailed analysis and translation into French of extracts from selected London daily newspapers including *The Morning Chronicle* and *The Courier*.[10] Their press translations became an important source of political and military intelligence for the French leadership.

The two translators were fully aware of the premium which the French regime placed on political loyalty. After the failed royalist *Vendémiaire* coup of October 1795, they were both required to explain in writing their loyalty to the regime. Delacroix oversaw a purge of his employees but the two Kerrymen survived. Not long afterwards, Delacroix also required all employees in the Foreign Ministry, including all translators, to swear an oath of loyalty at a public ceremony. We are fortunate that copies of the handwritten oaths which Madgett and Sullivan signed in January 1796 are held in the French National Archives. Madgett's almost illegible handwriting is followed by Sullivan's clear hand:

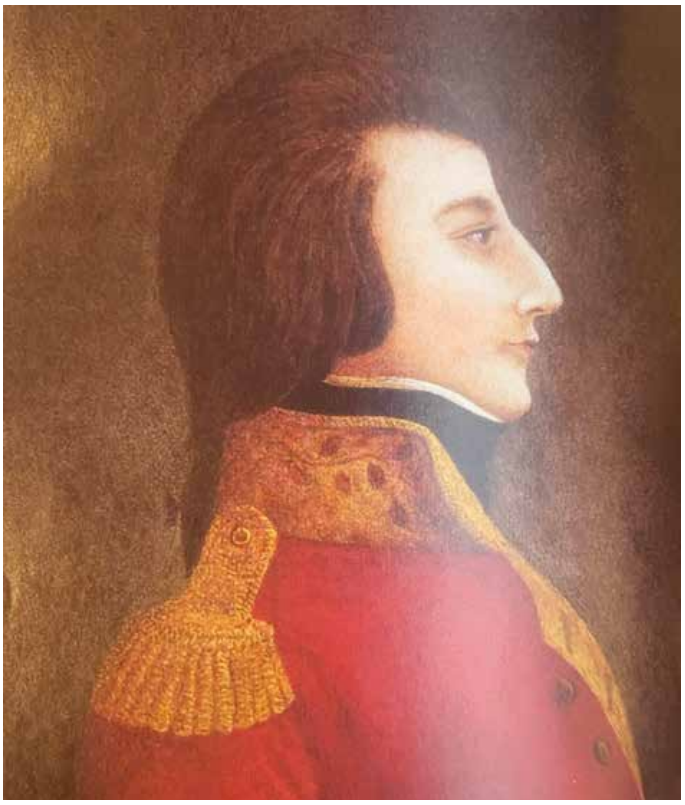

Déchiffreurs.
Je jure d'être sincèrement attaché à la République et je voue une haine éternelle à la Royauté.


Traducteurs.
Je Jure d'être Sincerement attaché à la République et Je Voue une haine éternelle à la Royauté. Paris le premier Pluviose de l'an 4 de la République une et indivisible
Sullivan traducteur
Je Jure d'être Sincerement attaché à la République

[11]

[I swear to be truly loyal to the Republic and I vow an eternal hatred of royalty. Paris, the first day of Plûviose, Year 4 of the one and indivisible Republic]

Madgett's political influence reached its apogee in 1796 when he collaborated with Theobald Wolfe Tone, who had arrived in Paris from America in February 1796 as the unofficial representative of Irish republicanism. Tone's mission was to persuade the French to intervene militarily in Ireland. Madgett was in effect appointed



Theobald Wolfe Tone in French Officer attire, 1796

as the French leadership's interlocutor with Tone. Madgett, and in time Sullivan, developed a personal relationship with Tone and they provided him with vital linguistic and political support in his negotiations with the French Directory. Sullivan was closer in age to Tone, who had this to say about the young Kerryman in April 1796:

> After dinner walked with Sullivan for two hours in the Tuileries, talking red hot Irish politics. Sullivan is a good lad and I like him very well.[12]

Two important documents which Tone drafted and Madgett translated into French in February 1796 were the *First and Second Memorials to the French Government on the present State of Ireland*.[13] Madgett consulted with Tone during the drafting of the original versions, and then completed the translations. He was simultaneously providing Delacroix with a profusion of political advice about Irish affairs. These Memorials were key documents in the negotiations between Tone and the French leadership which bore fruit when General Hoche was appointed by the French Directory in June 1796 to lead a military expedition to Ireland. The French historian Édouard Guillon concluded in 1888 that the Memorials contained the best guide to the political situation of late eighteenth-century Ireland.[14]

Sullivan and Madgett lost their positions as full-time government translators owing to budgetary constraints in October 1796 and July 1797 respectively. Translation was not always valued by the French state, whose translators could have no expectation of professional security, no matter how useful their services. Madgett and Sullivan each claimed that Delacroix had promised them alternative employment but to no avail. Madgett managed to survive with ad hoc advisory work for the French Navy Minister. After 1798, French interest in a military expedition to Ireland waned.

Madgett started a private language school and translation service. He also published two commercial translations on the political philosophy of ancient Rome and the geopolitics of trade routes to India. He still retained some influence in French political circles- he was consulted by Napoleon in 1803 in relation to the sale of Louisiana to the United States. Once again, it was Napoleon who commissioned Madgett to write a three-volume biography in French of the Duke of Marlborough in 1808.[15] But none of these activities were lucrative and Madgett could barely make ends meet. His friend, the successful lawyer Richard Ferris, met some of his debts as his health declined. He died in destitution at the age of seventy-five in 1813.

John Sullivan managed to survive on the basis of temporary commissions from the French army, mainly thanks to the loyalty of General Humbert. The most remarkable episode in Sullivan's short life was perhaps his participation in Humbert's poorly manned and ill-fated excursion to County Mayo in 1798. Sullivan had adopted the pseudonym 'Capitaine Laroche' prior to departure for Ireland in order to avoid any question about his nationality. Sullivan followed his republican rhetoric onto the battlefield and led a contingent of Irish volunteers into the Battle of Castlebar, which was the first full confrontation between Humbert's small contingent and British forces. Although the French were, inevitably, defeated by the British shortly afterwards in Ballinamuck, County Longford, Humbert praised Sullivan's contribution as follows:

> Il a constamment montré l'attachement le plus inviolable pour la République et la haine la plus invétérée pour les oppresseurs de sa première patrie.[16]
>
> *[He consistently showed the most unbreakable loyalty to the Republic and the most deep-seated hatred of the oppressors of his country of birth.]*

Sullivan's engagement with the British did not however end with the surrender of Humbert. He was detained and subject to interrogation after the French officers were released, as there was a suspicion that 'Capitaine Laroche' was in fact Irish and not French. If the British interrogators had satisfied themselves that Sullivan had been born in Ireland, he would have been executed on the spot for treason, as he had joined the army of an enemy nation. Sullivan managed to convince his captors that he was born in France of Irish parents because of his fluency in French. Internal British army

correspondence stated shortly after his release: 'he certainly spoke the language of a Frenchman'.[17] He had in effect translated himself out of captivity.

Sullivan's promised promotion to the rank of Captain in the French army was never ratified, despite personal endorsements of his abilities by his commanding officer, Humbert, and indeed by the Foreign Minister, Talleyrand. He continued to survive on ad hoc commissions as Humbert's *aide de camp.* John Sullivan died in 1802 in a military hospital in Saint Domingue (now Haiti) of yellow fever in the course of a Napoleonic expedition to retake control of the sugar rich island. It is ironic that a loyal servant of the French Revolution which embraced concepts of liberty and equality should perish on a mission driven by Napoleon's desire to restore slavery.

Madgett and Sullivan's professional versatility demonstrates how linguistic and educational capital could create opportunities for Irish Catholics in France that were denied to them in their country of birth. They exhibited competence in a wide range of bilingual engagement including propaganda, intelligence, proselytising and political advice. Their commitment to Irish independence in the shifting sands of the French Revolution deserves to be remembered.

NOTES

[1] Manning, Michael. 1976. 'Dr Nicholas Madgett's Constitutio Ecclesiastica, 1758', *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society,* 9: 70

[2] Allman, Jerry. 1983. *Causeway, Co. Kerry: Its Location, Lore and Legend* (Leinster Leader: Naas)

[3] French National Archives AF/III/52-55/213

[4] NLI/mf 04269/01)

[5] (NLI/mf 04270/05)

[6] de Brun, Padraig. 1985. 'Some lists of Kerry Priests, 1750-1835', *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society,* 18: 83-170

[7] British Archives NA/HO/100/43/85

[8] French National Archives AF/III/28/97/141

[9] French National Archives AF/III/52-55/213

[10] French National Archives AF/III/58/228-229

[11] French National Archives AF/III/52-55/213

[12] Tone, Theobald Wolfe. 2001. *The Writings of Theobald Wolf Tone, Volume II, America, France and Bantry Bay, August 1795 to December 1796,* ed. by T.W Moody, R.B. McDowell and C.J. Woods (Oxford: OUP), p. 143

[13] Ibid., pp. 61, 88

[14] Guillon, Édouard. 1888. *La France & l'Irlande sous le Directoire, Hoche & Humbert: d'après les documents inédits du Ministère de la Marine, du Dépot de la Guerre, et des Archives Nationales* (A. Colin: Paris), p. 174

[15] Madgett, Nicholas. 1808. *Histoire de Jean Churchill Duc de Marlborough* (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale)

[16] French Military Archives GR/2YE/3853/26

[17] British Archives HO/42/45/55

The Castlebar Races by John Reigh, National Library Catalogue

Tenants of the Sandes Estate in North Kerry 1797-1828

James G Ryan

Rentals are the account books kept by landlords to manage their tenancies and are a valuable resource for family history. They are often overlooked as few are available on-line, and because they can be difficult to find in archives. This article concerns a useful example of a rental for the Sandes Estate in North Kerry for the period 1797 to 1828.[1] The Sandes family had property in Kerry since 1667 when Lancelot Sandes was granted an estate under the Acts of Settlement.[2] The family house at Sallow Glen in the townland of Glansillagh near Tarbert was built in the 1780s, according to a reference in the Post-Chaise Companion.[3] The house name is an anglicisation of the original name of GlanSillagh. An extensive history of the family by Michael Sandes is available on-line.[4] In addition to managing their own estate, the Sandes were at one time agents for the Kerry estates of Trinity college Dublin.

The rental contains information on 240 tenants with holdings in the civil parishes of Murher, Knockanure and Kilnaughtin. The full list of tenants is available on-line on the Ancestor Solutions website.[5] The document is a large ledger that sets out the tenant accounts in the 'Debit – Contra' double-entry style described by Ryan (2024). [6] The form of account occupies two pages: the left page details the rent due, the tenant name(s), the location of their holding, and the lease terms. The right side lists the payments made. See Figures 1 and 2.

In addition to the potential value of the tenant list for genealogical research, the document illustrates some interesting aspects of rental arrangements. An example

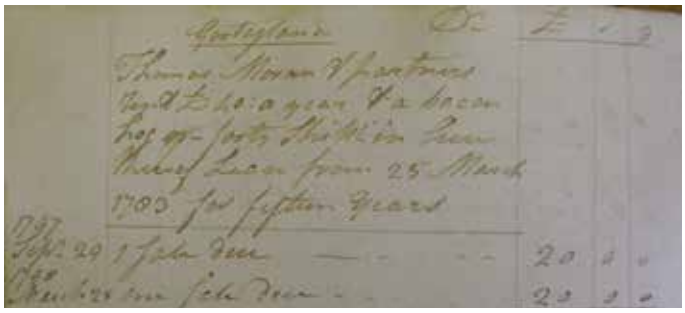


Figure 1: Debit entry for account of Thomas Moran and Partners for a lease of Gortaglanna. It reads "Thomas Moran & partners rent £40 a year and a bacon hog or forty Shillings in lieu thereof. Lease from 25 March 1783 for fifteen years".

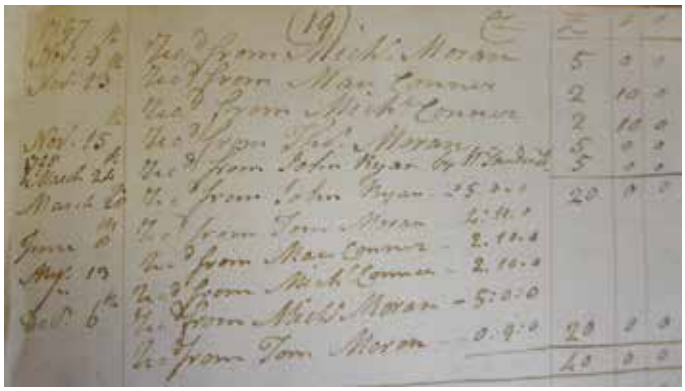


Figure 2: Contra entry, showing individual payments by partners of Thomas Moran in 1797. NLI Ms. 1792

is the occurrence of tenant partnerships, e.g. *Edmund Lister and partners,* and *Daniel Ahern and John Killy* (Figure 3). This was a common practice in estates. Land was rented by a group of tenants (partners) who would then distribute the land among themselves by their own arrangement. A head tenant would become the nominal land-holder and deal with the landlord. Landlords favoured this practice as it reduced the administration involved in creating leases and accounts for many small tenants. It also suited some consortia, particularly family groups, as it provided flexibility in allocation of the jointly held land. Several examples of family partnerships are in the list below, e.g. *Michael, John, James and William Ahern; and Cornelius Mulvihill and sons.*

The list of tenants on the Ancestor Solutions website was compiled from an index contained within the rental. Although the index only lists the head tenant(s), the specific account for each of these will often identify the partners within a consortium. An excellent example of this is in Figures 1 and 2 below. Figure 1 is a Debit account which shows that Thomas Moran and partners held a lease of Gortaglanna (part of the townland of Carhooearagh, east of Listowel). It reads "*Thomas Moran & partners rent £40 a year and a bacon hog or forty Shillings in lieu thereof. Lease from 25 March 1783 for fifteen years*". The half-yearly payments of £20 are also shown as payable on the traditional Gale days of 25 March and 29 September. The partners are not identified in this part of the account. However, Figure 2 shows the Contra side of the account which

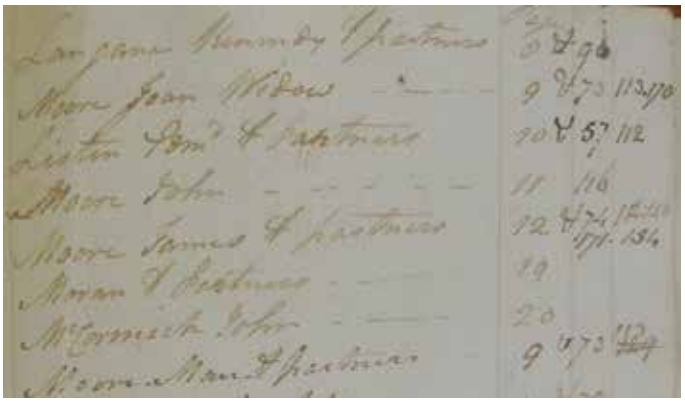


Figure 3. Extract from rental index to 'M' names. The number on the right is the page on which the tenant's account appears.

details the payments made. This usefully identifies the partners as Michael Moran, Michael and Maurice Conner, and John Ryan. These details make this rental a highly useful family history resource.

The most common names are Connor or Conner (19 occurrences), Mulvihill (15), Ahern (11) and Enright (9). Among the other interesting family names listed are Bohilly, which is possibly a variant of O'Buachalla (anglicised as Buckley); Patwell; and what appears to be Crombury or Croninbury. Some variants of this name (Crombury, Cronerbury etc) are found in Ireland, but it is very rare. Another interesting inclusion is Fizzell or Fitzell (9 occurrences). This is a Palatine name that is usually spelled Fitzell but is Fizzell in this register. However, it is strangely spelled Phyggell in the index and in the rental heading of some occurrences, and as Fizzell in the payments list. Other interesting names are Moore and Kelly. These two families are probably descended from those transplanted from Laois and Offaly to Kerry in the 17th century.[7]

Some common abbreviations are used, such as: And. = Andrew; Corn. or Conl = Cornelius; Edwd. = Edward; Jno. = John; Jas. = James; Mau. = Maurice; Richd. = Richard; Thos. = Thomas; Patt = Patrick; Wm. = William. Some distinctive Irish names also occur such as Darby (Dermot) and Garrett. Note also that some names are common and the clerk has included some 'nicknames' to differentiate. For example, one of the Michael Enrights is called 'Bawn'; one of the Michael Connors is called 'piper', presumably because he was a musician; and one of the Connors is noted as Gowla, which is one of the branches of the (O') Connors in Kerry.

NOTES

[1] A rent ledger of the estates of the Sandes family in Co. Kerry, 1797-1828. National Library of Ireland Ms 1792.

[2] Landed Estates database. https://landedestates.ie/estate/2048

[3] WILSON, William. *'The Post-Chaise Companion or Travellers Directory Through Ireland'*. Pub: Dublin, 1786

[4] *A History of the Sandes Family of Kerry,* by Michael Sandes - https://ancestry.sandes.uk/

[5] See Website of Ancestor Solutions: www.ancestorsolutions.ie/post/tenants-of-the-sandes-estate-in-north-kerry-1797-1828

[6] Ryan, J. (2024) Rentals as a resource for Irish family history. www.academia.edu/118475668/

[7] *FROM LAOIS TO KERRY: I The Laois Origins and Continuing Presence in Kerry of the Moores, Kellys, Dowlings, Lawlors, Dorans, McEvoys and Devoys or Deevys or Dees.* Michael C. Keane. Pub: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. ISBN-13: 978-1979168373

The Massacre at Dún an Óir Symposium: history, literature, archaeology, béaloideas – An Díseart, Dingle

L to R: Dr Jane Grogan (UCD & Symposium Co-organiser), Councillor Breandán Fitzgerald, Councillor Tommy Griffin, Dr Conor Brosnan (Symposium Co-organiser), Mayor Michael Foley (Mayor of Kerry), Dr Declan Downey (UCD), Tony Bergin (President KAHS)

Ballymullen Barracks, Tralee & The Soldiers who served Part 2

by Tommy Martin

To understand Ballymullen Barracks, you must realise that the story of Ballymullen Barracks, is the story of Tralee, the story of Kerry, and the story of Ireland. Ask any person living in Tralee when Ballymullen Barracks was built, and you will get many guesses, but few correct answers. Ask anyone why it was built, and you will be given a myriad of opinions, but few actual facts.

Ballymullen Barracks mirrors, in many ways, the national mood. It was built in response to the national mood, it was developed in tandem with national and world events, and even today, it is reflective of the society in which we live.

I earnestly believe that our history should be cherished and applauded. Of course, there are things we would rather forget and ignore, but everything that happened in the past, has created the people and the society we are today. Ballymullen was a part of that, and the story of the barracks deserves to be told. Nothing less is owed to the memory of all who soldiered there, irrespective of what uniform they wore.

> 'I wish thee as much pleasure in the reading, as I had in the writing.' Francis Quarles.

In its formative years, Ballymullen Barracks was known as Tralee Barracks. Ballymullen is the area of Tralee where the barracks is located, but to anyone outside of Tralee, this would not be widely known, hence the name, Tralee barracks. The barracks was not called after a great military or political figure, such as Victoria Barracks in Cork, although this is not unusual.

Ballymullen is an 'I' shaped barracks,[1] similar in design and layout to other barracks built by the British military throughout the world. While each barracks is unique, in its own sense, they all have common requirements.

Modern military barracks have a tarmacadam parade square as their centre point, where recruits are introduced to the delights of foot and arms drill! However, when Ballymullen was built, the drill field is where such training took place – with the parade ground being a much later innovation. The drill field at Ballymullen was quite large and was used for all outdoor military training, until it was acquired by the Health Services Executive in the 1990s, and now forms part of the property of the adjacent University Hospital Kerry.

An early map of Ballymullen Barracks, c. 1840, shows the location of various buildings, and, when taken in the context of the dwelling houses nearby, it is obvious that the construction of the barracks was a huge change to the social and economic history of this part of Tralee.

When compared to a later map dated 17 May 1912, the upgrading and development of Ballymullen Barracks is apparent. By this date, the Royal Munster Fusiliers were in situ at Ballymullen, using it as their Depot and Regimental Headquarters. In 1880, the British army had been completely reorganised and modernised. Under 'British Army General Order number 41', the Royal Munster Fusiliers came into being - effectively subsuming the local Militias as Reserve regiments into more traditional and well-established regular military regiments. Thus, the Kerry Militia, became the 5th Battalion of the Royal Munster Fusiliers.[2]

The detail between both maps, 70 years apart, illustrates societal changes and technological advances in the intervening years, such as the armoured motor car shed – evidence of modernity and military progress.

The site of the present Officers' Mess was originally the Quartermaster's quarters and Commanding Officer's office. The barracks was lighted by gas, provided from a mains in the road, while in those pre-environmental awareness days, we also note that; 'the foul drainage is conducted into the open river.'

Accommodation for the rank and file was in the soldiers' quarters or billets, where first floor rooms each accommodated nine men, while the ground floor rooms accommodated eleven men.

Each accommodation block was recognised by a letter of the alphabet, with six in total. A clock tower

separated A/B/C from D/E/F blocks. To cope with the ever-increasing demands on accommodation, by 1912, there were an additional eight huts, together with an ablution block, constructed on the parade square. Each hut could accommodate twenty men, and these were added in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. These huts continued to be used well into the 1950s, when they were demolished. Today, no trace of these huts remains.

Interestingly, in 1912, there are eleven horses on the establishment. However, this would not be unusual. Officers generally travelled on horseback or by motor car, while the rank and file had to content themselves with shank's mare!

There were stables to accommodate the barracks' eleven horses. However, even these were segregated, with a separate Officers' stable, Commanding Officer's stable and troop stable! The remnants of the Commanding Officer's stable can still be seen today, where the stall divider still stands.

An interesting snapshot of social life in Ballymullen Barracks is provided by the Census Return of 1901, which identifies some interesting information:

> General Return of the Officers, NCO's and Privates who were quartered in the Ballymullen Barracks, Tralee on the night of Saturday, 31st March, 1901, and of those who arrived on Monday 1st April who were not enumerated elsewhere.

Five Officers, and 241 soldiers were returned, including the Militia Company attached to the Depot of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, as being present in Ballymullen Barracks, on 31 March 1901.

> No entries were made on the Census as to the soldiers' ability to speak Irish.
>
> Nine soldiers declared that they could neither read nor write.
>
> Seven soldiers declared that they could write only.

The oldest occupant was Sergeant Major Patrick O'Callaghan, aged 44, married, and originally from Cork.

The youngest occupant was 6385 Boy[3] G. Fitzgerald, Roman Catholic, aged 15. He was a labourer, and a native of Cork.

The oldest Officer present was the Officer Commanding on the night, Captain A.F. Mann, Church of England, aged 41, described as a gentleman, married, and a native of England.

Ten soldiers were in hospital on the night of the Census return - four suffered from bronchitis, one from hemiplegia, one from contraction of tendon, one from chronic pleurisy, one from synovitis, one from debility and one from a fractured radius.[4]

In militaries worldwide today, it is unusual for troops to 'live in' barracks, especially in such large numbers. The types of illness being treated in the hospital block were common at the time, reflecting the health of society. Penicillin had yet to be invented, and general health among soldiers reflected the lifestyle and living standards of the day.

The Hospital block had a bed capacity for ten patients. The fact that the barracks had a hospital block is a strong indicator of what general health was like in the army, and in the population in general. It is important to bear in mind that health standards, and life expectancy, were nothing like we enjoy today. Added to this was the fact that soldiers tended to come from poorer sections of society, where illness was less likely to be treated effectively. During the First World War the Hospital block was used by troops recuperating from their wounds and from illness, as Ballymullen Barracks had, by 1916 onwards, become a rest barracks for units who came to recover and regroup.

Throughout its history, military discipline at Ballymullen, as elsewhere, was rigid and enforced. While the lash[5] had been discontinued in the late nineteenth century, by 1912, there remained a sizeable detention block, where defaulters[6] were imprisoned, usually for short periods of time, and generally for minor crimes such as insubordination, drunkenness, untidy appearance, etc. Punishments ranged from fines, to confinement to barracks for a period, to terms of imprisonment for more serious crimes.

Officers were accommodated in a separate Mess and had a separate entrance and exit to and from the barracks. The Commanding Officer's house and gardens were impressive, with a large flowerbed – in an area that would be completely out of bounds to troops in the barracks.

It was traditional for the Commanding Officer to occasionally entertain Officers in his house, and the Officers' Mess was a short stroll away, where the Commanding Officer would be an honoured guest. To illustrate the class structure that existed within the British army, the following is attributed to an unknown British Commanding Officer, which I hasten to add, was not uttered at Ballymullen! This Commanding Officer was arranging a function, to which he invited; 'Officers and their ladies, NCO's and their wives, and Privates and their women'!

Life for a British Army Officer serving in Ireland could be very enjoyable. Duties, in a peacetime barracks, would not be onerous, and with all the material comforts available, Officers embraced and enjoyed the social life available in Tralee.

Life for the private soldier was not altogether bad either. For many soldiers, the army, while difficult at times, provided food, clothing, shelter and regular pay – things that were not always as consistently available within society in general.

In this context, the barrack regulations of 1794, make interesting reading; 'The barrack master is to supply the non-commissioned officers, and privates in barracks with thirty-five-pound weight of clean straw, for each bed and bolster in use, every two months. 24 rounds of ball cartridges per man, to be kept constantly compleat in store. In time of war, encreased to 60 rounds.' 'An allowance of 2d net per diem, under the denomination of bread money.'

During the First World War, the average Private soldier gained one stone in weight, during his first six months in the army, evidence of the malnourishment that then existed in society. The opportunity for travel and adventure was also a key factor in men taking the 'king's shilling' and joining the British army. At the end of twenty-one years service, much of it likely to be served overseas in hostile climates where health was frequently compromised, the lure of a pension to secure old age, was also a very attractive reason to join the army.

For centuries, Irishmen flocked to the colours of British regiments, where the British army was seen as a legitimate employer. The army provided opportunities not readily available to the poorer classes within Irish society. Ireland was part of the British Empire, so for many, nationalism was not always a consideration when joining the army. Being an Irishman in the British army was seen by many in the same light as a Welshman or a Scot joining up.

Throughout its history, Ballymullen served as a regimental headquarters for a succession of British army regiments. It was the custom of the British military, to station units abroad for a year or two, where they would actively recruit, train and perform garrison duties, before returning to their home station, and subsequently moving again to a different location within the British Empire. Many Irishwomen married British soldiers while they were stationed in Ireland and ultimately travelled with their husbands when they returned to the United Kingdom.

Recruiting for the British army was also an important function at Ballymullen Barracks. On Friday, 11 September 1903, Lieutenants Crosbie and McGillycuddy, together with 140 NCO's and men, and the Regimental Band of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, began a recruiting drive. Taking over two weeks, the troops marched around the Ring of Kerry, visiting every town en route. 'On Saturday morning, 150 men of the 2nd Battalion of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, with Officers, arrived at Waterville by road march from Caherciveen, and encamped near the town in a field at the back of the coastguard station. The appearance of red-coats caused an unusual stir, as a body of soldiers has not been seen in the place for three quarters of a century.'[7]

The staff barracks at Boherbee, built in 1868, served as the married quarters for enlisted men stationed in Ballymullen. Referred to as the Militia barracks, it didn't serve as such but was used as accommodation for married soldiers and their families. It was always in demand, with a waiting list of soldiers and their families hoping to take up residence.

Following the treaty agreement after the War of Independence, Ballymullen Barracks and the Staff barracks, as part of the withdrawal of British military, were handed over to No. 1 Brigade of the Kerry I.R.A., in February, 1922.

> The taking over of military and constabulary barracks in Ireland by the IRA is an event of epoch-making consequence. It means in effect the freedom of Ireland from the centre to the sea. When we saw the Ballymullen Barracks taken over by a gallant group of young Irishmen, and the national flag hoisted, our thoughts went back to other days.[8]

Without doubt, this was a defining moment for Ballymullen, Tralee, and Kerry. The seat of the British military was now in the hands of Irish nationalists – something that was unthinkable a few short years before. Unfortunately, however, this early euphoria and hope quickly erupted into Civil War, with County Kerry largely taking the anti-treaty side.

The Civil War came to Kerry on 2 August 1922, when the Dublin Guards, Free State Army, landed in Fenit, from the ship, the *Lady Wicklow*, and advanced on Tralee. On learning that Free State troops were ashore in Fenit, the local IRA commander, John Joe Sheehy, gave orders to destroy Ballymullen, as his forces were far too small to effectively defend it. It is easy to imagine the feelings of the men who had taken possession of Ballymullen in a blaze of glory in February, now preparing to destroy it. They sprinkled petrol on some of the buildings and set them alight. In the chaos, they had to rescue some of their own men, who had been asleep upstairs in a billet, oblivious to events that were

overtaking them!

Parts of Ballymullen were quickly ablaze. 'I can remember the day in August 1922, when the barracks was set on fire. Clouds of thick smoke rose into the air.'[9]

The damage was extensive. A/B/C blocks were completely destroyed, together with part of the clock tower. The Commanding Officer's house and gardens were completely gutted. The Officers' quarters were also destroyed. Part of the Quartermaster's quarters were also damaged. However, most of the barracks escaped more serious damage. Free State troops took complete control of Tralee later that day and brought the blazes under control. Ballymullen then became the headquarters of the Kerry Command, Free State Army.

Mercifully, the Civil War, like all wars, came to an end. In time, Ballymullen settled down to its familiar routine, with soldiers in Ballymullen now wearing the green of Ireland, instead of khaki or redcoat of the past.

In 1924, a Company from the 4th Battalion, Free State Army, Cork, arrived, to perform guard and maintenance duties. This unit maintained a military presence in Kerry during a difficult and often turbulent time of the birth pangs of the new nation.

In 1940, during the Emergency, the 15th Infantry Battalion was formed, and occupied Ballymullen Barracks. This was a Regular Army Battalion, raised to help defend the State against foreign invasion during the Second World War. Men for this Battalion came from all over the south of Ireland.

At the same time, the L.D.F.[10] was formed, with many Kerrymen flocking to serve. After the war, the L.D.F. became the F.C.A., (Fórsa Cosanta Áitiúl), with Ballymullen serving as the Headquarters and centralised training location for the 15th Infantry Battalion, F.C.A.

The F.C.A. was later reorganised and restructured into the Army Reserve and today forms an integral part of the Irish Defence Forces. Ballymullen Barracks continues to function as a military barracks and training location for the Defence Forces.

NOTES

[1] Interview with Commandant Michael Scanlon, retired, February, 2002.

[2] *Tralee's Old Stock Reminisce,* by Mick O'Neill.

[3] A Boy Soldier was a rank in the army, equivalent to a private, for soldiers who were under 17 years of age.

[4] Census of Population Return, 31 March, 1901. Office of Public Works, Dublin.

[5] A lash was a whip. Soldiers would receive strokes of the lash, on their backs, as a punishment.

[6] A defaulter was a soldier who had committed a breach of military discipline and was charged with such.

[7] *Kerry Weekly Reporter,* 23 September, 1903.

[8] *The Kerry People,* February, 1922.

[9] Interview with Commandant Michael Scanlon, retired, in February, 2002.

[10] LDF – Local Defence Force, was a component part of the Irish Defence Forces, formed to defend against potential invasion during the Second World War. Its members were volunteers and were formed into military formations such as Platoons and Companies, throughout each town and village in County Kerry.

Attendees at our historical walk around Cahirsiveen, led by Muiris Bric.

Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty Ordination Centenary Liturgy

Propaganda Fide Chapel, Rome, 4 March 2025

Fr Tom Looney

Killarney's Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty Memorial Committee organised its fifth pilgrim journey to Rome to commemorate the Centenary of the Monsignor's Ordination to the Priesthood in 1925. Highlight of the five-day Jubilee Year visit was the Memorial Mass celebrated in the College Church of the Propaganda Fide, where he both studied and was ordained. Chief celebrant was Archbishop John Kennedy, Secretary of the Vatican's Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith – in effect, the Catholic Church's Supreme Court. Concelebrants included Rectors of both the Irish and Propaganda Fide Colleges, together with the visiting and Rome-based Clergy. The congregation included the Ambassadors of Great Britain, Germany, The Netherlands, and Ms Frances Collins of Ireland's Holy See Embassy as well as some O'Flaherty relatives among the sixty-five Kerry visitors. Tour Guide Kieran Troy oversaw another memorable tour, which included a Reception hosted by Ambassador Collins and included special Holy Year and Scarlet Pimpernel events. The following is the sermon given at the Memorial Mass.

I received a panicked phone call from a key member of Killarney's Hugh O'Flaherty Memorial Committee, the late Fr Pat Horgan and relative of O'Flaherty, who blurted, 'We can't find his Baptismal record.' 'Where are you looking?' I asked. 'Here in the Cathedral,' was his reply. 'Try Kiskeam because in the old days many an expectant mother went home to their mother for the birth of their child.' One hour later, 'Eureka,' and here it is. It reads, 'Hugo O'Flaherty natus 28 Febraraii 1898 to Joannis O'Flaherty et Magaritae Murphy, Lisrobin. Baptismo 2 Martii. Reverendo Dionyius D. O'Brien. Padrinos – Dionyius Murphy et Maria O'Leary.'

You ask, 'Where is Kiskeam?' When writing his history about his father's participation in our War of Independence Redemptorist Fr J.J. O'Riordan titled his masterpiece *Kiskeam Versus the Empire.* When a visiting British historian rather cynically asked him, 'And where is Kiskeam, Father?' J.J.'s rapid response went, 'Kiskeam is still there, boy.' You guessed it, it's in the Rebel County of Cork. Here, the son of a Galway Royal Irish Constable crossed the Kerry border where he was based to visit his Murphy in-laws for son Hugh's birth and Baptism.

Mons. Hugh O'Flaherty on his ordination, courtesy of the Mons. H. O'Flaherty Killarney Committee

The waters of that font commissioned him to be Priest, Prophet and King and we assemble in this chapel celebrating the 100th anniversary of his ordination to the Priesthood. Although he was ordained to serve the people of Cape Town, the authorities of Propaganda Fide right here made the daring decision to keep him in Rome. Jerry O'Grady is making available for all of us the souvenir Ordination Card of that historic day 20 December 1925. What a harvest this turned out to be and in this Eucharist and pilgrim visit we give thanks to God for Hugh's ministry.

English Catholic weekly *The Tablet* of 25 January last rates *The Scarlet and the Black* as one of the top 20 Catholic films of all times. Now, it's a long, long way from Lisrobin to Hollywood but Fr Hugh's priesthood is not merely a World War II nine-month wonder – by no means. He went on to serve the Church across three Continents - Egypt, Czechoslovakia, Santo Domingo, Haiti, Italy, with overseeing of facilities for Italian POWS in South Africa and the welfare of returning

refugees to Palestine. Furthermore, he took a special interest in the pastoral care of the poor farm labourers and their families close to the Acquasanta Golf Course where his former caddy and international star golfer, Roberto Bernardini, tells us that all his sixty fellow caddies attended the Monsignor's Sunday Mass before tee off. We are to make a group visit to that Chapel and meet Roberto on Thursday. Sadly, owning to failing health, Hugh was unable to take up his post as Papal Nuncio to Tanzania as he returned to Caherciveen where he died in 1963.

The major legend over his Killarney monument reads 'GOD HAS NO COUNTRY'. The Scripture scholars of the Christian Community Bible head up their footnotes of today's Gospel of St. John, Chapter 10 with the following 'Country without Frontiers'. The Good Shepherd Himself reveals how he came among humanity as a gateway herding all the flock into his fold and not just those of the Chosen Race. Fr Hugh lived this very vision too and he would well qualify for the Pope Francis' criteria of the faithful minister 'who has the smell of the sheep about him.' In fact, during the Roman occupation that smell became so overpowering that it went right up the noses of many, including Koch and Kappler. Hugh helped to band together a whole meitheal or collection of volunteers by setting up a network across Rome to shield, shelter and rescue some 6,500 folk in peril by way of the 200 safe houses of their escape line.

When you study Ezekiel's shepherd profile, which the Monsignor's grandniece, Catherine, just read for us, you get a glimpse of Hugh's vocation. He, too, goes seeking out and rescuing the lost and the strayed, binding up the injured, strengthening the weak while facing down the fat and the strong to feed them with justice. Now where did Fr Hugh get all this you may well ask. This man of the Rebel County, reared in the Kingdom of Kerry comes of the O'Flaherty Clan of Galway and the Aran Islands. In our folk tradition they are known as 'the Ferocious O'Flahertys' – coming from the Latin *ferox* meaning fierce or in Irish fíochmhar.

> Fr Hugh had a ferocious appetite for the Church and Propaganda Fide.
>
> Fr Hugh had a ferocious appetite for sport – boxing and golf.
>
> Fr Hugh had a ferocious appetite for justice and human rights.
>
> Fr Hugh had a ferocious appetite for reconciliation and service of God's People.

Remember how, as a young seminarian in Mungret during our War of Independence, he and another companion joined the long queue in Limerick City

Grave of Mons Hugh O'Flaherty

for the wake of its former Lord Mayors George and Michael Clancy murdered on 7 March 1921 by the Black and Tans. Curfew came and the students were detained under lock and key by the former colleagues of the R.I.C. whom Hugh's father had been a serving officer. Now the Mungret Superior could have expelled his students for breaching Martial Law and College Rules but 'No' that good Jesuit priest stood by his men demanding their release to continue their priestly studies. That was Limerick 1921- next stop Rome to study Theology and Ordination come 1925.

Noting his abilities Propaganda Fide authorities moved to keep him in Rome where he became a trusted member of the Church's Diplomatic Corps. At the turn of 1938 Monsignor Ottaviani deliberately placed Hugh in Campo Santo Teutonico under the shadow of St. Peter's and not because Vatican accommodation was scarce but 'to keep an eye on the National Socialist movement and initiate any necessary actions.' We are indebted to that College for their booklet in German on O'Flaherty whom they call 'The Hero of the Campo Santo Teutonico and Saviour of the people during the Nazi terrors.' Fifteen months ago my brother Donal and I represented the Killarney Committee on the thoughtful invitation of Irish Holy See's Ambassador Ms Frances Collins who had this important document translated and launched as a valued addition to the ever-increasing O'Flaherty library. Here we read how in 1936 Mons. Eugene Pachelli sent Hugh to Czechoslovakia already occupied by the National Socialists. Pachelli became Pope Pius XII three years later and himself went on to host some 12,000 refugees

in Castel Gandolfo which we visit on Thursday.

Meanwhile, Hugh had lodgings in the College which this booklet invites us to 'preserve the shady oasis of peace, a place of European remembrance since Charlemange until today.' I love the adjective 'shady' which enjoys tones of subversion in Kerry minds! Indeed, as you enter that College a *leacht cuimhnacháin* or plaque commemorates the selfless and daring actions of its Killarney guest. That plaque was unveiled by Hugh's niece and nephew, Pearl and Hugh.

Pope Francis highlights this very Jubilee Week as one encouraging all Volunteering. The Plaque and all the O'Flaherty monuments and murals at home reflect how O'Flaherty rounded up Volunteers galore and empowered them in their courageous actions of liberation. Clodagh Flynn of Tralee published *The Irish in the Resistance* last year. She tells tales of Killarney's Janie McCarthy born and reared literally around the corner of Hugh's Henn Street home. Janie taught in Paris and was deeply involved in five French Escape Lines during World War II. Clodagh relates how in the State limousine of the neutral Republic of Ireland our Ambassador's wife, Delia Murphy, transports a Scottish trooper with peritonitis from his safe house for emergency surgery in a Hospital for German soldiers. She and Agustinian Fr 'Spike' Hennessy killed time by driving around Rome before ferrying their patient to another safe house - that of Maltese widow, Henrietta Chevalier whose grandson David Sands and wife are present here this morning. Now that's volunteering for you.

Permanent Deacon Massimiliano Floridi who proclaimed the Gospel of the Good Shepherd is married to Princess Gesine Doria Pamphilj, whose grandfather, Phillipo, was a major volunteer and backer of the Escape Line. Some of us here were later pupils of the Monsignor's alma mater where we never heard a single word about their former pupil and Monitor. My late aunt Chris used to give our dad, Jack, her copies of *The People*. During the mid 1950s they ran a series on the Scarlet Pimpernel which I devoured. To this day that line drawing of the escaping coalman is deeply etched in my memory never to be forgotten. I put it as one of my reasons for my becoming a priest, in fact. As a young teen I often saw the Monsignor on High Street but never had the courage to approach him. Now I know I could have. After Mass we visit the Palace and entrance to the coal bunker.

As the Irish Sisters looked after both their Hospital and the Irish College one of their nurses told Fr Sean Quinlan that he should visit a fellow Killarney man in hospital. He visited the war-wounded Billy Vincent of Muckross House and suggested a visit from Hugh O'Flaherty who offered him on recovery a city tour of Rome in his tiny Fiat. After a one-day tour Hugh offered a second round of visits which Billy accepted. He later confessed that he was more terrified of Hugh's city driving than all the German bombs and bullets in North Africa and Montecassino! To express his gratitude Billy offered a contribution which Hugh declined but said, 'I wouldn't mind a pair of those American Army boots'. In the exchange Billy noted 'that there were holes in the soles of his shoes'. Billy is laid to rest in Killegy overlooking the resting place of Sean Quinlan in storied Muckross Abbey while the Reeks stretch westwards towards Caherciveen and the grave of Hugh O'Flaherty in the shadow of the Daniel O'Connell Memorial Church. While this booklet shows Hugh's grave you will find that today it is now covered with many stones after the manner of Speilberg's *Schlinder's List* as Jewish people place a stone in loving memory. The people of the Kerry Gaeltacht offer this prayer on the death of a priest, *'Go méadaí Dia ar a ghlóir 'sna Flaithis'* – 'May God give increase to his glories in Heaven'.

Postcard Publishers of County Kerry

Con Traynor

Postcards have been part of our lives for over 150 years, and their appearance has changed very little over that span of time. Modern printing technology and photography has brought changes, but the postcard principle is still as envisioned in those early days. The purpose of this article is to identify some of the photographers and publishing firms that operated in County Kerry, mostly in the main towns and villages. The focus is on the smaller and less well-known individuals, and it is not exhaustive. New names are included when that rare and elusive card appears in an auction catalogue or Antiques Fair and hopefully, the publisher or photographer is identified on the card.

It might be useful to outline a brief explanation of how postcards came into existence. With the advent of efficient delivery services, the International Postal Unions agreed on creating a quick and affordable means of communication and the postcard format was selected. Regulations related to size, amount of text and the cost of sending the card to local and overseas locations were agreed and the postcard was born. A happy mix of form, art and utility. The public soon showed their approval and at one time, collecting postcards or 'postals', as they were once called, rivalled stamp collecting in terms of popularity. They have been equated to the 'text message' of modern times and the speed of delivery by the Post Office via railway sorting offices and Mail ships provided an enviable service to the public.

Postcards are a useful source of information when it comes to history and social progress across the decades with a wide range of topics reflected in their image. Topography, political issues and propaganda, military, thematic, sports and sporting figures, artistic expression. The variety is endless. The written messages are also proving to be a revelation and while they were never intended for wider audiences, they are an invaluable insight and a mine of information when it comes to the daily interactions of the ordinary citizens. One important aspect relates to how emigrants communicated with their families and friends in the early years of the 1900s. Postcards mailed from Queenstown, now Cobh, reflect the conditions onboard the transatlantic liners, the weather and the incidental dialogue that captures the sad or happy emotions of departure or returning home.

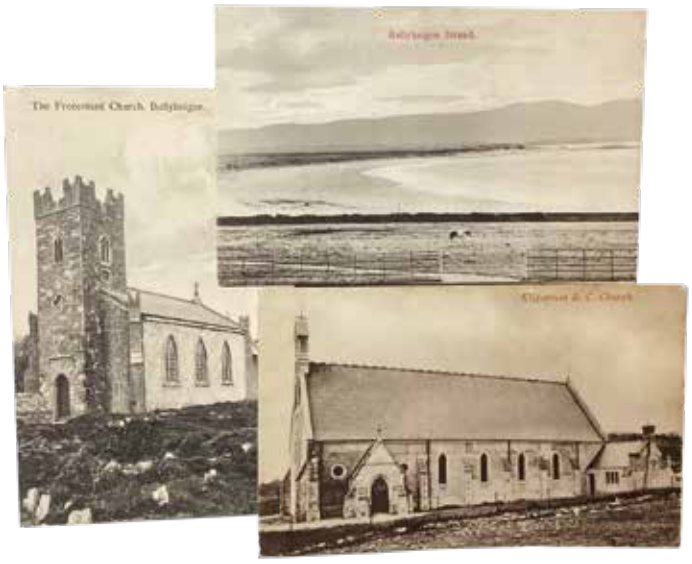


Photo medley (W.B. McCarthy, Tralee)

County Kerry has a proud tradition when it comes to postcard production, both in terms of photography and publishing. Louis Anthony of Killarney operated between 1900 and 1920 and left a marvellous archive of material catering mostly to the tourist trade. Killarney Printing Works continued that tradition through Mac Publications. The late Padraig Kennelly and his Tralee based company, Kencards, photographed towns and villages in County Kerry and countrywide during the late 1950s and 1960s and captured the changing face of Ireland. William Lawrence accomplished a similar feat of an earlier Ireland, during the early 1900s through the camera lens of Robert French. Each image displays, in beautiful detail, the vernacular aspects of rural and urban settings and appeals to the nostalgia of yesteryear and simpler times.

The following list identifies some of those photographers and publishers that operated in County Kerry. The names appear according to where their output retailed or featured. I have not included the large Irish or British Publishers as the number of such firms is enormous and outside the scope of this article. Non-local publishers are included because they issued postcards relevant to that town or village. Individual biographical information on the various local firms will be available in future editions of this magazine.

TRALEE
Fergus O'Connor, Publisher to the trade
(Operated countrywide)
W. B. McCarthy, Tralee
Lofthouse, Crosbie and Co., London (LC &Co)
Kennelly Photoworks, Ashe Street, Tralee
Ashe Studios, Aerial Photos, Dublin
Philco Series, Passed by Press Bureau, 18/5/1917
Hurley's, Denny Street, Tralee

KILLARNEY
Louis Anthony, Photographer, Killarney.
N. McCarthy, 4 Henn Street, Killarney
McCarthy, 33/4 College Street, Killarney
Guy's of Cork. Trade Publishers
Hely's of Dublin. Trade Publishers/Fergus O'Connor, Dublin
Killarney Printing Works/Mac Publications, Killarney
G. Walker, Main Street, Killarney
Lofthouse, Crosbie and Co., London. (LC&Co)

LISTOWEL
B. M. Buckley, Stationer (Printed by Hely's, Dublin)
Dowling, Listowel 1955
Kennelly Photoworks, Tralee
Rosehill and Sons, Cork
R. Cotter, Main Street, Listowel

KENMARE
J. M. Donovan, Kenmare
M. J. O'Sullivan, Kenmare
M. D. O'Sullivan, 14/16 Henry Street, Kenmare
Ch. Arthur, Kenmare/Mansfield, Kenmare
J. O'Sullivan, 18 Main Street, Kenmare
D. J. O'Callaghan, Photographer Royal, Cork
H. Rosehill, Cork.
Kennelly Photoworks, Tralee

CAHERSIVEEN/VALENTIA
C. J. Sheehan, Fancy Goods, Cahersiveen
Charles Brennan, Publ., Cahersiveen
John O'Connor, Rexall Pharmacy, Cahersiveen
B/D S Bennett, Cahersiveen. Chemist
Wharton and Son
Ryan's, Cahersiveen
D. Mangan, Cahersiveen
R. Smyth
Kennelly Photoworks, Tralee
John O'Sullivan, Valentia Island

WATERVILLE
Ellen O'Keeffe, Emigration Agent, Waterville, County Kerry
T. Foley, Private Hotel, Waterville
M. Lucey, General Merchant, Waterville
L. O'Reilly, General Draper, Waterville
Butler Arms Hotel
J. T. Huggard, Bayview Hotel, Waterville

Proclamation of King George V Courthouse, Tralee 14 May 1910 (W.B. McCarthy, Tralee)

Rosehill, Cork/ Fergus O'Connor, Dublin/Anthony, Killarney/Kennelly Photoworks, Tralee

DINGLE
Houlihan, Publisher, Strand Street, Dingle
J. C. Houlihan, Dingle
Miss K. Griffin, Bridge Street, Dingle.
Browne & Nolan (Irish Language card)
J. J. Hurley, Photographer, Bruff, County Limerick
Guy's of Cork/Mason, Dublin/Kennelly Photoworks, Tralee
J. Main, Sigerson Arms Hotel, Ballinskelligs, County Kerry
Benner's Hotel, Dingle, County Kerry

SNEEM
J. J. Sheehan, General Merchant, Sneem
W. F. C. Burke, Sneem
Coras Iompar Eireann/G. S. Railways, Hotel Div.
Cardall, Dublin/Rosehill, Cork/Photocraft, Dublin

KILLORGLIN
J. Duffy, Killorglin
R. Martin and Co., Killorglin
W. Sweeney, Photographer
Kennelly Photoworks, Tralee
Guy's Photochrom, Cork
P. Foley, Killorglin

RATHMORE
J.J. O'Mahoney, Millstreet

CASTLISLAND
W.J. Costello, Stationer, Castleisland
Photocraft Ltd., Dublin
E.R. Shanahan, Castleisland

KILGARVAN
Miss B. Cronin, Post Office, Kilgarvan
A. Cronin, Kilgarvan

GLENCAR, GLENBEIGH
A. J. Daly, Glencar
E. J. Taylor, Glencar
Evan's Tower Hotel

BALLYBUNION/BALLYHEIGUE
T O'Regan, Ballyheigue
H. Rosehill and Sons, Cork
N. Hennessy, Main Street, Ballybunion
W R & S Reliable Series
B.M. Buckley, Stationers, Listowel
W. R. McCarthy, Tralee
McAuliffe Publisher, Listowel and Ballybunion

FENIT
M. Kelly, Post Office, Fenit
Signal Series (Eason's, Dublin and Belfast)
Kennelly Photoworks, Tralee

Church Parade, R.W.F, Ballymullen Barracks, Tralee (W.B. McCarthy, Tralee)

Photography and postcard publishing are closely associated and a few individuals stand apart when it comes to County Kerry. I have mentioned Louis Anthony of Killarney, Daniel McMonagle of Killarney Printing and Padraig Kennelly, Tralee. Another photographer who is less well known but deserves to be remembered is William B. McCarthy. Very little is known about him, but examples of his work are in many collections. A quick search revealed the following details.

He was born in 1870 in Main Street, Castleisland, to John and Mary McCarthy nee Byrne. He shared his birthday with a twin brother, Cornelius. The McCarthy family were members of the Church of Ireland congregation and owned a boot and shoe shop. The business was destined for his older brother, John, so William changed tack and studied photography in the hope of establishing a studio and making a living. In 1897, he married Grace Farmer from Ballymullen, Tralee and moved to her family home in Garryruth. Her father, Robert Farmer, is listed in the 1901 Census as an ex-warden, Tralee Gaol. William B. McCarthy is present, and his profession is listed as a photographer and similarly in the Census returns for 1911. Various newspaper articles relating to W. B. McCarthy identify this location, 3 Ballymullen, as his studio and it appears he was quite successful judging from various references to his work and associations. He was a frequent contributor to weekly magazines such as the Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, a popular weekly publication of the time and was particularly interested in horses, coursing including breeding greyhounds and red setters He also photographed the big 'Establishment' occasions such as the Proclamation of King George V from Tralee Courthouse in May, 1910 and Church parades from Ballymullen Barracks. One of his most interesting photographs is of the County Kerry All-Ireland winning football team of 1903 and a photograph of the winning captain, J. O'Gorman, although the photograph was taken in 1905. He promoted these photographs all over the county and held raffles offering a watercolour of the photograph to the winning ticket. An example of this postcard is one of the most highly sought after postcards to County Kerry collectors. An example is in the Muckross House Library Collection.


Kerry Weekly Reporter 1883-1920, Saturday, April 14, 1906; Section: Front page, Page: 1

THE KERRY FOOTBALL TEAM."

ALL-IRELAND 1903 CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS.

There is on view in Messrs R. Hilliard and Sons' window, Main Street, Killarney, two splendid Water-Colour Enlargements (beautifully framed) of the above team and of Mr Timothy O'Gorman (Captain), by Mr W. B. McCarthy, Photographer, Tralee; which are a splendid reproduction, and should provide immense excitement, for the forthcoming Drawing which is to take place at O'Sullivan's Hotel, Castle Street, Tralee, on Tuesday evening, April 17th. Tickets can be had of all sporting friends, or from Mr W. B. McCarthy, Photographer, Tralee, who will forward books to any person applying for same, to assist him in this interesting contest. Tickets, sixpence each.—Advt. 18x

Ad, Kerry Weekly Reporter, 14 Apr 1906

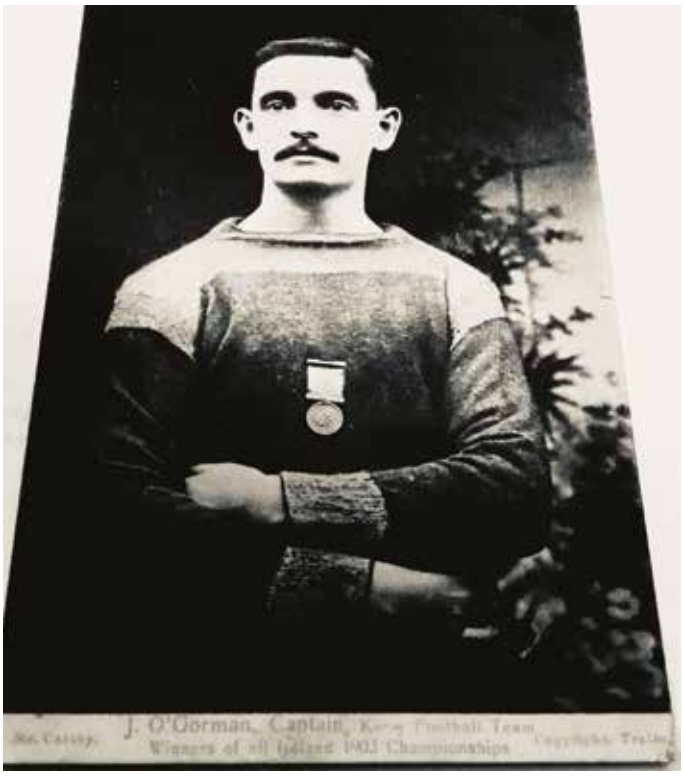
His career was not without the occasional controversy, and he had to resort to the court to resolve a dispute or two. A client from Maglass, Gortatlea, was not happy with the images as offered and refused to pay for the complete package. He was a well to do landowner and farmer and was unhappy when his horses were photographed having short necks, three legs, poor backgrounds, etc. William argued that his travelling expenses plus the negatives, etc., had cost him and therefore by implication charged to the client. Neither party exited the courtroom exonerated but it did give

an insight into the value of having a clear and concise agreement before undertaking a project.

William died in 1928 at the relatively young age of 58 and his wife, Grace, passed in 1942. They did not have any children. William was listed as a postmaster at the time of his death. The Farmer family were involved in the post office in Ballyconnell, Kilfeighny, near Lixnaw as recorded in the 1901 Census and later in 1911 to be represented by the Jones family. The economic conditions during the troubled years of 1916/25 years might have contributed to ending William's photography business and at some point, he became an employee of the Post Office.

His contribution to the historical record may be modest at this point but it is hoped that further investigation and research may reveal more about his work and his unique contribution to the visual record of County Kerry and beyond.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following for their assistance in compiling this list: Kerry County Library, Postcard Archive; Mary Rafferty, VintageIrishpostcards.com; Various Private Collectors; Britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk. I would also like to invite contact through the Society if additional names and details should be considered for inclusion, also, with any additional information regarding William B. McCarthy and his photography.



J. O'Gorman, Captain, Kerry Football Team, 1903 (W.B. McCarthy, Tralee)

The 1903 All Ireland team' and the credit is 'Muckross House Research Library, Courtesy Trustees of Muckross House (Killarney) CLG

‘Partner of my soul’: A Brief Glimpse into the World of Mary O’Connell

Erin I. Bishop, PhD

The marriage of Mary and Daniel O’Connell was, in large part, conducted through letter writing over years of constant separations. Extant correspondence between the couple includes 262 letters Mary penned to Daniel and 764 letters she received from him. Of these letters, 176 have never been published.[1]

O’Connell biographers generally agree that Mary was a good match for O’Connell. In the few paragraphs historians devote to Mary, however, she is often one dimensional, hidden under O’Connell’s massive shadow, viewed only in relation to how O’Connell perceived her or her impact upon his life. Lacking nuance, the complexity of Mary’s thoughts and feelings are over-simplified, and her actions sometimes misunderstood.[2]

My research on Mary O’Connell began with the 3500 letters, edited by M.R. O’Connell and published as The Correspondence of Daniel O’Connell (8 vols, Shannon, 1972). Regularly excluded from this collection, though carefully marked by ellipses, were family matters or material determined to be ‘tedious’ or ‘repetitious’. It is in the repetitious dailiness of the unedited correspondence, lost in the ellipses of the published letters, that the private lives of Mary and Daniel emerge, providing a rare glimpse into a 19th-century marriage. At its centre is Mary O’Connell: a wife, mother, housekeeper, and caregiver, who thoroughly embraced the woman’s sphere of domesticity, fulfilling the same roles as most women of her era. As a result, the O’Connell collections bring to life the little-studied world of 19th-century Irish Catholic women and, specifically, those women of the newly forming middle class.

Mary O’Connell was born in Tralee, County Kerry, on 25 September 1778, one of eleven children of Ellen Tuohy and Thomas O’Connell, a Tralee physician. Thomas O’Connell died in 1785, when Mary was just seven years old, leaving the family virtually penniless. Little else is known of Mary’s early life growing up in Tralee. When Mary was twenty-two, she entered a secret discourse with a young barrister named Daniel O’Connell, a distant cousin. The two had mutual acquaintances, including Mary’s brother-in-law, James Connor, husband to her sister Betsey. Connor was a

Mary O’Connell and Child,
Derrynane House, Co. Kerry, Ireland

friend of, and sometimes co-counsel with, Daniel O’Connell. Like other practicing attorneys, O’Connell rode the circuit, taking on cases in assize towns throughout Munster. O’Connell may have even lodged with the Connors when in Tralee. The couple likely met, or became more closely acquainted, during one of the social functions surrounding the circuit court session. By November 1800, their mutual interest had grown serious, and O’Connell confessed his affections while acknowledging the need for discretion. Although far from ideal, secrecy was essential to their relationship. ‘You know as well as I do how much we have at stake in keeping the business secret,’ he wrote Mary.[3] The stake to which he referred was a substantial inheritance from his uncle, Maurice O’Connell, known as ‘Hunting Cap’. O’Connell risked losing everything if his uncle discovered this unsanctioned attachment.

O'Connell's choice of Mary is extraordinary when viewed within the framework of traditional patriarchy in which marriage was primarily an economic contract intended to advance the interests of both families. In practical terms, Mary brought little to the union. She was dowerless and lacked influential political, social, or economic connections to advance O'Connell's aspirations. Steeped in Gaelic traditions and societal expectations, Hunting Cap would never sanction such a match for his heir. So began nearly two years of a clandestine relationship.

In July 1802, the couple secretly married in Dublin. The marriage is emblematic of a growing trend during the early part of the 1800s toward more companionate marriages, where couples sought out partners they held in affection—in short, a love match. Just days after the wedding, Mary returned to her mother's home in Tralee, and O'Connell returned to his circuit practice. Their separation was difficult with letters their only consolation. 'Oh God what would I not at this moment give to have an opportunity to press your lips to squeeze to my bosom my adored Girl,' O'Connell wrote to Mary.[4] For her part, Mary found herself foregoing social activities, preferring instead 'to sit forever alone thinking of you,' she penned to her husband, 'and embracing your dear resemblance.'[5]

Despite the forced separation, by November 1802 Mary was pregnant. O'Connell could no longer continue the ruse. It was time to face his uncle with the news of his clandestine wedding. As suspected, Hunting Cap was displeased. His punishment initially resulted in O'Connell's complete disinheritance.

In the first years of their marriage, Mary and Daniel lived a nomadic lifestyle. Mary moved between her mother's home in Tralee, where she withdrew to give birth to her first three children, and her in-laws' home in Carhen. It was not until 1805 that O'Connell bought their first house on Westland Row in Dublin, where the couple was finally able to establish a home together.

Gradually the pattern of their married life emerged. Every spring and autumn, O'Connell left his wife to ride the Munster circuit for four to six weeks at a time. Once the sessions ended, O'Connell usually travelled down to Carhen and Derrynane for another two to four weeks to visit family, hunt, and take care of business interests. He then returned home to Mary, or she joined him somewhere along the way. While her husband was absent, Mary was alone to deal with the house, servants, visitors, bill collectors, and children who, along with their debts, grew in number with each passing year.

O'Connell had never been prone to thrift.[6] His early letters to Mary boasted of his earnings, consistently predicting his rising fortunes. 'We loved each other, darling, when we were poor…And now that we are becoming rich it is the chief sweetener of life,' he told her.[7] So sure of his future successes, O'Connell decided to buy a home on Merrion Square in Dublin in 1809. The purchase was a stretch for the family and Mary advised against it. 'For God's sake, darling love, let me entreat of you to give up this house in the Square if it is in your power as I see no other way for you to get out of difficulties,' she wrote Daniel in September of that year.[8] O'Connell would not be deterred. The house was something of a status symbol for the upwardly mobile young professional and aspiring politician. Absent a title or estate, one's home, horses, carriage, clothing, and deportment projected to polite society the desired standing of middle-class working professionals. Unfortunately, this purchase put the couple in a prolonged and precarious financial position.

Some O'Connell scholars unfairly accuse Mary of contributing to their money troubles by her lavish spending.[9] Mary, however, was only living up to the appearance that her husband believed proper and fitting for a man of his stature. 'You will not allow yourself to want for either conveniences or luxuries,' he wrote her in 1804. 'I entreat and even command you not to be in any degree sparing.'[10] He also frequently sent guests to Mary to entertain, feed, and house for as long as they wished at his expense.

It was, perhaps, Mary's concern about O'Connell's spending that gave rise to the common lore that Mary disliked Kerry, finding it cold, backward, and dull. There is little evidence to back up this claim.[11] While she was jealous of the time O'Connell spent there, rather than in Dublin with her and the children, she found the extravagant spending and money lending he undertook while vacationing there especially distressing. On one occasion, she implored him to send her his earnings from the circuit, 'should you my darling not…you will be tempted to distribute it when you go to Kerry. It is there that all the claims are on you.'[12] Once the couple's financial troubles cleared and Derrynane was renovated, Mary's complaints about Kerry disappear from the correspondence. Her later letters often express delight at her time spent there.[13]

In traditional society, the primary biological purpose for a woman, her basic task in life, was the production of children. Mary certainly fulfilled this role. By 1809, she had given birth to five children. Two more came ten months apart in 1810. In all, Mary carried twelve children to term, though only seven survived.[14] Her robust maternal health brings into question historical

accounts of her weak nature and propensity to illness. The ailments which historians attributed to her delicate constitution were, in many cases, pregnancy related. Mary was pregnant during every year between her marriage in 1802 and the birth of her last child in 1816, suggesting relatively good health and over-all well-being.[15]

As the nineteenth century progressed, the role of women as mothers evolved to include their efforts in shaping the character of their offspring, becoming an essential consideration in defining a woman's place in the domestic sphere. At the same time, a new emphasis on individuality reflected a growing school of thought that children were not only potential heirs but worthy contributors to the social enrichment of the family. As such, they should be loved for themselves, rather than as pawns in the aggrandisement of family wealth and power. Mary embraced both her role as a mother and this modern view of parenting, cultivating an informal and affectionate relationship with her children. By setting a good example, administering firm discipline, and lavishing them with love, Mary strove to guide her children's development. She was careful to acknowledge each child as an individual and considered their unique personality when deciding on the best course for rearing them. Punishment, such as confinement to the nursery or exclusion from the dinner table, as well as withholding affection and praise, were employed to deter any errant ways. Physical punishment within the home appeared to be almost non-existent and outside the home it was strongly condemned. Extensive education went hand in hand with sport and leisure activities. Mary was active in the children's studies, hiring tutors, consulting with O'Connell on subject matter, and organizing lessons in deportment, music, and dancing. Alongside her husband, she also oversaw settling her daughters into good marriages and identifying careers suitable to each boy's skill set and personality.

Aside from summers spent in Tralee or various spa towns, Mary remained in Dublin until 1817 when she removed, with children in tow, to the south of England in the hopes of improving her health. It is unclear what ailed her but worth noting that she gave birth to her last child in 1816 at the age of thirty-seven. In an era where a woman's childbearing years averaged twenty-two, this is unusual. Between 1811 and 1815, Mary lost four of the children born to her during that time. This rapid succession of pregnancies and loss may have finally taken its toll on her maternal and mental health. A summer spent in the seaside town of Bristol seemed to do the trick, and Mary returned to Ireland later that year.

Financial difficulties continued to plague the couple. By now, O'Connell was over £20,000 in debt, calling for drastic measures. Using his wife's health as an excuse, O'Connell sent Mary and the children to the south of France in 1822, where they could live more frugally. He remained in Ireland, to attend his law practice and, focus on amassing the fortune it would now take to clear his mounting debts.

O'Connell's uncle Hunting Cap died in 1825, leaving his estate, Derrynane, to his nephew. This windfall helped but was not enough to see them clear of debt. Under the advice of his brother, who was now helping the family untangle their financial troubles, O'Connell determined that Mary and the children could return to Ireland and stay at Derrynane, where a less opulent lifestyle was more socially acceptable. The house, however, needed renovations, and they spent an excessive amount of money on this process. 'I laid out a foolish deal of money at Derrynane to practice the economy which we are now suffering under,' O'Connell belatedly confessed to Mary, during yet another separation brought upon them by financial troubles.[16] Ever the optimist, Daniel assured Mary on more than one occasion, 'One or two years of strict economy', would see them through.[17] In the end, only the national testimonial, organized as tribute to O'Connell in 1829, saw the family free of debt.

When O'Connell entered parliament in 1830, Mary accompanied him to London. From then until her death in 1836, she and O'Connell were seldom apart and correspondence between the two waned. Her health began to deteriorate as early as 1835, possibly exacerbated by the Ellen Courtenay scandal.[18] In the summer of 1836, Mary took to her bed at Derrynane. She died there on 31 October 1836 at age 58 and is buried at Derrynane Abbey in County Kerry.

NOTES

[1] The O'Connell family papers can be found at the National Library of Ireland, Dublin *(O'Connell Papers and O'Connell-FitzSimon Papers* Microfilm). A smaller collection is housed at University College Dublin Archives *(O'Connell Papers).*

[2] For a detailed discussion of historians' treatment of Mary, see Erin I. Bishop, *The World of Mary O'Connell, 1778-1836* (Lilliput Press, 1999).

[3] O'Connell to Mary, 28 November 1800, *O'Connell-FitzSimon* Papers microfilm 1620, National Library of Ireland, Dublin (hereafter cited as NLI, FS).

[4] Ibid., O'Connell to Mary, 16 November 1802.

[5] Ibid., Mary to O'Connell, 27 August 1802.

[6] Hunting Cap, who funded O'Connell's studies, often complained about his nephew's excessive spending. M. R. O'Connell, *Daniel O'Connell, The Man and His Politics* (Irish Academic Press, 1990), 15.

[7] O'Connell to Mary, 26 March 1807, NLI, FS 1620.

[8] Ibid., Mary to O'Connell, 18 September 1809.

[9] O'Connell, *Daniel O'Connell, The Man and His Politics,* 26; Oliver MacDonagh, *O'Connell: The Life of Daniel O'Connell 1775-1847* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991), 155.

[10] O'Connell to Mary, 29 November 1804, *O'Connell Papers,* Ms. 5759, National Library of Ireland, Dublin (hereafter cited as NLI, Ms.).

[11] When discussing my research with other scholars and the general public, I often heard of Mary's alleged disdain for Kerry.

[12] Mary to O'Connell, 31 March 1808, NLI, Ms.13650 (14).

[13] Mary O'Connell to Daniel Jr., NLI, Ms.13644.

[14] Of twelve children, seven survived to adulthood: Maurice (b. 1803), Morgan (b. 1804), Ellen (b. 1805), Kate (b. 1807), John (b. 1810), Betsy (b. 1810), and Daniel Jr. (b. 1816). Those who died in childhood were Edward (b. 1808), who lived seven months; Daniel Stephen (b. 1812), who survived fourteen months; Mary (b. 1814), who died shortly after birth; and Gloriana (b. 1811) and Ricarda (b. 1815), who lived perhaps two years.

[15] For a detailed study of Mary's maternal health and role as mother, see Bishop, *The World of Mary O'Connell 1778-1836.*

[16] O'Connell to Mary, 30 October 1827, NLI, FS 1621.

[17] Ibid., O'Connell to Mary, 26 January, 27 February 1824, 1 November 1825.

[18] In 1832, Ellen Courtenay publicly accused O'Connell of fathering her illegitimate child. See, Erin I. Bishop, 'Was O'Connell Faithful? Ellen Courtenay Revisited' in *Éire-Ireland,* 31, no. 3 & 4, (Fall/Winter 1996) 58-75.

Aoibheann Lambe (sitting) describing petroglyphs found near Coomsaharn.

Outing to Kilflynn

Attendees at an exhibition of Celtic-inspired cast plaster casts made by senior students of Presentation Secondary, Listowel, as part of Architecture Kerry 2025's Art in Architecture with ARTlab. The exhibition was launched by Tony Bergin, President, KAHS. Architecture Kerry is organised by Victoria McCarthy, County Heritage Officer and a KAHS Education and Outreach Officer.

Tralee Famine Sites Map

Mary McGillicuddy

This map was initially researched and compiled in 1997, as a contribution to commemorations marking 150 years since an Gorta Mór calamity began. The historical sources used at that point were essentially Griffith's Valuation (which was completed for Kerry 19 July, 1853)[1] and KAHS publication *The Famine in Kerry* (1997)[2]. This paper is an updated version of that work. The Famine period addressed covers years 1845-1853.

The Irish Poor Law Act of 1838 was modelled after the English act of 1834, which attempted to provide institutional relief for the destitute in Ireland. It divided Ireland into 130 Poor Law Unions, each centred around a workhouse. These unions were managed by a board of Poor Law Guardians, comprised of both elected members and local magistrates. The system was initially designed to support 1% of the population (approximately 80,000 people), but by March 1851, due to the famine, nearly 4% of the population was in workhouses. (By the early 1920s, most poor law unions in southern Ireland, excluding Dublin, were abolished and workhouses were closed.[3]) Tralee Poor Law Union was formally established on 30 March, 1840 and initially covered an area of 548 square miles. Its operation covered eighteen electoral divisions (DED's), to include: Ballinacourty, Ballincushane, Ballinvoher, Ballyduff, Ballymacelligott, Brosna, Castlegregory, Castlemaine, Castleisland, Dingle, Dunorlin, Dunquin, Kilgarrylander, Kilgobbin, Kilquane, Minard, Tralee, Ventry. The territory was later expanded in 1850 to include some Killarney and Listowel areas also[4].

The Tralee Union workhouse (map legend #15) was erected on a ten acre site, one mile to the east of Tralee town in Ratass/Rathass. Designed by Poor Law Commission architect George Wilkinson, the building was built to hold 1,000 inmates. It was declared fit to admit paupers on 1 September, 1842, but did not receive its first admissions until 1 February, 1844[5]. During the famine in the 1840s, additional sleeping galleries and sheds were erected for c.150 further places[6]. A fever hospital to accommodate 60 patients was erected at the north-east of the workhouse[7]. According to Bryan MacMahon (2017), it was common for the Tralee Board of Guardians to hold meetings...' while a mob assembled outside their room and threw stones through the windows'[8].

Additional auxiliary workhouses were created as the need increased during the Famine years. They were usually unused stores, breweries or warehouses that were rented out by the Union[9]. November 1847 saw the Board advertise for tenders for renting houses in or near Tralee to accommodate about 400 children belonging to the workhouse schools[10]. The first auxiliary workhouse was an old distillery in Ballymullen (#4) which had previously functioned as a storehouse in 1847 for the British Relief Association which was supplying meals to schoolchildren[11]. MacMahon (2017) also quotes from the Kerry Evening Post of 1 May, 1847 that 3 stores were acquired and fitted out by the British Relief Association for distribution of relief, on Rock Street (#2), Castle Street and in Blennerville (#5). (*The Association is not recorded as tenant in Griffith's Valuation, however, and a Castle Street store is not identifiable[12].) *Kerry Evening Post* 6 January, 1847 reported that over 20,000 people were receiving food daily from relief committee stores in Tralee[13]. Also, while several 'alms houses' are listed in Griffiths Valuation, one in Milk Market Lane (#12), and six buildings in McEnnery's Lane (#11), no specific written documentation about the assistance provided at these locations has been located by this author.

As MacMahon (2017) states, the number of auxiliary workhouses varied according to need, with the *Kerry Evening Post* reporting there were ten in the Tralee union in 1851, whereas one guardian, John Hurly, was documented as saying there were seventeen auxiliary workhouses in the union[14]. And in the 18 February, 1852 issue of the *Kerry Evening Post,* Justin Supple was quoted as speaking of the guardians having to ... 'rent, fit up and furnish ...sixteen auxiliary workhouses' when there were nearly 8,000 paupers in the union[15]. (Tralee workhouse inmates included many people from west Kerry until a facility was built in Dingle in 1849[16].) By 1855, many auxiliary workhouses were not needed, with the *Kerry Evening Post* reporting that there were then 988 inmates in Tralee at that stage[17]. Many workhouses also had hospitals; MacMahon (2017) lists hospitals linked to workhouses of: Ballymullen (#3.4), Blennerville (#5), Clahane (#7), James Street (#10), Riordan's (#9?), the Rock (#2), Waterloo (#18)[18]. The *Kerry Evening Post* recorded the fall in Tralee Union population from 71,626 to 58,184 from 1841 census to 1851 census, with the Tralee population having increased due to many paupers admitted to workhouses coming from outside Tralee[19].

Helen O'Carroll (2020) has observed that the Poor Laws in the 19th century operated in a society that regarded

poverty as a moral failing. Paupers were viewed as those who had failed to contribute to society and needed to be sequestered when alive by means of the workhouse and in death by placing their burial grounds apart from the rest of the community, ensuring their exclusion from society, with this practice continuing during the Famine[20]. The main burial ground for those who died during the Famine in Tralee Workhouse was a cemetery opened in May 1846 at the north-east corner of the grounds[21].

It has long been believed that God's Acre in Ballybeggan (#1) was the Workhouse cemetery. However, O'Carroll (2020) has determined that the Ballybeggan site was opened as late as September 1853, after the Famine, and that burials continued at the Workhouse site possibly up to 1851[22]. The chairman of Tralee Borough Commissioners wrote in 1853 that between September 1850 and March 1853, 1,876 bodies from the Tralee workhouse were interred in Ratass graveyard. He stated he appointed a man, armed with a gun, to watch over the graves so that dogs would not attack the buried bodies. When the burial grounds were full, he stated that the board of guardians then rented the land now known as 'God's Acre' to function as pauper's graveyard[23]. A plaque was erected at this site on 19 April, 1997 by Tralee UDC members24. MacMahon (2017) suggests that on the grounds of a Ballymullen Auxiliary Workhouse is possibly also another pauper's graveyard[25].

This map would benefit from skilled IT input to create an interactive resource; this is merely an initial effort to plot relevant documented sites. It marks the location of structures which were recorded as being utilised for famine relief during the peak famine years; additional detail could further enhance the existing compilation, e.g. departure site(s) for ships taking emigrants abroad and sites where religious bodies also provided relief, etc.

Bryan MacMahon, in his work *The Great Famine in Tralee and North Kerry* (2017) and others have detailed the context and conditions which people experienced during the Famine period in Tralee. This map serves to identify the sites where workhouses and hospitals, etc. were located, and his and other works provide the detailed factual material that enables a deeper exploration of what actually did occur at these sites. The people who experienced the Famine and particularly those who did not survive it must be respected and remembered, may they rest in peace.

LEGEND

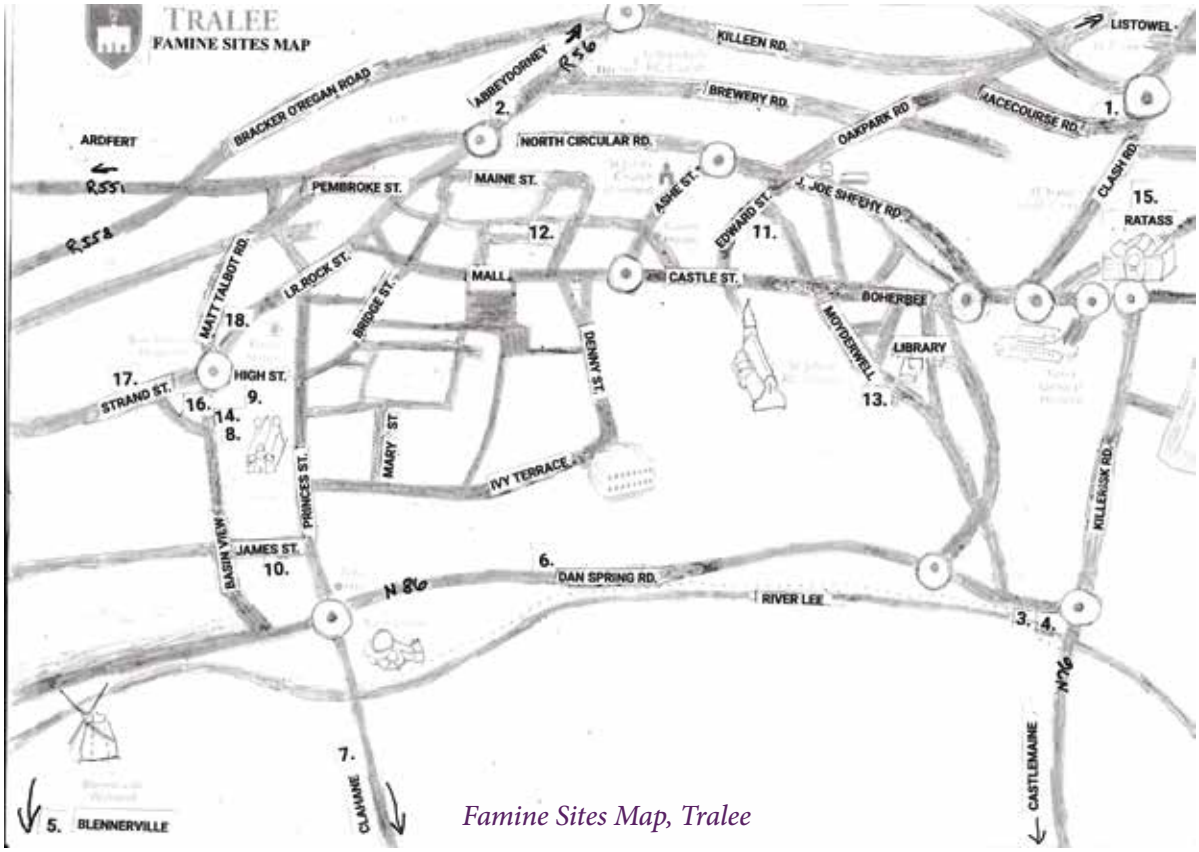
(GV = Griffith's Valuation) 27

1. BALLYBEGGAN God's Acre (pauper's burial ground) *(GV Ratass p. 198)*

2. BALLOONAGH ROAD Auxiliary Workhouse (vicinity Barry's shop/Rock Street) *(GV p. 222 #5, Chute)*

3. BALLYMULLEN / GARRYRUTH Auxiliary Workhouse (opposite barracks, south of terrace, large building bordering river, now demolished) *(GV Ratass p. 217 Garryruth #1, 10, Tralee PL Guardians)*

4. BALLYMULLEN / GARRYRUTH Auxiliary Workhouse (also opposite barracks, large warehouse,



Famine Sites Map, Tralee

now demolished) *(GV Ratass p. 217 Garryruth #1, 10 a, Tralee PL Guardians)*

5. BLENNERVILLE (Main Street) Auxiliary Workhouse and Hospital – for women nursing children *(GV Annagh, Curragraigue, p. 5, #14, Guardians of Tralee Union)*

6. BÓTHAR NA MARBH *(by Dan Spring Road)*[28]

7. CLAHANE Auxiliary Workhouse
(was two storey building in field opposite turn for rugby club, town side of river)
(GV Annagh p. 3, #5B b. Guardians of Tralee Union)

8. CROSS LANE Auxiliary Workhouse
(southwest of St Vincent de Paul shop)
(GV Clounalour p. 238, #9, Tralee PL Guardians)

9. HIGH STREET
(GV p233 #?, no Riordan listed, possibly #1, Hurley[29]*)*

10. JAMES STREET*(GV p. 239, #15, Palmer)*

11. McENNERY'S LANE Widows' Alms Houses
(GV Cloonmore p. 220, #1,2,3,4,5,6, Rev. J. G. McEnnery)

12. MILK MARKET LANE Alms House
(later Dowd's fish shop) *(GV p. 228 # 23, Trustees)*

13. MOYDERWELL LANE Fever Hospital
(near site of Tralee library)
(GV Cloonbeg p. 219 #1, Trustees)

14. OLD CHAPEL LANE Auxiliary Workhouse
(vicinity of new dwellings opposite Cash & Carry)
(GV p. 238 #12, Tralee PL Guardians)

15. RATASS Tralee Union Workhouse and graveyard
(now KCC buildings)
(GV p. 204 # 7,8, Tralee PL Guardians)

16. STRAND STREET Dispensary
(area of 'Betty's pub')
(GV p. 235 #96, Tralee PL Guardians)

17. STRAND STREET County Infirmary
(GV p. 233 #1, Trustees)

18. WATERLOO LANE
(GV p. 233 12(?), Thomas O'Kelly/Busteed30)

NOTES

[1] Griffith's Valuation, (copy) Local History and Archives Department, Kerry Library

[2] Michael Costello (ed.), *The Famine in Kerry* (Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society, 1997)

[3] Poor Law Records, National Archives https://www.nationalarchives.ie/help-with-research/research-guides/poor-law-records/ [accessed 5 May 2025]

[4] Bryan MacMahon, *The Great Famine in Tralee and North Kerry* (Mercier Press, 2017) p. 252

[5] P. Higginbotham, *The Workhouse, the story of an institution* (2025) https://www.workhouses.org.uk/Tralee [accessed May 1, 2025]

[6] MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 72

[7] Higginbotham, *The Workhouse.*

[8] MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 164

[9] Ibid,, p. 165

[10] Ibid., p. 164

[11] *Kerry Evening Post,* 1 December 1847 cited in MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 165

[12] *Kerry Evening Post,* 1 May, 1847 cited in MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 113

[13] *Kerry Evening Post,* 6 January, 1847 cited in MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 94

[14] *Kerry Evening Post,* 16 August, 1851 cited in MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 306

[15] MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 306

[16] Ibid., p. 19

[17] *Kerry Evening Post,* 22 August 1855 cited in MacMahon, Great Famine, p. 328

[18] *Kerry Evening Post,* 12 April 1851 cited in MacMahon, Great Famine, p. 260

[19] *Kerry Evening Post*, 24 December, 1851 cited in MacMahon, Great Famine, p. 324

[20] O'Carroll, Helen, *Tralee Workhouse Burial Ground* (2020): https://www.kerryhistory.ie/webinar-5-tralee-workhouse-burial-ground-by-helen-o-carroll [accessed April 22, 2025]

[21] MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 41

[22] O'Carroll, *Tralee Workhouse*

[23] *Kerry Evening Post,* 12 October, 1853 cited in MacMahon, Great Famine, p. 326

[24] Maeve Spring, 'God's Acre, Famine Burial Ground, Tralee' in Michael Connolly (ed.), *The Famine in Kerry,* (Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society, 1997) p. 7

[25] MacMahon, Great Famine, p. 329

[26] Griffiths Valuation, Ask About Ireland website, OMS Services, Eneclann & National Library of Ireland (2003) https://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/ [accessed May 1, 2025]

[27] Information provided to the author, 1997

[28] Board of Guardians rough minute book (BG/154/AA/24), 24 May, 1851, cited in MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 306

[29] MacMahon, *Great Famine,* p. 306

Religious Frenzy in Dingle on the eve of the Famine, 1846

Bryan MacMahon

The Protestant proselytising mission in Corca Dhuibhne began in the 1830s and by 1845 had developed an extensive infrastructure of buildings such as churches, schools, parsonages and convert cottages known as colonies in Dingle and Ventry. Estimates of the number of converts in 1846 vary but there were certainly over 1,000, including children. While this was low relative to the whole population, there was momentum in the conversion movement and substantial funding from its supporters in Britain. Local priests became alarmed and regularly issued pulpit tirades and stern warnings to their congregations not to be seduced by the blandishments of the proselytisers.

Daniel O'Connell

Some of the religious conflicts led to court cases and, by way of their involvement in these, a number of Dublin-based Catholic barristers became involved in efforts to stem the tide of conversion. They concluded that a parish mission in Dingle run by priests of the Vincentian order would be the most effective course of action. Parish missions were a novel and experimental feature of Irish Catholicism at this time, inspired by a small group of Vincentian priests who were based in Phibsborough in Dublin. The Congregation of the Mission (CM), also known as the Vincentian order, was founded in France by St Vincent de Paul in 1625. Their first location was in the priory of Saint Lazare in Paris, hence another popular name, Lazarists or Lazarites.

The Irish Vincentians were pioneers, gaining experience in administering parish missions as they went along. The typical format was that a group of priests would embed themselves in a parish for about four weeks, preach at three daily services and instruct congregations on the doctrines of the Catholic faith. The sacraments of confession and confirmation were to the fore during the mission and various lay societies were established to keep the momentum up after the departure of the missioners. Parish missions later became an important and familiar aspect of Catholic parish rituals throughout Ireland. In the words of historian James H. Murphy: 'The character of the mission was that of a blitzkrieg rather than a war of attrition, bringing a parish into a rapid conformity with the desired model.'[1]

The Dublin barristers met a major obstacle in planning a mission for Dingle: the standard protocol was that an invitation should come from the bishop of a diocese. They enlisted the support of the Liberator Daniel O'Connell to persuade Bishop Egan of Kerry to invite the missioners. When the bishop was staying in a Dublin hotel, O'Connell called on him and faced with all the authority of the great national leader, Bishop Egan 'very reluctantly' agreed to his request. There and then, O'Connell wrote out the invitation to the Vincentian missioners and 'induced his Lordship actually to sign it'. However, this was without any prior consultation with Fr Michael Divine, the parish priest of Dingle, or his curates, leaving another hurdle to be cleared.

The mission began in Dingle in early August 1846 and went on for six weeks, two weeks longer than planned, due to the enthusiastic response of the people. Fr Thomas McNamara was the leader, and he was accompanied by Frs. Thomas Kelly, Anthony O'Grady, John Martin and Peter Lydon. McNamara's manuscript account of the 'memorable' mission, written forty years later, is preserved in Vincentian archives in Dublin. Dingle was not the first Vincentian mission in Ireland but in time it became the most important one of their early days.[2]

The journey from Dublin by coach took the men two days and they reached Dingle at 10.00 p.m. on a Friday night, planning to commence the mission on the Sunday. Their arrival in Dingle was not auspicious. The missioners knew of the 'explosive' religious divisions in Dingle, but 'the first release of fury, however, was among the local clergy and almost killed the mission before it began.'[3]

Fr Michael Devine and his three curates saw the whole enterprise as 'a dreadful reproach', implying that they were 'wanting in their duties towards the faithful of the parish'. Fr Devine bluntly told the missioners that he was leaving town: 'I regret that I myself have business to Tralee and must be absent till the middle of next week. So, goodbye gentlemen for the present.'

After Devine's departure, McNamara and his confreres found the confession boxes in the church locked tight, so they employed a carpenter to build temporary confessionals. Then they found a travelling man, a tinker, to make lamps suitable for evening services. There were three homilies each day, at 8.00 a.m., noon and 8.00 p.m. The morning instruction focussed on the commandments, sacraments, prayer and religious duties. At noon, there was instruction for children on the catechism and on religious terms. The main event each day was the evening sermon, which was attended by large numbers.

Only two of the men, O'Grady and Lydon, were fluent in Irish and as well as doing their own preaching, they were required to translate the sermons of the others. This was doubling the work and making services longer, but the congregations did not appear to mind. Because of the huge demands on the missioners' stamina, McNamara made a request for two Irish-speaking Christian Brothers to assist them. Patrick Corbett and Vincent Culkin duly arrived, one from Limerick and the other from Carrick-on-Suir. One of them worked so hard during the mission that he reportedly lost four stone in weight. In due course, the Christian Brothers School was established as a direct result of the mission.

Fr Peter Lydon was regarded as the finest preacher among the men. He was normally gentle in manner but when he preached he was transformed into a powerful orator, 'like another St. Paul'. On one occasion, his audience was so moved that:

> the whole people commenced to cry aloud and threw themselves on the floor, while the more respectable, falling on their knees, wept abundantly. The church on this occasion presented an extraordinary scene. The dense congregation lay flat upon the floor, as if overwhelmed by a thunderbolt.

The effects of their mission were astonishing to Fr McNamara, with the whole district being involved:

> Not only were the streets thronged, but the roads leading off into the country all around were alive with hundreds and thousands to a distance of several miles, according as the inhabitants came to, or returned from, the exercises of the mission.

Fr Thomas McNamara, leader of the Vincentian Mission of 1846. (Vincentian Archives, Dublin.)

There was a kind of 'mission mania' similar to that experienced by celebrities today, and as the priests made their way to and from their hotel, they found the deference shown to them 'quite embarrassing', with people kneeling and asking for blessings. On his return after ten days, Fr Devine was astonished 'to find his people in such a state of religious excitement, with the streets full of animation'. He resented the presence of the Christian Brothers, but nevertheless began to co-operate with the missioners, while the curates still remained aloof and did not get involved until later.

Individual confessions proved very popular, and priests from adjoining parishes were required to help with the large numbers who presented themselves. In order to regulate the crowds, a ticketing system was introduced with the date and time for confession printed on them. This practical step proved very efficient as means of crowd control. There was always the possibility of a trade in tickets, and touts cashing in on the system, but in fact people were genuinely grateful to have their personal tickets and no trading occurred, according to McNamara.

The crowd control problems were compounded by the fact that large numbers of the poor who attended were suffering from typhus. These people 'crawled out of their sick beds' and implored the missioners to hear their confessions, 'saying they were in fever and they

were afraid that death had laid its grasp upon them'. McNamara noted that 'of course, we felt their appeal to be irresistible'. Some of the other healthy penitents were frightened away by the typhus victims, ceding the positions they had by virtue of their tickets.

Bishop Egan came to administer confirmation and over a thousand people of all ages were waiting for the sacrament. The large numbers caused a logistical problem, and the men of the newly formed Confraternity of Christian Doctrine were enlisted to marshal the crowds. They formed a cordon across the width of the church, allowing people into the sanctuary area in pairs to approach the bishop. This bizarre scene then followed:

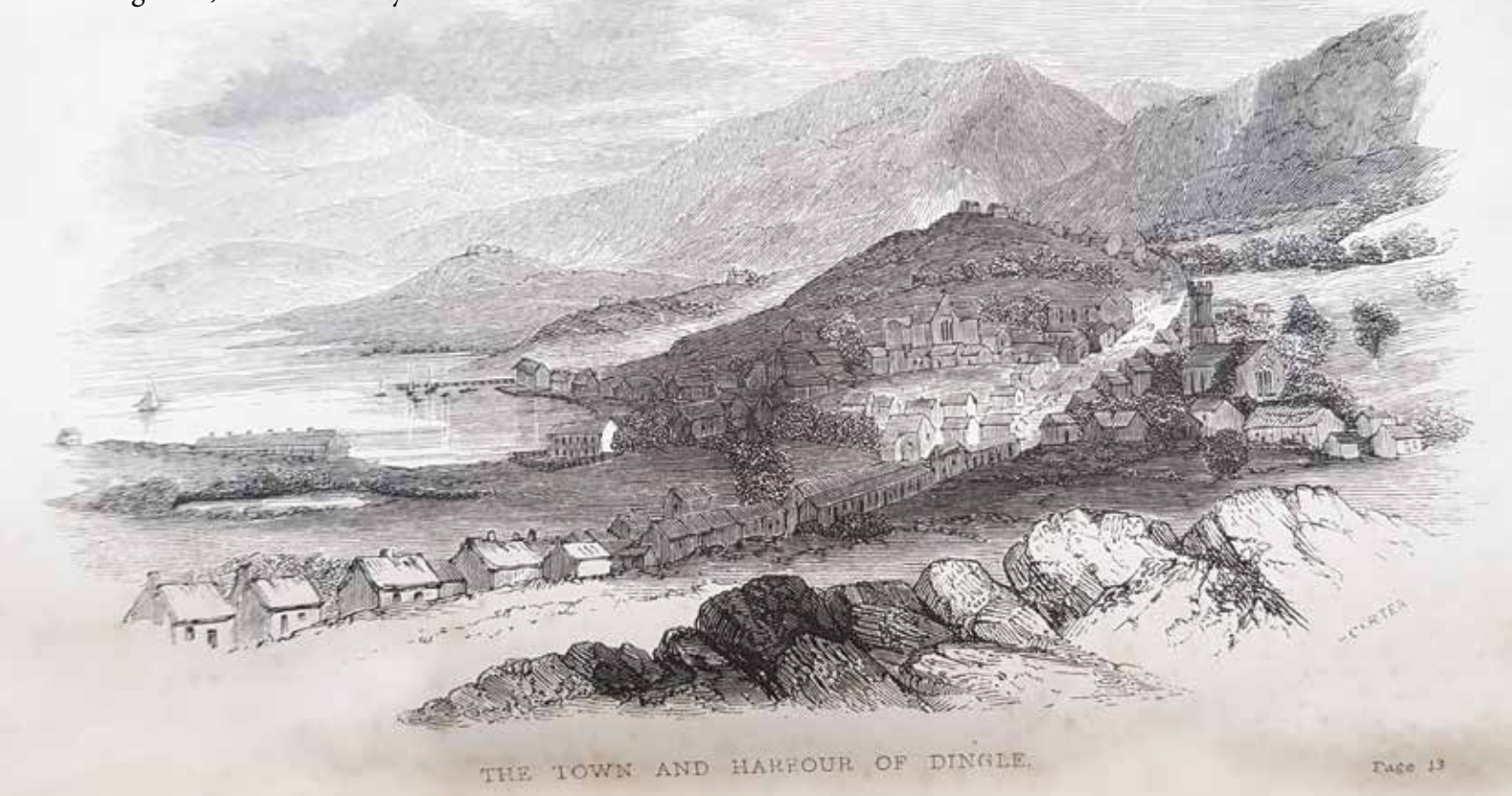
> The people pressed forward and the Confraternity men pressed them back until, unable to resist by any other means, they had actually to use sticks and clubs in the struggle, and, what can scarcely be believed, blood flowed copiously from the blows inflicted, the Confraternity men feeling they had a duty to perform even to so terrible an extremity, and we who attended the bishop right and left had to witness with his lordship how the poor people fought their way to come forward. Such a scene is only to be imagined among a poor, rude people urged onward by their religious enthusiasm to offer, as one may say, violence to heaven.

The announcement of the end of the mission caused a frenzy among the people and the atmosphere became dangerous, as described by Fr McNamara:

> As the end approached, we had to be guarded by the Confraternity, the members of which lent themselves to us as a bodyguard to conduct us to the church and back, through the throng that blocked our way, asking for our blessing and endeavouring even to touch our dress as we passed amongst them. But the farewell evening at length arrived. The church was literally packed. The sermon commenced amidst the sighs and sobbings of the immense congregation but as the preacher announced the mission as having come to a close, the church resounded from end to end with wailing and lamentation from the assembled thousands.

McNamara was becoming concerned about the practical arrangements for their departure:

> We resolved to get away by sea across the bay to Caherciveen and made arrangements in secret, as we thought, with the members of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine to engage cars and have them in readiness at an appointed time to take us down to the shore, where they would also have a boat at our service. But secrecy was impossible under the circumstances. The population crowded before the hotel and filled the street as the cars were drawn up. The Confraternity with difficulty formed a passage for us, and, as we appeared coming forth from the hotel, each name was sounded aloud with a burst of lamentation.

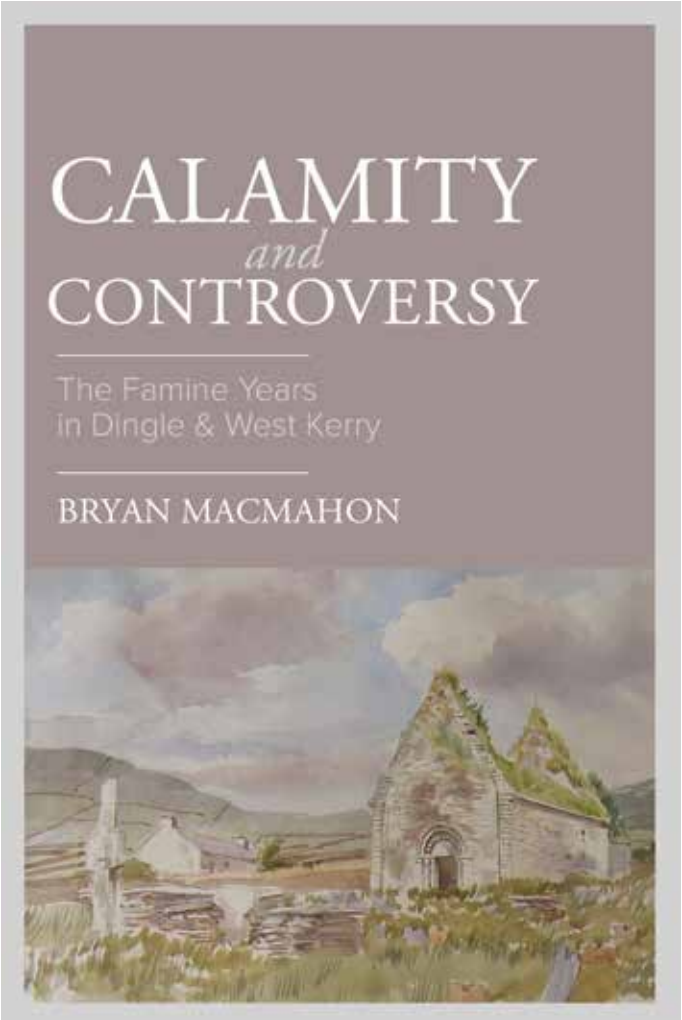


A view of Dingle in the 1840s. (Irish Intelligence. Courtesy of Kerry County Library.)

This was the scene after they boarded the boats:

> Men and women, young and old, rushed into the water, as if to follow us, but this being impossible, they vented their grief in lamentations, clapping their hands and raising them towards heaven to invoke a parting blessing on us. In a short time all the boats on the shore were put in requisition and filled with earnest townsmen, to accompany us for a distance over the spacious bay, so that we were escorted by a fleet of fishing boats as we went along, whilst everywhere the cliffs overhanging the bay were crowned with groups of people….

In conclusion, it would appear that the people of Corca Dhuibhne were stirred by something more than religious zeal and that their extraordinary frenzy was stimulated by fears unrelated to religious doctrine. In August 1846, the potato crop was already widely known to have been blighted and lost, and the lamentations of the people could be seen as reflecting their full awareness of the impending calamity in the winter of 1846-7. The missioners had brought a message of consolation and salvation, and the hopes of the people had been buoyed up by them for six weeks of extraordinary religious fervour. It seems that people looked to these saintly men as their hope for deliverance and their departure as a herald of the doom that lay in store.[4]



NOTES

[1] James H. Murphy, 'The Role of Vincentian Parish Missions in the 'Irish Counter-Reformation' of the Mid Nineteenth Century', *Irish Historical Studies* Vol. 24, No. 94 (November, 1984), pp. 152-171.

[2] Two other accounts are also held in this archive, one anonymous and one by Fr Thomas Murphy. Except where otherwise attributed, the information and quotations here are collated from these sources. I am grateful to Miriam van der Molen, archivist of Vincentian Order, Dublin, for facilitating access to these documents and for providing the image of Fr McNamara.

[3] Murphy, 'Role of Vincentian Parish Missions'.

[4] The early years of the Protestant conversion campaign in Corca Dhuibhne are treated in my book *Faith and Fury: the Evangelical Campaign in Dingle and West Kerry, 1825-45* (2021). For information on the later years, see my recently published *Calamity and Controversy: The Famine Years in Dingle & West Kerry* (2025).

KERRY YOUNG HISTORIAN OF THE YEAR

Overall Winner
JUNIOR CATEGORY

Latchford's Mill, Islandganniv, Listowel

Lucy Griffin
Presentation Secondary School, Listowel

Background
My Grandad, John Sayers, often tells a story that he heard at home growing up. It is a story of his father, John, swimming in the mill stream at the back of their farm. His father would recall being strong enough to swim against the current of the water in the mill stream when the sluice gate was opened. This intrigued me as there is now no mill stream and no trace of a mill. This story led me to researching Latchford's Mill, a flour mill in Islandganniv, Listowel, in operation until the 1940s.

Milling was one of the most extensive industrial activities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Using the power of flowing water to turn huge stones, a viable food source was created for communities by transforming grain to meal and flour. Electricity gradually replaced water and steam as the motive power for milling and rural electrification eventually put an end to all local water-powered mills. Today, most of the flour used in Ireland is imported.

Latchford Family
John Latchford initially farmed and lived in the Listowel area. In 1829 he moved to Tralee and established a bakery business. Due to the success of the bakery business, he was able to enter the milling industry and in 1843 he rented Derrymore Mill. John expanded his business in 1856 by acquiring a mill in Cahersiveen. In 1860 John engaged in correspondence with Lord

6-inch raster mapping dated 1830s to 1930s shows the corn mill, the millrace and a weir across the river upstream closer to Listowel town. Source: - osi.maps.arcgis.com – accessed 22/11/2024 (Map Genie 6 Inch Last Edition Black & White ITM). Sheet name KY010. Publication Date 12/31/1940

Listowel's agent, Major Holmes, regarding a suitable site in Listowel. He eventually secured the lease of Leonard's Mill and also a mill further downstream in Islandganniv. In 1864 John further grew the business and purchased a mill in Dingle.

John Latchford's will declared his eldest son, Richard, as his successor and guardian of the younger children. John Latchford passed away in 1867, and Richard inherited Derrymore Mill, the bakery in Tralee and the use of the mill in Dingle for 7 years when it was transferred to his brother George on turning 21. Richard also inherited the farms in Listowel as well as the mill site at Islandganniv and Leonard's mill.

The Weir

Latchford's Mill in Islandganniv, Listowel, was powered by water diverted from the River Feale. The height of the water supplying the mill was artificially enhanced by a weir across the River Feale and diverting part of the flow along a flattish headrace. A grate allowed water flow down along the mill stream. By the time the water arrived at the millwheel, it was at a higher level than the river. The power of the flowing water turned the mill wheel, which turned the large stones used to grind the grain to make flour. The mill stream came out into the river again beyond the mill.

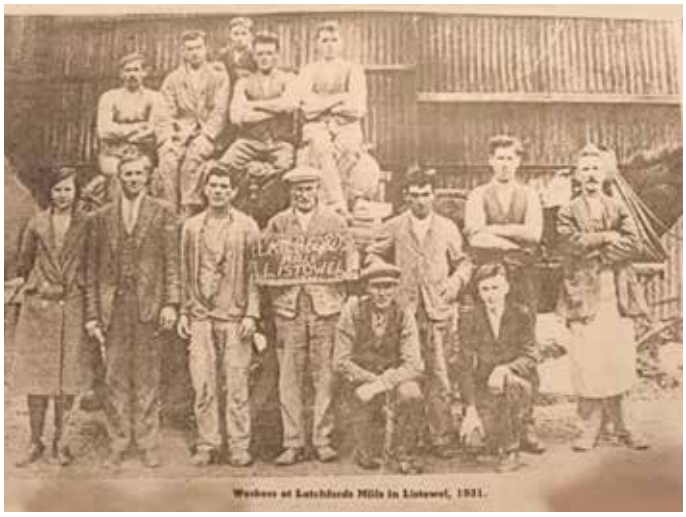
At a meeting of the Tralee Town Commissioners on 17 October 1878, Richard Latchford confirmed that he had employed a clerk of works, Mr. Counihan, to carry out extensive works to create a weir on the River Feale for use at the Listowel Mill, a project that required a significant capital investment of £10,000 equating to £1,000,000 in today's terms. At another meeting Richard Latchford detailed the extent of the weir, some 690 feet long across one of the largest rivers in Kerry.

Sayers Family Islandganniv

The 1901 Census reveals a wealth of information about Islandganniv, Listowel, at the time. The House and Building Return includes an Indian Meal and Mill House with Richard Latchford as the Landholder. Garrett Sayers is also listed as the head of a family residing in a house in Islandganniv North. Garrett Sayers was my 3rd great-grandfather. He was employed by Latchford's to work at the mill. The census lists his occupation as a miller. Another census page from 1901 shows his son, my 2nd great-grandfather, Garret Sayers, also as a Miller. His family were living in Church Street. In the 1911 census my 2nd great-grandfather's family is detailed. His occupation was still a corn miller.

Closure of Latchford's Mill, Islandganniv, Listowel

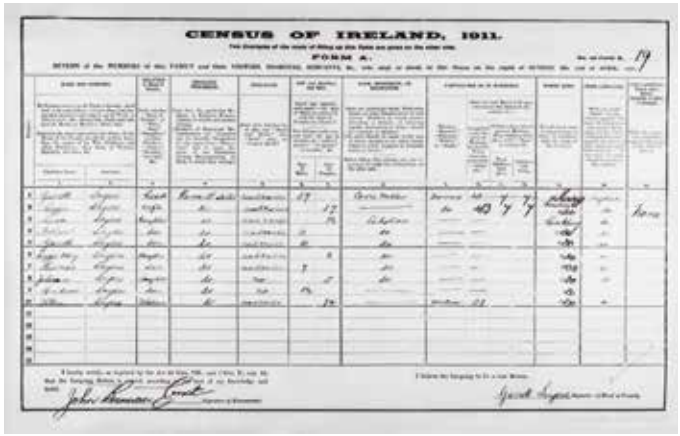
John "Jack" Latchford was the eldest son of Richard Latchford. It was Jack's youngest son, John "Mac",



My 2nd great-grandfather, Garrett Sayers, Sr, can be seen in this picture in the front row holding the sign. Gareth Sayers, Jr (back row 2nd from left) and Tommy Sayers (middle row 3rd from right) are my great-granduncles. Source of photo: Newspaper clipping at my grandparents' house. Paper unknown. Photo is also in Merchant Princes: The Remarkable Story of Tralee's Milling Families, by Vincent O'Mahoney.

that took an interest in the Latchford's Mill, Listowel, after joining the family business. A breach in its weir in January 1945 caused severe flood damage to the adjoining Listowel Racecourse. Extensive remedial works, including the construction of a new embankment at the racecourse, were required to prevent further damage. A settlement was reached, and the Listowel Racecourse Company accepted an agreed compensation. The consequences of this major flood prompted a meeting on 5 February 1946, wherein a decision was taken to gradually wind down production at the Listowel Mill.

John "Mac" sold the mill at Islandganniv and its


CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1911.

My 2nd great-grandfather's family in the 1911 census. His occupation was still a corn miller. My great-grandfather John was not yet born. Source: National Archives online. www.census.nationalarchives.ie – accessed 22/11/2024

surrounding five acres to Charles Walsh in November 1947. The mill was later demolished. Latchford's farm at Islandganniv, Listowel, was sold to my great-grandparents, John and Bridie Sayers. My grandparents, John and Kay Sayers, still live at the farm. The location of the millrace is still evident as it is clearly marked by a hedge separating paddocks where I now keep my ponies.

My grandad John Sayers, centre, with his father, John Sayers, on the farm at Islandganniv, Listowel in 1961. Source: Photo from my grandparents' house

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Current satellite imagery of the millrace and mill location. Source: www.bing.com/maps – accessed 22/11/2024

SENIOR CATEGORY

Fort Shannon

Joshua Nestor
Tarbert Comprehensive School

Rationale

I have chosen to write about Fort Shannon because it is the only major artillery installation that the government built during World War 2. It is of interest to me as it is situated in my local area, and I have been to visit it on numerous occasions. I am writing about it to raise awareness about the site; I believe more attention should be brought to it and I would like to see the fort fully restored as a military tourist attraction. I find it disappointing that it has been let go into a state of disrepair, despite it being such a unique historical site.

Introduction

Fort Shannon is a small coastal artillery installation situated at Ardmore Point, County Kerry. It is located near Tarbert next to the bank of the River Shannon (See Figure 1). It was built as a precaution in the event of a German or British naval or air attack and was the only large-scale military installation the Irish government constructed during the World War 2 (DeCogan, 2001).

In 1941, it was decided that, in light of the war or 'The Emergency', as it was called, the Examination Service of the Shannon estuary would need artillery support. The Examination Service building was based at Port Cappa on the Clare side of the estuary. Artillery support was required due to the importance to national security of the Examination Service, as it examined the contents of every ship that came through the Shannon Estuary to ensure that there was no contraband on-board. Fort Shannon was their solution to this (Dargan, 2017).

Figure 1 - Location of Fort Shannon (Dargan, 2017)

Background - Irish Military Capability

During this time, the state of Irish defence capability had been described as pathetic. Commentators noted that there was grass growing on the parade ground of the Portobello Barracks as a result of disuse. Due to disbandment under the Anglo-Irish treaty, there was essentially no naval defence. Anti-aircraft defences consisted of four 76mm guns which were delivered in 1928, four Mark-I Bofors and eight searchlights. There were 21 armoured cars, 13 of which were from the years of World War 1, and two tanks, which were Swedish-built Landswerk L60's (DeCogan, 2001)

There were 16 serviceable aircraft in the Irish Air Corps during that time which were later retired at the end of the 1940's. These aircraft consisted of six Avro Ansons, 2 Supermarine Walrus Amphibious planes, three Gloster Gladiators and 5 Westland Lysanders (DeCogan, 2001)

A state of emergency was declared across the country in June 1940 after it was deemed likely that Germany might attempt an invasion of Ireland similar to that which they embarked on in Norway. The Government approved a plan for a regular army of 40,000 volunteers, a figure which was later raised to 56,000 (De Cogan, 2001)

Other measures were taken to further ensure Irish safety such as reaching out to Germany diplomatically. The Irish Government asked the German ambassador for Ireland if, in the event of a British attack, would the Germans provide support to Ireland. Von Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Minister offered to provide help to Ireland to maintain its neutrality in such an event (DeCogan, 2001).

Purpose of Fort Shannon

As World War 2 continued, and as Ireland held onto her neutrality, fears of invasion grew. There was a fear of a potential attack from the United Kingdom for two reasons, firstly as a result of Irish refusal to join the allied forces or in the second instance, to prevent Germany from taking control of Ireland and surrounding Britain. The fear of attack by Germany was also a concern, as it would provide the German Heer (army), Luftwaffe (air force) and Kriegsmarine (navy) with a strategic position from where they could attack Britain on a second front. At the time, both scenarios seemed equally likely (Bilder, 2018). If there was to be an attack from either the German or the British Naval Forces, it was believed that it would most likely be through the Shannon Estuary.

Planning/construction

The estuary was deemed a critical point for any potential attack as it provided a key route to Limerick port and city, and onwards to the interior of the country (Dargan, 2017). Fort Shannon was built as a precaution for such an attack. It was chosen to be built on a five-acre site near Tarbert, Co. Kerry (see Figure 2). Commandant Mick Sugrue came from Fort Carlisle to take command and oversee construction.

The plans proposed included details of the artillery to be deployed. The fort was to be armed with two 6" guns, a machine gun platoon and a searchlight detachment. Three concrete pillboxes were constructed on the raised ground along the perimeter, overlooking the site. These pillboxes provided machine gun cover in the case of an attack (Dargan, 2017).

Figure 2 - Layout Plan of Fort Shannon (DeCogan, 2001)

The site is an oval-like shape in plan. The terrain rises sharply from the estuary and then comes to an approximately level position with a farm-style gateway on the west and east sides. The location for the site where the fort was to be built was carefully chosen. The fort is placed to cover a point downstream where the navigable channel is limited between Scattery Island on the north bank and Carrig Island on the south. In order for any ship to pass between the two islands, it would be forced to present its bow, or front, directly to the fort, allowing it only to engage its forward-facing armament in an attack (Dargan, 2017). It was built by Irish Army engineers and took approximately three months to build, with construction starting in August 1942 (DeCogan, 2001).

Figure 3 - Image of Officers planning for Fort Shannon (DeCogan, 2001)

Gun Emplacements

The most obvious features of Fort Shannon are the two gun emplacements in the centre. Two heavy 6" guns were placed there during the emergency. Both of these emplacements consisted of a gun chamber, behind which was an underground passageway that provided a link to the magazine (Figure 4).

Both of these gun emplacements were protected by concrete walls and a roof (Figure 5). A metal RSJ beam was fitted on the roof which allowed the gun to be manoeuvred into position on the mounting. Topsoil was stripped away during the construction period, and once as the concrete structure was completed, the soil was put back on top of it for camouflage purposes. This also helped to hide the stairs out of the gun chamber to the rear shown in Figure 3.

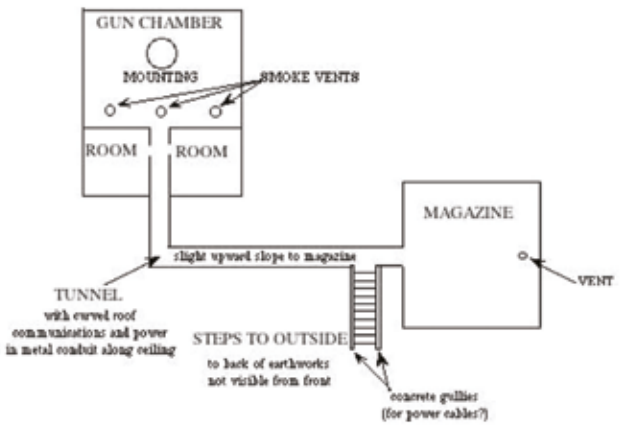

Figure 4 - Gun Chamber and Magazine Plans (DeCogan, 2001)

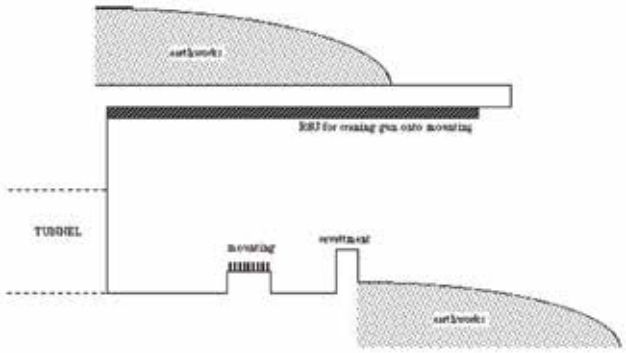

Figure 5 - Elevation of the gun emplacements (DeCogan, 2001)

The Guns

Each gun was a breach loading coastal defence gun. These remained the standard coastal defence weapon of Britain for the duration of the war despite being manufactured by Vickers in the early 20th century (1902-1903). The guns were provided to the Irish Government by the British Army, as it was in their interest to protect Ireland, as they still owned all our ports after the War of Independence. These did not come back into the control of the Irish Government until 1949, after Ireland was officially declared as an independent republic (Dargan, 2017). The personnel manning the guns were given no windows in the concrete box, but a small roof aperture which provided some ventilation.

Operation of the Fort and Personnel Deployment

For the duration of the emergency, Fort Shannon's gunmen and engineers manned their posts, although it is not recorded specifically how many posts were at Fort Shannon. The personnel were only called into action on one occasion when a merchant vessel ran aground near Cappa Island, and they went to rescue those onboard. No lives were lost in the incident. In reality, the only shots fired from Fort Shannon were practice rounds (Dargan, 2017).

The defence capabilities of Fort Shannon were limited though, due to the small stock of ammunition, the slow fire rate of the 6" guns, and the fact that the concrete structures would have been insufficient against heavy bombardment. It was believed that the fort could be easily overcome in any possible assault (Dargan, 2017).

Abandonment of Fort Shannon

In 1946, at the end of the Emergency, Mick Sugrue, the commandant of the fort, evacuated it, and only a small 'skeleton crew' of men remained for a short time afterward. After they left, the fort was allowed go into disrepair (DeCogan, 2001).

The fort itself remains, however all the wooden support structures have since disappeared, as have all guns, weaponry, equipment and ammunition. A restored set of guns, similar to those deployed at Fort Shannon is on display at Fort Mitchell on Spike Island in Cork. A pair of similar guns is on display and kept in working order in Greypoint Fort Museum in County Down (Dargan, 2017). They were test fired and proven to be functional in 2014. The derelict state that Fort Shannon lies in today is a reflection of the failure of those responsible to see to its upkeep. This is made more evident when you compare it to the likes of Fort Dundee, Fort Mitchell, and Greypoint Fort which continue to attract visitors.

Fort Shannon was recently included as part of a location database established by www.screenkerry.ie aimed at attracting filmmakers to the County. Some of the images (Figures 6 and 7) included by Screen Kerry highlight the dilapidated nature of Fort Shannon in the present day.

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Figure 6 - Present day Fort Shannon (Screen Kerry)

Figure 7 - Present day Fort Shannon (Screen Kerry)

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Dennehy, C. (2025): *Kerry Co-Op: The heart of who we are,* Kerry Co-operative Creameries Ltd., Co. Kerry.

Donegan, A. (2024): *Seashells,* author, Listowel.

Doran, P. (2025): *Lady Killers,* author.

Doyle, P. (2025): *No Filter, author,* Co. Kerry.

Dubhshláine, M. Ó (2024): *Bríde Liath: A woman of great fortitude, Ponc* Press, Dingle.

Eastwood, L. (2025): *Scotia - Lost Sister of Tutankhamun,* Electric Publications, Co. Kerry.

Fallon, E. (ed.) (2025): *Local Links – New works by Kerry writers,* KCC, Tralee.

Faoláin, S. Ó (2024): *Meidéa le Eoiripidéas, Coiscéim,* Baile Átha Cliath.

Firtéar, P. (2024): *An Caomhnóir, Uimh. 44: Nuachtlitir Fhondúireacht an Bhlascaoid 2024,* Fondúireacht an Bhlascaoid, Dún Chaoin.

FitzGerald, A. (2025): *Disillusioned Unionist – The papers of Maurice FitzGerald, 18th Knight of Kerry, Volume I,* Kingdom Books, Dublin.

FitzGerald, A. (2025): *Rejected Emancipationist – The papers of Maurice FitzGerald, 18th Knight of Kerry,* **Volume II,** Kingdom Books, Dublin.

Gaughan, J.A. (2023): *More book reviews 1986 – 2023: Reviews of works by distinguished biographers, celebrities, historians, philosophers and writers,* Kingdom Books, Dublin.

Greenfield, L. (2025): *Remembering Johnny "The Rock" O'Brien: The Uncrowned King of Glenflesk,* author, Co. Kerry.

Griffin, M. (2024): *The history of St. Gobnait's Church, Keel 1874 – 2024,* author, Co. Kerry.

Hanniffy, R. (2024): *Invasive alien species pocket guide,* Kerry County Council, Co. Kerry.

Harrington, J. (2023): *Lyreacrompane & District Journal No. 15: 2024,* Lyreacrompane Rural Journal Committee, Co. Kerry.

Hart, E.E, Barry, B. & Dunford, B. (2025): *The Farming for Nature Handbook, A Practical guide to Protecting and Restoring Nature on Your Farm,* Dingle Publishing, Co. Kerry.

Hayes-McCoy, F. (2024): *The bookseller's gift,* Hachette Books Ireland, Dublin.

Hayes-McCoy, F. (2024): *The house on an Irish hillside - a memoir,* Open Road Integrated Media, New York.

Héalaí, P. Ó (2024): *Bréanainn an Naomh, an Cnoc, an Fhilíocht,* Oidhreacht Chorca Dhuibhne, Kerry.

Herridge, A. (2021): *Soul of Skellig,* author, Ireland.

Herridge, A. (2023): *Blasket Soul,* author, Ireland.

Iarlaithe, A. Ó h- (2024): *Dúchas: The Duhallow Historical Journal. Vol.3,* Cló Cnoc na Graí, Cork.

Joyce, M. (2025): *Breaking cover,* author, Ballyheigue, Co. Kerry.

Kennedy, F. (2025): *Ballybunion to the River Kwai,* Gill Books, Dublin.

Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society (2024): *Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society: Series 2, Vol. 24,* KAHS, Co. Kerry.

Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society (2024): *The Kerry Magazine, Issue No.34,* KAHS, Co. Kerry.

Kilflynn Chronicle Committee (2024): *The Kilflynn Chronicle 2024: Issue No. 15 – 30th Anniversary edition,* Kilflynn Chronicle Committee, Kilflynn, Co. Kerry.

Larkin, E. (2024): *Izzy's magical athletic adventure,* Emma Larkin Books, Co. Kerry.

Larkin, E. (2025): *Féile!,* O'Brien Press, Dublin.

Lawlor, D. (2024): *Christmas comeback,* author, Listowel.

Lendennie, J. (2024): *Gabriel Fitzmaurice: The poet and his work,* Salmon Poetry, Clare.

Linnell, S. (2024): *The 2025 Kenmare Chronicle: A week in Kenmare - our town, your pictures 11-18 August 2024,* Dennison Design, Kenmare.

McAuliffe, J. (2024): *National theatre,* Gallery Books, Dublin.

McCauley, B. (2024): *Joyful in my house of prayer: George McAuliffe's Testimony,* author, Co. Kerry.

Meaney, R. (2025): *Moving On,* Hachette Books Ireland, Dublin.

Milner, M. & Smyth, A. (2025): *We've come a long way,* Red Barn Publishing, Cork.

Mooney, M. (2025): *The moon and Beinin,* Revival Press, Limerick.

Moriarty, M. (2025): *Telling Tales Stories from an Irish Country Parish,* author, Co. Kerry.

Murphy, J. (2025): *O'Connell - The last months,* Castleisland Heritage Centre, Castleisland.

O'Connor, J. (2025): *Dingle Days Eggs and Rashers, Hay and Oats,* Garraí Publications, Dingle, Co. Kerry.

O'Connor, T. (2022): *Tom reflects,* author, Kenmare, Co. Kerry.

O'Connor, B. (2025): *Jesus and the Religious Authorities: A Turbulent Relationship Revealed in the Gospels (a basic resource book for students),* author, Co. Kerry.

O'Doherty, T. (2025): *My Therapist… My Bike…,* author, Co. Kerry.

Ó Donnabháin, P. (2024): *Bláthú: Gaelcholáiste Chiarraí 1989 – 2024,* [Gaelcholáiste Chiarraí], Tralee, Co. Chiarraí.

O'Donoghue, Mary. (2025): *Fred Healy 1893-1932 'The One-Eyed Gunner' - A forgotten hero,* Castleisland District Heritage, Co. Kerry.

O'Dowd, Paul (2024): *Final voyage of the Thetis: Immigration & smuggling in the 19th Century,* author, Co. Kerry.

O'Leary, E. (2024): *I'm a big boy now,* Bridge House Publishing, Manchester, UK.

O'Neill, L. (2025): *Riastáil,* Dingle Publishing Services, Dingle.

Ó Sé, Marc. (2025): *A Kerry Family -a Football dynasty,* Gill Books, Dublin

O'Shea, Owen, (2025): *One Man's Ireland: Memoirs of Dan Mulvihill, Maverick Republican,* Merrion Press, Dublin.

O'Shea, J & Crowley, J. (2024): *Athletic Scribblings: A century of Athletics in the Farran fore Maine Valley Area & Beyond,* [author], Co. Kerry.

O'Sullivan, J. (2025): *The Lighthouse Keeper's Wife,* Poolbeg Press Ltd.

Ryan, Louise et al. (2025): *Irish Nurses in the NHS - An Oral History,* Four Courts Press, Dublin

Ryan, N. (2024): *Truly silly,* Troubadour Publishing, Leicestershire, UK.

Scanlan, E. & O'Callaghan, Fr. B. (2025): *Gaelic and free – Memoirs of Pádraig O'Callaghan,* author, Co. Kerry.

Scoil Réalt na Mara (2025): *Cromane: A place we call home,* Scoil Réalt na Mara, Cromane, Co. Kerry.

Sneem Parish News Editorial Board (2024): *Sneem Parish News 2024: 62nd ed.,* Sneem Parish News Editorial Board, Sneem.

Tuosist Parish Committee (2024): *Tuosist Parish Newsletter 2024 No. 31: Nuachtlitir Thuath ó Siosta,* Tuosist Parish Committee, Tuosist, Co. Kerry.

Wall, J. (2025): *Kingdom of kindness – A memoir of the McCarthys of 3 Day Place,* Crescent Publishing, Tralee.

Woodard, K. (2023): *Killarney – The town beside the Lakes,* author, Kerry.

Kerry Archaeological & Historical Society Programme 2025

JANUARY

Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, 21 January
Tralee Library and via Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY

Ross Castle and Life in Ireland during the 15th Century
Tuesday, 4 February
Dan Rael
Tralee Library, 7:00 p.m.

Echoes of War: Legacies of the Civil War in North Kerry
Thursday, 20 February
Dr Richard McElligott, Historian
Via Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

MARCH

An Turas Fada go Trá Banna: Ruairí Mac Easmuinn ar an bóthar ó Aontraim go Ciarraí
Tuesday, 4 March
Pádraig Ó Conchubhair, Past President, KAHS
Tralee Library, 7:00 p.m.

Outing: Daniel O'Connell's Derrynane: Creating an International Stage for a Stateman
Sunday, 23 March
Victoria McCarthy, Conservation Officer, Kerry County Council
Meet at Derrynane House Carpark at 2:00 p.m.

Pilgrimage in Medieval Kerry
Thursday, 27 March
Dr Louise Nugent, Archaeologist
Tralee Library, 7:00 p.m.

APRIL

Outing: Coomsaharn Area
Sunday, 6 April
Aoibheann Lambe
Meet Glenbeigh NS, Ballynakilly Lr,
V93 KD50,
2:30 p.m.

Knocknacuig Excavations
Thursday, 10 April
Dr Michael Connelly, County Archaeologist
Tralee Library, 7:00 p.m.

Outing: Kilmalkedar Area
Sunday, 27 April
Isabel Bennett, Archaeologist
Meet at the new graveyard, Kilmalkedar,
2:30 p.m.

MAY

Outing: Curator's Choice, Kerry Museum
Thursday, 8 May
Helen O'Carroll, Curator
Kerry County Museum, Tralee, 11:30 a.m.

Civil Army War Chaplain: Fr William Ferris's Service with Kerry Command 1922-24
Thursday, 8 May
Brendan McCarthy
Via Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

St Brendan's Mass
Friday, 16 May
St Brendan's Church, Tralee, 9:30 a.m.

JUNE

Outing: Ballyheigue Castle, St James's Graveyard, and Our Lady's Well
Sunday, 15 June
Bryan MacMahon, Historian
Meet at Castle gate, Ballyheigue, 2:00 p.m.

JULY

Outing: Cahirsiveen
Sunday, 13 July
Prof Maurice Bric, Historian
Meet at the Fair Field opposite the Garda Station, Cahirsiveen, 2:30 p.m.

AUGUST

Outing: Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty's Killarney Links
Monday, 4 August
Mons. H. O'Flaherty Killarney Committee
Meet Cathedral Carpark, 2:30 p.m.

Outing: Kilflynn (A Heritage Week Event)
Saturday, 16 August
John Flaherty, Historian & Dr Richard McElligott, Historian
Meet at St Columba's Centre, Kilflynn V92 X272, 2:30 p.m.

SEPTEMBER

Roundtable Discussion on Local History Publications
Thursday, 11 September
John Flaherty, Chair, with Joe Harrington, Lyreacrompane Journal; Jim Finnerty, Ballydonoghue Parish Magazine; Dónal Hickey, Sliabh Luachra Journal and John Downing, Sneem Parish News
Via Zoom, 7:00 p.m.

Award Ceremony: Kerry Young Historian 2025
Wednesday, 24 September
Kerry County Museum, Tralee, 7:00 p.m.

Architecture Kerry 2025
Friday 26-Sunday 28 September

OCTOBER

'…the Tans appeared to have gone mad'. The Crown forces and violence in County Kerry, 1920-21
Thursday, 16 October
T.E. Fitzgerald
Killarney Library, 7:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER

Altóir na Gréine
Thursday, 6 November
Dr. Billy Mag Fhloinn, Archaeologist, Folklorist
SHU Campus, Dingle, 7:00 p.m.

Journal Launch
Thursday, 20 November
Tralee Library, 7:00 p.m.

Annual Social & Heritage Award Presentation
Sunday, 30 November
Rose Hotel, Tralee, 1:00 p.m.
€10 per person

DECEMBER

The salmon fishing industry in the Rivers Feale and Cashen 1844-1964
Thursday, 4 December
Tom Dillon
Tralee Library, 7:00 p.m.

Daniel O'Connell 250 years on
Thursday, 11 December
Prof. Maurice Bric, historian
Killarney Library, 7:00 p.m.

Contributors

TONY BERGIN

Tony Bergin is President of the *Kerry Archaeological & Historical Society* and is editor of the Society's Journal. He lives in Lios Póil, County Kerry and works as writer, historian and heritage tour guide.

ERIN I. BISHOP

Erin I. Bishop obtained her M.A. and Ph.D. in history from University College Dublin. Her doctoral thesis was the first in-depth portrayal of Mary O'Connell, wife of the Liberator, and led to the publication of two books, *'My Darling Danny': Letters from Mary O'Connell to Her Son Daniel, 1830-1832* (1998) and *The World of Mary O'Connell, 1778-1836* (1999).

MUIRIS J. BRIC

Muiris J. Bric is Professor Emeritus of History at University College Dublin. He is a Member of the Royal Irish Academy of which he has also been Vice President. He is Director of the Daniel O'Connell School, which is held annually over the last weekend in August in Cahersiveen/Derrynane.

PADRAIG Ó CONCUBHAIR

Padraig Ó Concubhair is a retired National School Principal from Lenamore Ballylongford. He is a member of both the Clogher and Kerry Archaeological and Historical Societies and is a past president of the latter body.

JOHN GLEESON

John Gleeson is a post-doctoral researcher in the Trinity Centre for Literary and Cultural Translation, Trinity College Dublin. The title of his PhD thesis is 'The Political Influence of Translation in a time of Revolution and War in France: A Microhistory of two Irish translators Nicholas Madgett (1738-1813) and John Sullivan (1767-1802)'. The thesis may be accessed at www.tara.tcd.ie/handle/2262/108153. His principal research interest is translation history.

LUCY GRIFFIN

Lucy Griffin is a student at Presentation Secondary School in Listowel.

FR TOM LOONEY

Fr Tom Looney is a retired priest of Kerry Diocese where he has served since 1969, together with missionary outreach to London and Peru. As former President of KAHS, he continues to research and publish on local history. He is author of *Óglaigh Chill Áirne -1913-1916* (2016), biographies *Dick Fitzgerald - King in a Kingdom of Kings (2008) and Unbeatable - Fr. Tom Jones Handball Supremo* (2025).

PETER LUDDY

Peter Luddy is an Assistant Lecturer at the Cork Centre for Architectural Education — focusing on history, theory, and design. He is also a Research Assistant on UCC's EU-Interreg-funded Bauhaus Goes North project. Peter has presented at Architecture Kerry, and his writing has featured in Gandon Editions and *Architecture Ireland.*

BRYAN MACMAHON

Bryan MacMahon is a retired teacher and a native of Ballyheigue, County Kerry who has published many books and articles on local history. He is a regular contributor to *The Journal of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society* and to *The Kerry Magazine.* His most recent publications are *Faith and Fury: the evangelical campaign in Dingle and West Kerry, 1825-45* (Eastwood, 2021) and *Ballyheigue in Arms: Portrait of a Kerry Parish, 1914-1923,* published in 2023. He has a special interest in the Famine in Kerry and this article is adapted from his book *Calamity and Controversy: The Famine Years in Dingle & West Kerry,* published by Eastwood in 2025. It is a companion to his 2017 book *The Great Famine in Tralee and North Kerry* (Mercier).

TOMMY MARTIN

Tommy Martin is a self-employed Financial, Business Consultant and Trainer, working primarily with Banks, Credit Unions and the Not-for-Profit sector. Tommy holds a Master's degree in Local History from UCC and is a published author and playwright. Tommy is also an Associate Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, and a Commandant in the Army Reserve.

VICTORIA MCCARTHY

Victoria McCarthy is Kerry County Council's Architectural Conservation Officer and curator of Kerry's festival of architecture, Architecture Kerry. Victoria holds a master's degree in town planning and a master's degree in building conservation. A recipient of a scholarship from Research Ireland and the Desmond Guinness award, Victoria is in the final stage of completing her doctorate at the School of Architecture at UCD, where her thesis centres on Kerry's designed historic landscapes, their history, significance, conservation, and management.

MARY MCGILLYCUDDY

Mary McGillycuddy has lived in Kerry for over 40 years. She has an MA in Local History from University of Limerick and a BA in History and Sociology from UCC among her academic qualifications. Mary has a keen interest in Irish history during the early modern period in particular.

JOSHUA NESTOR

Joshua Nestor is a fifth-year student at Tarbert Comprehensive School. He has always had an interest in history from a very young age, and recently in politics and geo-politics as well. He hopes to pursue a career in either a historical field or a political field.

DR PATRICIA O'HARE

Dr Patricia O'Hare has been employed by the Trustees of Muckross House CLG as Research and Education Officer since 1995. She holds post-graduate degrees in Archaeology (MA, UCD) and Museum Studies (MA, Leicester University). Patricia is interested in all aspects of the archaeology, folk life, and social history of County Kerry. The subject of her doctoral thesis (UCD) was the calendar custom of the Wren Boys of County Kerry. Patricia is currently serving as a Board Member of the Heritage Council.

DR OWEN O'SHEA

Dr Owen O'Shea is a historian and the author of several books on history and politics in Kerry, including the acclaimed *No Middle Path: The Civil War in Kerry* (Merrion Press, 2022) and *Ballymacandy: The Story of a Kerry Ambush* (Merrion Press, 2021). His latest book is *From Bullets to Ballots: Politics and Electioneering in Post-Civil War Kerry, 1923-33* (UCD Press).

DR JAMES G. RYAN

Dr James G. Ryan is a writer, lecturer and publisher in Irish genealogy. His publications include *'Irish Records: sources for Irish family and local history'* Ancestry Inc. (1988); *Tracing your Dublin Ancestors* (Flyleaf Press 2009); *Irish Church Records* (Flyleaf 2001); Sources for Irish Family History (Flyleaf Press 2021); *Victims and Criminals in Ireland: 1821-1860* (Flyleaf Press 2022).

FR SEÁN QUINLAN

Fr Seán Quinlan (1920-2001), a native of Killarney, was ordained a priest in Rome in 1944. In 1945 he was a chaplain in the Irish Brigade in Italy and Austria. A spell as teacher in St. Brendan's (1946-55) was followed by a career in higher education, teaching theology and, after biblical studies in Palestine and Rome, Sacred Scripture in America and (1972-91) Maynooth. He retired to Killarney and died in 2001. He left a large body of poems, a selection of which is due to be published in 2026.

CON TRAYNOR

Con Traynor is a farmer in his native Kilgarvan, County Kerry. He is graduate of Limerick Institute of Technology. Con is a council member of the Kerry Archaeological and Historical Society representing Gleanrought and Dunkerron South. He has a lifelong interest in all aspects of social history and in the visual record of South Kerry, its culture and natural environment. He is involved in a number of local publications.

Contributors

The Kerry Magazine is published annually. We welcome short articles, with a maximum of 2,500 words (including endnotes), on topics relating to any aspect of Kerry's rich and diverse heritage. Potential contributors, whether academic or non-academic, are welcome to submit articles for consideration to our editing committee before 31 May each year. Articles should be submitted in Word (.doc, .docx, or .rtf) format. Please do not submit documents in .pdf format. Contributors should also submit appropriate illustrations in .jpg format, along with a brief biographical note (50-60 words) for publication in our Contributors List. Full submission guidelines can be obtained by emailing us at magazine@kerryhistory.ie.

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Kerry Young Historians of the Year 2024

Tony Bergin, KAHS President (L), and Jimmy Deenihan, former KAHS President (R), with Lucy Griffin, the Overall Winner of the Kerry Young Historian of the Year Award 2025

Tony Bergin, KAHS President, with the participants who placed in the Kerry Young Historians of the Year 2024 competition.

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