

# Deel Views

RATHKEALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

*Summer 2002*



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# Editorial

It is regrettable how the relatively new recycling collection centre at the New Line is being misused and abused. This is a first class facility and the County Council are to be commended for relocating it from the former location at the car park. There are receptacles available for the disposal of old clothes, cans of different varieties and bottles. In addition on regular specified occasions the council arranges for the collection of white goods such as old washing machines etc. Most of the abuse centres around this latter arrangement and some people seem to think, despite very explicit regulatory notices, that these white goods can be 'dumped' at any time and in any place. More often than not there is as much outside the roadside as inside the centre. Likewise a lot of what is disposed inside the compound is not suitable for collection and is usually just thrown on the ground.

We as a community would be quick to complain if we did not have a collection or disposal service available to us and those who misuse the service show little respect for themselves or others. We would appeal to all our citizens to use the facility properly and help to keep Rathkeale tidier.

## ***RATHKEALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL RESPONSE PROGRAMME***

Rathkeale Community Council has learned with regret that FAS will cease funding for the Rathkeale Community Response Programme from the 2nd of September 2002.

The programme was established by West Limerick Resources Ltd, in June 2000 in response to a request from FAS & DSCFA, and catered for a group of 12 unemployed traveller women in Rathkeale with the aim of providing them with opportunities for second chance education and development. A majority of the trainees had previously attended the Senior Traveller Training Centre in Rathkeale and all were on the Live Register. The Programme is supported by the Mid-Western Health Board, the DSCFA and Co. Limerick VEC as well as the ADM Local Development Social Inclusion Programme. The group work towards achieving NCVA (Fetac) Certification in Communications, Numeracy and Computer Information at Foundation & Level

1. The programme operates in partnership with the MWHB to deliver elements of the Traveller Primary Health Care programme.

At a meeting on Tuesday July 16th 2002, Donal Griffin, FAS thanked West Limerick Resources Ltd., for their support in administering this programme. He stated that the numbers of Traveller women registered with FAS from the area has greatly declined and that changing strategies in FAS meant that the funding available for this type of training would be subject to different criteria. He went on to say that he had now run for two years and that it was FAS policy to limit training to two years for clients who had previously attended other training centres. Mr. Griffin further stated that he was of the opinion that the Senior Traveller Training Centre had sufficient resources to cater for the group and that they should be encouraged to return to same.

Outlining the company's disappointment at the decision to terminate funding to the Programme Joan Murphy for West Limerick Resources Ltd., stated that the programme had been developed in response to a request from FAS and DSCFA to meet a specific need. It was pointed out that deficits in their formal education resulted in the need for greater flexibility in relation to the length of training programmes for Travellers.

She emphasised that the clients were the company's major concern and a positive outcome might include the development of an alternative programme along the lines of Community Employment with the emphasis on youth & community work might meet the needs of the participants. Stating that he could not guarantee a positive response from FAS Mr. Griffin said that an application would receive their consideration.



# Coffin Ships *and Rathkeale*

Pat Coleman

We tend to associate coffin ships with the famine period. One of the little known facts of Irish History is that in the decade 1831 to 1840 approximately one million people left Ireland. The aftermath of Daniel O'Connell's election unleashed a sectarian backlash that unsettled many Irish Protestants and resulted in them emigrating. Many left for Canada which was still a loyal British colony and some used this route as a stopping off point on their way to America. Nor were all those who left Protestants. The 1830's also saw the initial period of Catholic emigration.

The population of Rathkeale dropped from 4800 to 4200 in the decade. While the cholera epidemic of 1832/33 accounted for some of this loss emigration also accounted for a part of same. Part of the reduction in population was caused by the clearance of Rathkeale Commons in 1836 and we do not know what happened to these people. They would have constituted the poorest and most vulnerable of the populace and most would have been catholic. It appears from later evidence that many made their way to cities such as Liverpool, there to earn money to purchase a ticket to America. Those who left through Limerick for Canada and America included labourers but also what were known at that time as the "middling class". This fact is supported by newspaper reports regarding two ships which made the transatlantic crossing in 1834. They both sank with severe loss of lives and the first of the tragedies was reported in the Limerick Star and Evening Post of June 10th 1834. This indicated that there were only three survivors of the 240 aboard. These were listed as members of the crew and were named as Dr. O'Sullivan of Rathkeale (ships surgeon), H. Henderson (mate) and George Fanning (ships carpenter).

A further report in the paper of the same date contains a list of those on board and this gives Dr. O'Sullivan as one of the passengers. Presumably he was acting as surgeon as a means of paying his passage. The list of names adds up to 224 and the breakdown was; 13 crew, 104 male adults, 75 female adults, 13 children aged over 7 and under 9, and 19 children under 7. On board also were 59 Limerick labourers and 18 farmers. At least two of the names are distinctive and may have had West Limerick origins viz. Leos of whom there were six and Lowes. The paper stated that Mrs. Lowes had her five children with her and was going to join her husband in Canada. It suggests that the Lowes were from rural

Limerick and Mrs. Lowes was a sister of a Mr Seward of Georges St. (now O'Connell St.)

The edition of the same paper of June 20th 1834 contains a letter from Dr. O'Sullivan dated May 10th of that year, written from Charlotte's Town, Prince Edward Island. I quote the letter in full, however the report does inform us that the doctor's first name was Jerome. The earlier report had stated that his late father had also been a doctor and had practised in Rathkeale. Tragically the ship had reached the Canadian coastline and given the numbers on board, it is evident there were far too few lifeboats. However, as will appear from the letter, it is possible that because the shipwreck occurred so close to the shore that lifeboats would likely have been smashed against the cliffs anyway. The later letter promised by the doctor does not appear to have reached the newspapers.

"I suppose you have seen by the papers the melancholy announcement of the loss of the barque Astrea with all on board, with the exception of three, the carpenters seaman and myself. I will not detain you by detailing the horrors of a shipwreck, suffice to say, we stuck against a rock at two o'clock on Thursday morning, May 8th and were dashed to pieces in less than twenty minutes. The boy came down to the cabin and shouted out "there is land ahead". The Captain and I immediately jumped up on deck, half dressed and were not there ten minutes when she struck. The captain at once ordered the boat to be lowered and I was one of the first to jump into it. The people on board made towards the boat with the same determination as I had done. One perceiving this I left and got on deck again, foreseeing that so many could not get into the boat without it being in danger of sinking. I was scarcely on deck when the small boat was shattered to pieces and the vessel was thrown onto her beam end. I then got my arms around the wheel and clung onto it, determined to remain there until she struck or went down. I was dreadfully washed by the breakers as the sea was rolling over the entire ship. I now left the wheel and got onto the ship's side and was scarcely there when the wheel was torn off and dashed overboard on the other side. I then realised that the ship was irrevocably lost and I was determined to save my life if I possibly could. I plunged off the wreck without further hesitation and endeavoured to swim to the opposite rock which I could discover pretty clearly from the foam of the breakers which dashed against it with fury. I gained

the cliff unhurt when a beam of timber (torn from the ship) struck me on the back and drove me down the current about forty yards in the opposite direction. The returning wave brought me back again and threw me on the rock on hands and knees. The timber drifted me off again and dashed me against another rock. I was held under the timber and partly under the water for about fifteen minutes when the beam stuck in a nook of the rock and remained stationary, by which means I was able to disengage myself from it and finally, after many exertions, attained the cliff in a state of extreme exhaustion. I suffered so much then from cold that I was going to precipitate myself again into the sea and drown myself, but God in his infinite mercy ordered otherwise. The two men who were also preserved from the wreck picked me up in the morning and brought me to a house which we found after two hours walking, near a mile from the place of being wrecked. The woman of the house behaved very kind to me, gave us some hot tea, put me to bed and applied hot irons to my feet and brought me to by degrees. I was next day conveyed to the house of a Mr. McAlpine where I was kindly treated and subsequently brought to Captain Nesby, of The Britannia and to Charlottes Town (my present abode) where the physicians supplied me with money and clothes. I am hardly able to hold a pen now I am so weak. I am cut, hacked and bruised all over and am afraid you will not be able to read a word of this or make anything of it, as I really do not know what I am saying. I should not have attempted to write at all but to still your fears by letting you know that I am still alive. You shall have a long letter from me with a full description of the wreck as soon as I am able to hold a pen with ease.

Ever yours, Jerome R. O'Sullivan,"

No sooner had this tragedy been reported in the Limerick papers than news of a fresh disaster emerged. On June 27th 1834 the Limerick Star and Evening Reporter carried details of the sinking of the "James". Details of this tragedy give differing dates for the departure of the ship from Limerick. The dates given were the 8th and 11th April. According to reports "Several of the passengers had been well to do in Ireland and had with them a large quantity of gold, being in most part from Rathkeale and it's neighbourhood" The "James" is described as being 58 years old and as stated in the paper "It has been the custom of owners of English vessels to barter with the lives of our enterprising countrymen, by converting these crazy hulks, which from age they find unfit for any other service, to the conveyance of emigrants of every age and sex over a lengthened and perilous voyage." It is also evident from the report that the Government had just appointed an Emigration Officer to Limerick Port. Again aboard the Astrea there were not enough lifeboats but on this occasion according to the Captain there were three. However as he suggests the passengers refused to board the boats one won-

ders if they were seaworthy. A further point of concern regarding the James is that two of those who survived the sinking do not appear in the passenger or crew lists. These were Robert S. Laidler (described as brother of the Captain) and James Sheahan. The inclusion of these names among the survivors suggests that the ship may have been taking a number of other unregistered passengers. Indeed overloading may have been one of the causes of the accident.

The first account we have of the sinking of the "James" is from The Quebec Exchange of 22nd May and reprinted in the local paper in Limerick on June 27th 1834.

Loss of the "James": The "James" Captain Laidler sailed from Limerick for Quebec in ballast on 8th April. It was consigned to Mr. Thomas Curry with 230 passengers and experienced rough weather with variable winds until the 27th when it commenced blowing a tremendous gale at N.W. About noon the vessel was struck by a heavy sea which broke right over her, took away everything that was not lashed to the decks, a mast off the ice bulwarks and top gallant quarter boards and threw the ship nearly on her beam ends. After which, perceiving her to be taking considerable water, set the pumps on - found them clogged - hoisted them up, put baskets on the ends and put them down again. The suction of the pumps or rubbing against the floor timbers, injured the bottom of the baskets and the pumps clogged again. This was repeated eight or ten times with similarly success. Then removed some of the casks forward and got some of the passengers to assist the crew to bale, in doing which several of them got injured from the rolling of the casks and they left off working when the water of course increased. Tried the pumps by hoisting them a foot higher but still they clogged and further was useless. At this point (5p.m.) there were eight to nine feet of water in the hold and the ship lurching on her beam ends--found it impossible to save her. Shortly after this a vessel hove in sight to the northward, standing towards the "James". Endeavoured to bear down on her but found the ship would not answer her helm, having so much water in her. Continued towards her in the best way we could until 7p.m. when Captain Laidler thought it best, as night was approaching, and no possibility of saving the ship, to take to the Jolly boat and proceed to the vessel bearing towards them. This proved to be the "Margaret" with Captain Wake of Newcastle, Previous to leaving the "James" Captain Laidler exhorted the passengers to assist the crew in getting the boats out but their answer was that the sea is rough, we are sure to be drowned and may as well die on board as in the boats. Capt. Laidler told them that he intended to take a small boat and that their chances would be much better in the large ones.

He got on board the "Margaret" about 8p.m and Capt. Wake immediately hoisted a light and stood towards the "James's" as near as the wind would admit it, still blow-

ing very hard. The "James" crew, nine of whom were on board, including the first and second mate, never answered the light, although she was not more than two miles distant and visible to the Margaret's crew until half past eight. Capt. Wake steered all night as near as possible in the direction of the sinking ship but the light was not answered and nothing was afterwards seen of the "James" or her boats.

The wreck occurred to the east of the banks of Newfoundland and the above account would appear to be that of Captain Laidler. Despite what he reports of the attitude of his passengers to putting to sea in the remaining boats, the Star and Evening Post of July 1st. 1834 contained a letter from Laidler dated June 4th and addressed from "Outboard". "The Mountaineer of the Brandy Pots" which states that they the long boat and skiff on board. These boats interestingly would have accommodated 80 people. I am unaware of any other passengers from the "James" being rescued. One other comment of note in Laidler's Letter is that Capt. Wake transferred those he rescued as soon as possible to another ship, the "Nancy" of North Shields, The reason given for this action was.... "Capt. Wake had not enough water for us all." One wonders given the precarious circumstances Capt. Wake found himself in, how extensive was the rescue attempt that he conducted. One feels at least that he behaved honourably.

The town or community that experienced the greatest loss in the sinking of the "James" was Golden, Co. Tipperary. In all I calculated that 54 of those listed came from that area and only one from there is listed among the 11 survivors, Edward Curry or Cody. The breakdown of those who died was 24 adult male, 1 boy, 19 adult female, and 9 girls. West Limerick also was to endure much suffering and as will be noted from the list of names many of those lost were of Palatine stock:

Thomas Hayes, Labourer, Castletown  
 John Cliffe, farmer, Pallaskenry.  
 William Supple, farmer, Pallaskenry  
 Hugh Delmege, farmer, Rathkeale  
 Henry Stark (son), farmer, Rathkeale  
 William Ruckle, farmer, Croagh  
 John Ruddle, farmer, Croagh  
 Pat Shaughnessy, butcher, Rathkeale  
 Andrew Neville, Cappagh  
 John Leahy, Shanagolden  
 Michael Allen, Foynes Island  
 James Dondon, Croagh  
 John Meagher, farmer, Stonehall  
 James McDonald, farmer, Castletown Waller  
 Pat Reddan, farmer, Rathkeale  
 Thos. Fitzgerald, farmer, Croom  
 James Kennedy, farmer, Croom  
 Daniel Hedderman, farmer, Croom  
 Pat Rourke, farmer, Kildimo  
 Patk, Cliffe, farmer, Kilbreedy

William Stark, farmer Rathkeale  
 John Morgan, farmer, Castletown  
 Pat Cliffe, farmer, Pallaskenry.  
 Thomas Cliffe, farmer, Pallaskenry  
 John Delmege, farmer, Rathkeale  
 Henry Stark, farmer, Rathkeale  
 Peter Lawes, farmer, Rathkeale  
 Andrew Younge, farmer, Croagh (survivor)  
 Michael Shaughnessy, farmer, Ardagh  
 James Shaughnessy, butcher, Rathkeale  
 John Donovan, Oldtown  
 David Kennedy, Shanagolden  
 Henry Morgan, Castletown  
 John Halpin, farmer, Ardagh  
 Edmond Moloney, farmer, Stonehall  
 Jas. McMahan, farmer, Ballysteen  
 George Culhane, farmer, Donoman  
 Pat Blake, farmer, Croom  
 Patk. Moloney, farmer Oldtown  
 Michael Hickey, farmer, Kildimo  
 Henry Cliffe, farmer, Kilbreedy  
 Joseph Delmege, farmer, Rathkeale  
 Bryan Donovan, farmer, Oldtown  
 Daniel Hedderman, farmer, Croom.

#### Boys:

Sean Delmege, Rathkeale  
 Pat Leahy, Shanagolden  
 Thomas Morgan, Castletown  
 Richard Morgan, Castletown.  
 Michael Morgan, Castletown  
 Samuel Hedderman, Croom  
 John Fitzgerald, Adare

#### Female Adults:

Eliza Cliffe, Thomastown  
 Barbara Delmege, Rathkeale  
 Fanny Delmege, Rathkeale  
 Charlotte Delmege, Rathkeale  
 Eliza Stark, Rathkeale  
 Catherine Laws, Rathkeale  
 Eliza Ruddle, Croagh,  
 Mary Young, Croagh  
 Honora Daly, Croagh  
 Nancy Donovan, Oldtown  
 Johanna Leahy, Shanagolden  
 Elinor Kennelly, Shanagolden  
 Catherine Morgan, Shanagolden  
 Ann Dundon, Croagh  
 Norry Creed, Croagh  
 Bridget McDonnell, Castletown  
 Catherine Walsh, Stonehall  
 Mary Hastings, Castletown  
 Johanna Blake, Croom  
 Mary Bennett, Oldtown  
 Mary Connor, Oldtown  
 Johanna Hedderman, Croom

Judy Carroll, Castletown  
 Catherine Upton, Ardagh  
 Bridget Halpin, Ardagh,  
 Mary Nash, Pallaskenry  
 Margt. Stanley, Ballinacarriga  
 Mary Fitzgerald, Adare  
 Mary Costelloe, Adare  
 Nelly McCarthy, Kildimo  
 Bridget Rahilly, Castletown  
 Catherine Rahilly, Castletown  
 Catherine Regan, Rathkeale  
 Mary Regan, Rathkeale  
 Nancy McDonnell, Adare  
 Ellen Cliffe, Kilbreedy  
 Catherine Delmege, Rathkeale  
 Margt. Delmege, Rathkeale  
 Mary Mulcahy, Rathkeale  
 Ellen Hedderman, Croom,  
 Mary Cliffe, Kilbreedy  
 Eliza Cliffe, Kilbreedy  
 Eliza Delmege, Rathkeale  
 Kitty Donovan, Oldtown  
 Norry Donovan, Shanagolden

I wish to add a few lines about the lists. Invariably they cannot be treated as wholly accurate; for instance all the adult women on board are listed as spinsters. An examination of the male, female and children lists would indicate that the ship had to include a number of family units. Take those of the name Cliffe, for example. On the passenger list, six adult males are mentioned, one adult female and three girls. The geographic breakdown

of this group is five Kilbreedy, four Pallaskenry and one Thomastown and a number of anomalies are thrown up. Three are girls of under 14 years; The one adult female is from Thomastown and a townland of that name exists in the Kilfinnane area. However she, Eliza Cliffe is also listed at the fore of a larger group from the Rathkeale/West Limerick Palatine Community. It may be that she was allocated to the wrong locality in the list. It is unlikely, given the moral climate of the age, that three young girls would have travelled under the guardianship of their father, unless he was a widower. Furthermore, while we are aware that three girls were under 14 years, only boys under 7 years were listed, though we know that the ship carried another eighteen boys aged between 7 and 14, who are included in the adult list. We find three Cliffes, all from Kilbreedy, among this adult group. Though the method is questionable these figures lend credence to the possibility that those of the name Cliffe included one family unit (Father, Mother, 3 older boys, 3 younger sisters and 2 older males, either older sons or brothers/cousins of the father).

Inevitably the loss suffered by the Cliffe family, the Morgans of Oldtown and the Delmege family of Rathkeale, among others was enormous.

*P.S. In my previous article on "The Pubs of Rathkeale" I attributed a story about members of the Carey family to John Griffin and Margaret Reddan. The latter has pointed to me that there were significant differences in the story which she related and that of John Griffins. I accept this to be the case and I apologise for any embarrassment caused.*

## Abrahams Golfing Society

Officers of the Society for 2002 are  
 President . . . . . Pauline Noonan  
 Captain . . . . . Declan Mooney  
 Vice Captain . . . . . Gerry O'Connell  
 Secretary . . . . . John O'Connor  
 Treasurer . . . . . Pa Wilmott/Phil Supple  
 Committee: . . . . . Mary O'Sullivan, Monnie Wilmott, Dan Donovan

Results of outings to date:

### SHANNON GOLF CLUB, APRIL

Gents:	Ladies
1 Tom Keating	1 Nora Dwane
2 Tadgh O'Connor	2 Phil O'Connor
3 Denis O'Dea	3 Eileen Noonan
4 Terry Cordon	4 Emer Newell
5 Liam Woulfe	
6 Maurice Noonan	

### NEWCASTLE WEST GOLF CLUB, MAY

Gents	Ladies
1 Neilly Duggan	1 Phil Ruttle
2 Joe Dunleavy	2 Mary O'Sullivan B/G
3 Pat Neville	3 Elizabeth Keating

The Vice Captains (Gerry O'Connell) Prize won by Dan Donovan

### BALLYKISTEEN GOLF CLUB, JUNE

Gents	Ladies
1 Sean Harnett	1 Eileen Noonan
2 Declan Mooney	2 Eithne Neville
3 Con Naughton	3 Pat O'Kelly
4 Michael White	

### ADARE MANOR GOLF CLUB, JULY

Presidents (Pauline Noonan) Prize - Winner: Joe Roe

Gents	Ladies
1 Declan Mooney	1 Breda Keating
2 Sean Harnett	2 Irene Donovan
3 Dave Malone	3 Phil Ruttle
4 Maurice Noonan	4 Pat O'Kelly

**Next outing will be for the Captains Prize at Charleville Golf Club on Monday August 5th.**

# From the Journal of the Irish Palatine Association

In this the eleventh edition of our annual Journal we are making a departure from tradition. Our earlier editions covered the last completed calendar year, but appeared so late in the year that much of the material appeared to be very much 'out of date.' To try and remedy that we are dating this year 2000/2001 and publishing rather earlier in the year.

The Journal has two purposes. One is to place on record material of historic interest. This includes personal and family profiles, articles on the Palatinate and Palatine settlements, reports of family reunions and other relevant gatherings, and transcriptions of documents that are not always easy to locate otherwise. In this respect we hope that our publication, small though it is will make a contribution to the growing archive of Palatine history.

The second purpose is to maintain contact with all of our members. It may help you to know what we are doing, and we hope that it will encourage you to write to the Association. Material does not come to the Editor in a steady flow. There are times when we are short of material to put into our pages. There are other times, not quite so frequent, when we have more material than we can publish in one edition. If your article does not appear in the next issue, please be patient with us; you have probably hit on one of the latter times!

**Irish Palatine Heritage Centre** - This is our major enterprise. We are very grateful for the financial assistance which we have received from the Limerick County Council in the past two years, without which we would have been unable to maintain the Museum. Museums do not pay their own way, but they are a very important part of our heritage, and help to attract visitors to a district. Ours has a unique contribution to make in preserving the Palatine record. Please feel that we value your membership subscription as a means to achieving this, and of interesting people who would otherwise have known nothing of the Palatine story.

The year 2001 has been difficult. In Europe the early part of it was dominated by the Foot and Mouth disease epidemic in England. Very few cases were reported in Ireland, but the travel restrictions imposed to keep it from spreading through farms here had their effect on numbers of visitors. The downturn in the US Economy had its repercussions here too. Then in September the World was shocked by the attacks in New York and Washington. In Ireland September 17th was a national

Day of Mourning, as people expressed sympathy with the victims, and prayed for them and their families. Church services were held throughout the country, many of them ecumenical. One was held in Embury and Heck Memorial Methodist Church in Ballingrane, which has historic links with New York.

**Library** - The library is still quite small, but contains a number of important works on Palatine history, and some substantial family trees. Of particular value are major volumes on the Shier/Shire, Sparling, Switzer and Teskey families, produced by Wesley Switzer, Royal Spier and Ken McDonald. The indices for these works contain not only the names of thousands of people who belonged to these families, but also of many from other Irish Palatine families with whom they intermarried.

Last year we undertook the microfilming of the Bovenizer, Miller and Southwell Papers. We had some enquiries from members who hoped that these would be of help in family genealogical work. In fact the papers relate to legal and other concerns of the families. As such they help us to understand their way of live, and the relationships between the families and between landlord and tenant. Their genealogical interest is minimal.

**Future Plans** - Ken McDonald has very kindly offered to lead the organisation of a tour of the Plaiz in 2004. This will be open to all members of the Association. Ken would be pleased to hear from anyone who can offer assistance.

In 2009 we would hope to mark the Tercentenary of the Palatine migration from Germany to Ireland. No plans have yet been made, but one person has suggested a tour following the known route from the Plaiz, down the Rhine to Rotterdam, across to London, and then via Chester and Dublin to the new homelands in Ireland.

**Staff** - Our small committee continues to work hard to ensure that the objectives of the Association are fulfilled as much as possible. For work in the museum and library, for maintenance work, and for the wide variety of other things that need to be done we rely on a number of mostly voluntary workers. To all of these we express our warm gratitude.

## Museum Opening Times for 2002 Season

May 1st. to September 30th.  
Tuesday to Friday 10a.m. to 5p.m.  
Sundays and Bank Holidays 2-5 p.m.  
Closed for Lunch: 1-2p.m.  
Other times by prior appointment.  
Tel./Fax. +353(0)6963511  
[www.erin.ie/pa](http://www.erin.ie/pa)  
email: [ipass@eircom.net](mailto:ipass@eircom.net)

## *A Bad Bird*

I was flying into the town last Tuesday when the row started. I always fly there on a Tuesday to collect some food. There's a little girl in the house near Brady's Garage and she keeps a board that she calls a bird table and puts food out on it. I once looked in the window of the little girl's house and they had a table of their own, too, inside with food on it. I suppose they call it a human table. This girl is really fond of me. She really spoils me. I often say for a joke that I have a bird in the town. But she's not really a bird. She's a human being. How they can get around without wings is beyond me, and not a feather to keep them warm. It's sad to see creatures like human beings born without the advantages that we birds have. Did you ever see such clumsy things? My wife laughs every time she sees one. Still, to cut a long tail short, as the fox said to the rooster, this is what happened last Tuesday.

Mick Magpie gave me the warning first. He's the one they wrote the rhyme about:

One for sorrow  
Two for joy  
Three for a girl  
Four for a boy.

"I don't want to put you off," he said, "but I wouldn't go near that town."

"Mick," said I, "I must wing my way. I have to bring home the food for the dinner."

"There's a hawk escaped from Fowl Mere Jail" said he. "He's wanted for a murder at Robinstown and robbery at Drumcrow. He's injured a guardbird (that's what we call the women police) and spread malicious rumours about Cyril Cuckoo. He's a foul fowl and they say he's hiding out in the town."

"I'd prefer to face him than to face my wife if I go home without the groceries," said I.

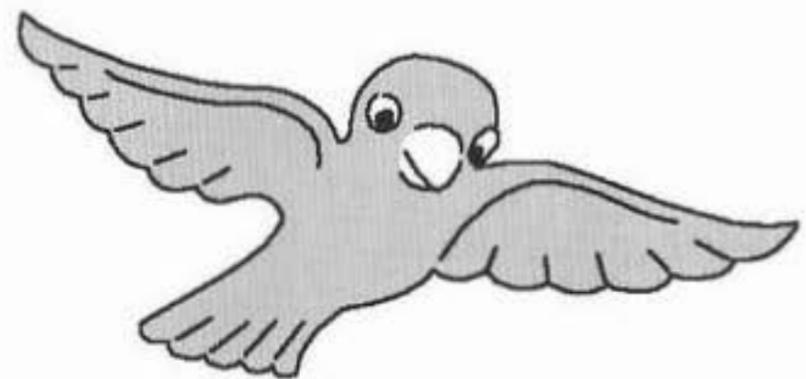
I resumed my flight into the town, but the air was thick with birds flying out rather than in. There were crowds of town birds, sparrows and tits and the like, racing out into the country. It was like a Sunday afternoon with all the traffic. Most of them ignorant about flight paths and kept flying across my track. As I said before, we have so many advantages over human beings and we don't have to travel on roads, so this ignorant flying made me cross. There's also a

bit of a housing shortage out in the country and it made me nervous to see so many birds. To buy a sound, airy, well constructed nest, with a nice view and away from factory fumes, costs a great deal nowadays and I didn't want this lot occupying valuable housing accommodation.

When I reached the town there was an ominous silence. "No bird sang," as that human chap wrote. Cats were conspicuous by their absence. The bird table had not been touched. I settled down to have a little snack before bringing home the rest of the food. From where I stood, I could see the little girl inside watching the television. Can you guess what she was watching? A bird programme! And me a real bird just outside the window! It just shows you how artificial is the life they lead. I could also see reflections in the window I was looking through.

Were you ever looking in a mirror when you saw something coming up behind you? Well, that's what happened then. An ugly monster with sharp, unnatural feet was flying down at me. Action station! No panic! No excitement! Just as the hawk bore down at me with a thunder of wings, I stepped neatly sideways and he crashed straight on through the window and landed unconscious in front of the television set. The little girl gave a scream and the killer hawk lay still. His days of crime had ended. No longer would he terrify the community.

I flew home with the food and was the wife delighted to see me. You never heard such cooing in all your life!



# FROM "WEEKLY OBSERVER" 1916

A continuation of a series by Mr. William Hayes

The old '48 historic town was the stronghold for the great leader of the Young Ireland Party, Mr. William Smith O'Brien, who was beloved by his faithful followers. The following leading townsmen were conspicuous then: Dr. O'Hanlon, father of the Dr. O'Hanlon who had to leave his native town to avoid arrest, Martin O'Dea slater and contractor, John Quilty contractor, Thos McNamara solicitor, who was taken prisoner and taken by a troop of horse to Limerick Gaol. Mr. O'Dea and his brother in law had to leave their homes to avoid arrest. Also to be mentioned were Mr. James Hayes, cooper, Pat McHugh of Well Lane, Pat Hayes and Mr. Mitchell, slater. Important meetings were held in the Temperance Hall and often addressed by Thomas Meagher and William Smith O'Brien. The great leader Daniel O'Connell died in 1947 and the old people used to say he died of a broken heart as a result of the division of the Irish people when the party split. He was a wise man and did all in his power for Ireland fighting it's battles with little help in those penal days of persecution. He was opposed to the building of workhouses all over the country as he said that those inside would be better off than those outside. Surely he did not mean those inmates who suffered so badly in the famine years of starvation.

The Temperance Society had a splendid Brass and Reed band with all kinds of instruments and the leading young men of the town were members. They wore uniforms with brass helmets. The late Mr. Brian McMahon used to play "Jingling Johnny" a comical kind of instrumental with lots of bells. The band was highly thought of by people of both city and country. Important meetings were also held in Cahermoyle House, the residence of William Smith O'Brien. Unfortunately it was the wrong time for a rising. During the famine years when the crops failed, it was related by the older people how the Sultan of Turkey sent £20,000 towards the poor peoples relief fund but because of some law of the government £15,000 had to be returned.

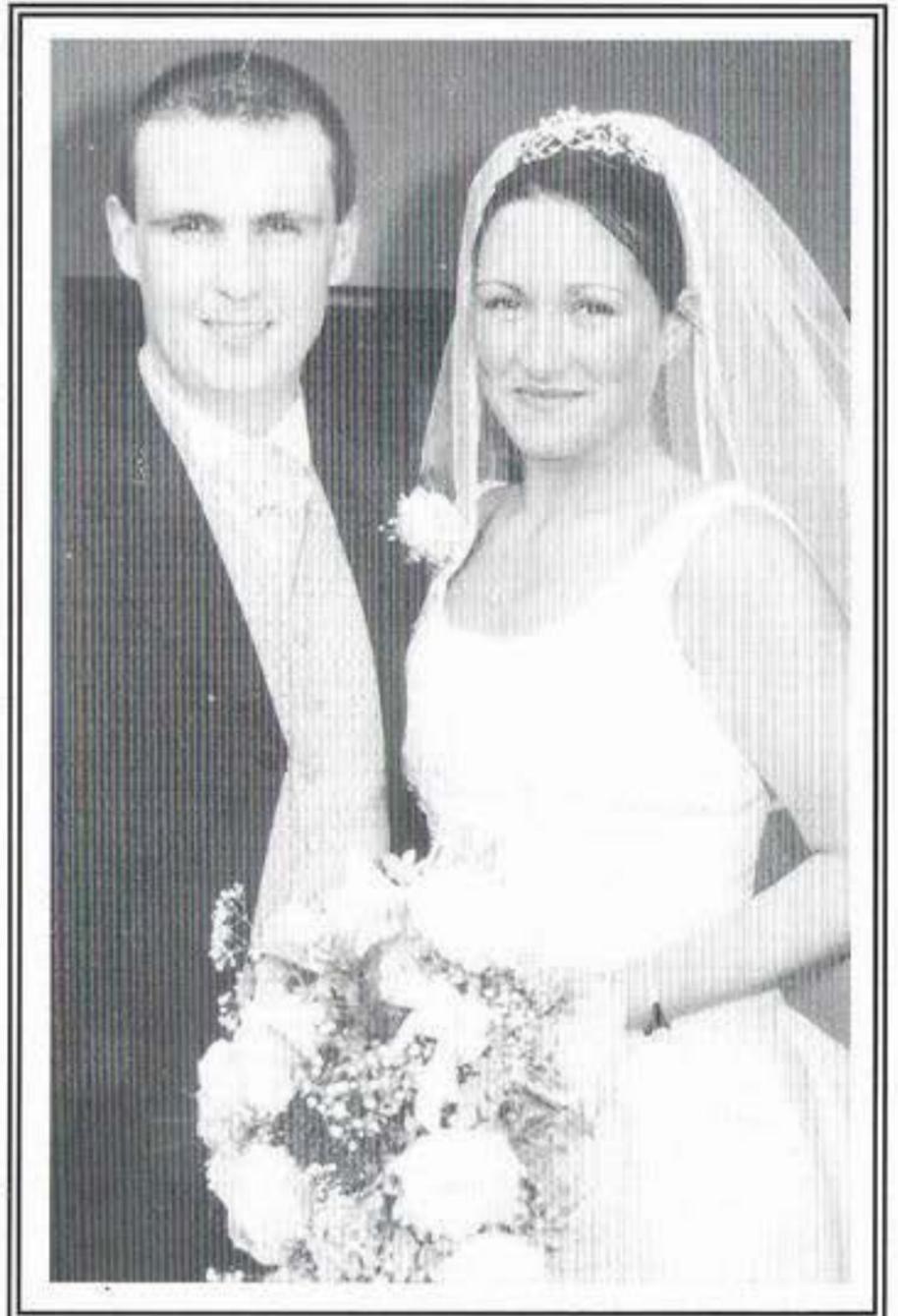
The Young Ireland leaders were eloquent and well educated. Mr. Dillon, father of the present M.P., John Martin and John Mitchell. The great William Smith O'Brien used to invite people to his home at Cahermoyle where they were hospitably entertained. He was arrested and transported to Van Diemens Land where he was incarcerated for longer than any other prisoner. John O'Shaughnessy and John Hassett of Newbridge thought innocent, were transported for a political offence and they described the sufferings of

O'Brien. His sword and dress can be seen at Cahermoyle. I hope when the centenary of the '48 movement expires that Nationalists will assemble in their thousands and honour the remains of this noble patriot at Rathgonan, Ardagh. He was true to the heroes of the rebellion

**"He never was behind time  
The brave Smith O'Brien  
Faithful and true  
Like the great Brian Boru"**

The nationalists of the district should erect a stone over the grave of such a patriot who made such a sacrifice for his country when he was on the eve of being pensioned off after twenty years service.

Mr John O'Shaughnessy had to flee his home at Ballyanne, Newbridge to avoid arrest and spent one snowy night under a tombstone in Nantinan Graveyard.



*Susan Collins & Kieran Cunningham, both of Rathkeale who were married recently.*

## **Extract from a Lecture to Rathkeale Historical Society**

### **MGR. O'RIORDAN, BISHOP O'DWYER AND THE SHAPING OF NEW RELATIONS BETWEEN NATIONALIST IRELAND AND THE VATICAN DURING WORLD WAR ONE.**

*Jérôme aan de WIEL  
(Glenstal Abbey, Co. Limerick)*

#### **1) Introduction: home rule, the war and the Vatican.**

*When the First world War broke out, the Nationalist Party, headed by John Redmond, pledged its full support to the war effort in Ireland. although the country was not yet granted Home Rule officially. Redmond saw the conflict as a way to show Ireland's nationhood and deemed that the British Empire was fighting for the rights of small nations. Initially, the Irish Catholic Church largely supported the Party's endeavours in the war effort and did not hear Pope Benedict XV's peace appeals.*

*However, among a certain number of ecclesiastics who decided to show their ultramontane tendencies or who were not satisfied with Redmond's war policy, two men, both from the diocese of Limerick, distinguished themselves: Bishop Edward O'Dwyer and Mgr. Michael O'Riordan, rector of the Irish College in Rome. Both men would be responsible for a tangible rapprochement between a new nationalist Ireland and the Vatican.*

*O'Dwyer had earned himself the nickname of >Landlord Bishop< by the angry Catholic and nationalist people when he approved Pope Leo XIII's decision to condemn the Plan of Campaign in 1887 during the Land War. The conflict in Europe completely changed the Irish people's minds about O'Dwyer. He did not approve the British Cabinet's decision to defer the implementation of Home Rule and also feared that the country might be partitioned. Furthermore, the Bishop of Limerick had ultramontane tendencies and contrary to the vast majority of the Irish clergy, he did hear Benedict XV's peace appeal in his first encyclical called *Ad Beatissimi*. made public on the 1st November 1914. O'Dwyer promptly decided to denounce the war at every possible opportunity. In fact, his fervent antimilitarism and ultramontanism placed him in direct and public opposition to John Redmond and his party and, as the war dragged on and nationalist Ireland's aspirations were more and more frustrated, he became the country's most popular ecclesiastic.*

*In Rome, the rector of the Irish College, Mgr. Michael O'Riordan, agreed with O'Dwyer. Like the bishop, he*

*deplored the Nationalist Party's lack of independent policies towards the British Government and did not believe that Home Rule was secure. Therefore, he regretted Redmond's haste to support the war effort in Ireland. According to Fr. John Hagan, the nationalist-minded vice-rector of the college, O'Riordan had come to Rome without political intentions but was forced to change his mind because of the English colony residing in the city and who were not in favour of Home Rule and nationalist Ireland (1) Also, O'Riordan wished that the Irish Catholic Church in Rome be represented by Irish prelates and not by English ones like Cardinals Francis Bourne of Westminster and Aidan Gasquet, an English Benedictine monk residing in Rome. He also knew that the Vatican did not regard Ireland as being important from an ecclesiastical point of view (2), and that certain Italian newspapers, such as the *Corriere d'Italia*, influenced by English Conservative politicians, misrepresented Irish politics and history (3) The rector, therefore, set out to defend the distance Irish nationality and opted for a separatist policy in order to show the Pope and the Roman Curia that Ireland, like Great Britain, was a nation and that she had her own Church which did not depend on Westminster for decision-making or other ecclesiastical affairs.*

*Unlike Bishop O'Dwyer, O'Riordan had a more cautious approach to ultramontanism. He, too, could remember the days of Leo XIII's intervention in the Plan of Campaign which had been due to diplomatic negotiations between the Holy See and Britain. When the conflict started, his fears were that the English Government might, yet again, use the Vatican in order to control Irish nationalism. Although his reaction was understandable and justified, he could not have known that the First World War had created a diplomatic climate favourable to nationalist Ireland. It would seem that the Holy See, despite its policy of strict neutrality, was discreetly favouring Germany and her allies. Before the war, the Vatican was on the brink of bankruptcy and from the end of 1914, it benefited from German financial aid until at least 1917. The financial transactions took place through*

Swiss banks. Benedict XV and his Cardinal Secretary of State, Pietro Gasparri, knew about those transactions. Also, the Vatican found out in December, 1915, if not before, that it had been excluded from the future peace conference in a secret treaty signed in March 1915 between Italy and Britain (4) Under those circumstances, one could not expect the Vatican to favour British diplomacy and policies in Rome or Ireland... Benedict XV was not Leo XIII and O'Riordan would successfully confront the British in Rome. In doing so, one of the rector's main achievements was to forge a strong relationship between the ultramontane O'Dwyer and the Vatican.

## 2) British influence at Rome and O'Riordan

O'Riordan's fears became a reality when Sir Henry Howard was appointed head of a British Mission to the Vatican in November 1914: the new Special Envoy would explain Britain's attitude towards the war and very likely towards its own small dependent nation, Ireland. It would appear that the sending of this mission to Rome was Cardinal Aidan Gasquet's brainchild. He was an ardent English patriot who had defended the behaviour of British soldiers during the Boer War in South Africa (5) and he was not in favour of Irish nationalism and had served clashes with O'Riordan and notably Hagan, in 1914, to whom he denied having told the Vatican that Home Rule was against the interests of the Irish Catholic Church (6). The English cardinal believed that the Italian Church generally supported Germany and was influenced by the activities of the Bavarian and Austrian ministers. He complained about this state of affairs to John Redmond (7) who in turn privately helped the setting up of the Mission (8).

Sir Henry Howard's arrival in Rome worried a few independent nationalist. Mgr. Curran, secretary to Archbishop Walsh and later vice-rector of the Irish College, wrote to Hagan : 'So you have got a Minister Plenipotentiary, what Leo spent a life time trying to achieve {...} It looks very like as if the year that was to have seen Home Rule for Ireland will see Rome Rule with sauce á l'Anglaise' (9)

## 5) The Impact of the Easter Rising of 1916

The events in Dublin did not take Mgr O'Riordan and Fr. Hagan by surprise. They had been informed by Count Plunkett around the 8th of April 1916 (31). The count had been sent to the Vatican by Eoin MacNeill in order to obtain the Pope's approval and blessing for the rebels (32) and had also met the German ambassador in Switzerland to whom he gave a letter for Sir Roger Casement (33). According to Plunkett, his audience

lasted almost two hours in complete privacy. The count remembered Benedict's knowledge of Irish affairs : 'I was much struck with the Pope's familiarity with the Irish cause, and with the arguments put forward by England (34). This was further proof of O'Riordan's activities in Rome. Meantime in Ireland, the Bishop of Limerick had written a devastating reply to General John Maxwell, the Commander in Chief of the British forces which defeated the rebels in Dublin, who had asked O'Dwyer to suspend two priests of his diocese. The general believed that the two men were guilty of subversive activities. Not only did the prelate defend his priests but he also denounced the general's oppressive military regime and the way the leaders of the Rising had been summarily executed. O'Dwyer's letter was published at a time when Irish nationalist public opinion was changing in favour of the rebels. The population largely approved O'Dwyer's action (35). On the 27th of May 1916, the rector reassured O'Dwyer, after his letter to General Maxwell, that the Pope was not displeased with him and that Herbert Asquith had never complained to Benedict XV. (36). O'Riordan equally told the bishop that people in Rome thought he was a fenian (37). All those rumours prompted O'Riordan to write a pamphlet on the political situation in Ireland. In June 1916, he wrote to Cardinal Gasparri about his intentions. He told the Secretary of State that the British Government might approach the Vatican about the recent Rising in Ireland and told him that he was in a position to inform him on the event in question (38). The pamphlet was printed in September 1916 and soon became known as the 'Red Book' because of the colour of its cover. It was 43 pages long, written in Italian and entitled 'The Recent Insurrection in Ireland, Account of its Causes and Consequences'. It would be too long to evoke in detail the contents of the 'Red Book'. Briefly, it was an exposé of the British Government's policy in Ireland concerning Home Rule and the war effort and why this had led to the creation of a nationalist paramilitary force that eventually rose against the British authorities. Although O'Riordan did not justify the Rising, he defended the rebels's behaviour during the fighting in Dublin and contrasted it to certain bad actions of the British army. He also explained that the English Government had never forgiven the Irish Catholic Church for not having helped the police and the Civil Service in carrying out their duties. Finally, he stated that the present war was not at all about small nations and he denounced the hypocrisy of the main powers. As an example, he made a comparison between Belgium and Ireland. O'Riordan's sources were mainly extracts from English newspapers and official reports criticising the English in Ireland. Thus the reader could

not accuse him of partiality. O'Dwyer's writings figured as well, notably his letter to General Maxwell and a letter the bishop had written in the defence of Irish emigrants in Liverpool trying to flee conscription (39). O'Riordan's greatest achievement was that every nationalist, from John Redmond to Arthur Griffith, would have approved of the *Red Book*. It certainly was not a statement in favour of one particular brand of Irish nationalism.

The *Red Book* created a sensation in Roman ecclesiastical and diplomatic society. In October, O'Riordan informed O'Dwyer that Cardinal Maffi was asking for more copies (40). It is more difficult to know with certainty what the Pope's reaction had been. If one takes into account Germany's financial aid to the Vatican and the exclusion of the Holy See from the future peace conference by Italy and Britain, it would be unlikely that he had objected to it. However, Cardinal Gasquet's activities provide an extra clue. He had contacts with a French Civil Servant called André Géraud, based in the French embassy in London. Géraud had been responsible for several propaganda missions in Ireland involving members of the French and Irish Catholic Hierarchies (41).

Their aim had been to boost recruitment in Ireland. One

month after the circulation of the *Red Book* in Rome, Géraud wrote his impressions on O'Riordan and Hagan in a report for the French Foreign Office: 'they have committed real acts of treason... they have direct and clandestine access to the Pope... according to Cardinal Gasquet, they have a real influence on him' (42). It was as well real evidence that Gasquet did interfere in Irish affairs... Count De Salis, who had replaced Sir Henry Howard at the head of the British Mission, did not advise the new Foreign Office Secretary, Arthur Balfour, to prosecute against the Irish College. De Salis was of the opinion that the Vatican would do nothing (43). As to the French Embassy in Rome, it informed its Prime Minister that O'Riordan's pamphlet was 'only an apology for the insurrection in Ireland and an indictment against the British Government's policy in that part of the United Kingdom' (44). It seemed that the war had changed the nature of traditional Franco-Irish relations! O'Riordan's initiative had been successful. The British in Rome were unable to use the Easter Rising in order to operate a rapprochement with the Vatican and use the latter against Irish nationalism. In fact, the Holy See would move closer towards Ireland thanks, once more, to the Bishop of Limerick's writings and O'Riordan's prompt translations.

## Births Marriages and Deaths

**Births:** Niall Daniel O'Shea, Margaret O'Brien, Michael Robert Mulcahy Eileen Sheridan, Aisling Marguerite Hayes, Ellen Quilligan, Claire Danielle Kennedy, Jodie Marie White, Lisa Lorraine Duggan, Abigeal Jayne Lyons, Sarah Therese Wilmott, Mai Therese Keating, James Tony Gammell, Pdraig Mulcair, Dan Sheridan, Breda Natalie Gammell, Nora Sheridan, Emily Mary D'Alton, Patrick O'Brien, Nora Gabrielle Culligan, Helen Charlotte Culligan, Niall Andrew Wilmott, Zoe Ann Markham, Tony Clancy, Dylan Anthony Burns, Kacey Margaret Kennedy, Mark Thomas Sheahan, Jennifer Katharyna Gerardine Dinnage.

**Marriages:** William O'Brien and Brigid Gammell.  
Michael Quilligan and Sylvia Mary O'Connor,  
James Joseph McEnery and Martha Kerins,  
John Pdraig Donaghy and Patricia Lynch,  
Michael Anthony Quilligan and Teresa Flynn,  
Patrick Anthony O'Connor and Philomena Teresa Woulfe.  
Eamon Gerard Purcell and Paula Josephine Casey.

**Deaths:** Mary Jobber Sheridan, Desmond O'Brien, Margaret Sheridan, Peggy Roche, Danny Gammell, Josie Enright, Aidan O'Sullivan, Peggie Teskey, Nancy O'Sullivan, Kathleen Liston, Brid Giltinane, Conor Magner, Ned Scully, Patsy McCann, Mary Ita Ryan, Joe O'Donovan, Kathleen Storin, Jimmy Wilmott, Edward Power, Michael Hunt.

# Remembering Times Past 1979

During the Church Unity Octave, Mass will be celebrated in St. Mary's Church on this Friday January 19th. A Service of prayer for Christian Unity will take place in Holy Trinity Church at 8p.m. on Wednesday January 24th. Clergy of all denominations will take part and the special preacher will be the Rev. Robert Storey, Methodist Minister of Adare and Ballingarrane.

The a.g.m. of Abbey Pitch and Putt Club was held at Patsy Doherty's on Monday 15th inst. and the following officers were elected:

Ch. Billy Neville, Sec. Breda Woulfe. Treas. Tommy Steele, Comm. Liam Woulfe, Seamus Tierney, Mrs P. Dollery, Mrs J. Dollery, Seamus Doherty, Jimmy Dollery, Phil Dollery, J.Griffin, S. Lyons, M. Dunne, Pat and Michael Neville.

Deel Anglers Ass. held their a.g.m. in Shiels Arms Hotel and chose the following officers for the coming year: Ch. John Dinnage, Sec. Jimmy Glenney, Treas. John Roche. Comm. Joe Kenneally, Sonny Buston, Pat Geaney, John Dally and Pat Jones.

Cappagh Guild of Muintir na Tire held their a.g.m. in the Community Hall on Feb.16th. The guest speaker was Pat Doyle, National Organiser of Muintir and the following were elected for the coming year:

Ch. Thomas Hogan. V.Ch. Walter Ruttle and Michael O'Donnell. Treas. Ernie Ruttle and Vincent Hayes. Sec. Breda Stokes. Ass. Sec. Miss B. Whelan Pro. Tom Drummond and P.J. Madigan.

The annual general meeting of Rathkeale Community games was held in the Community Centre and incoming officers are as follows: Ch. J.O'Dwyer. V.Ch. N. Harnett. Sec. M. Hanley. Treas J. Dinnage, Comm. S. Condon, D.Kenneally, P. Ambrose, P. McCann, Mgt. Guilteneane.

The Bishop of Limerick, Most Rev. Dr. Newman, visited Rathkeale on Monday 5th of March and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 60 boys and 80 girls. The bishop was assisted by Rev. Canon Costelloe, Rev J. Irwin, Rev A. Elliot, and Rev J. Kennedy. The singing during the ceremony was contributed by the choir from the Convent Primary School.

Members of the Cappagh Guild of Muintir Na Tire took part in the counting of the votes in the election of Rathkeale Community Council. The count took place in the Library on 26th inst. Elected for a three year term were:

N. Harnett, E. Neville, E. Kennedy, P. Ahern, J. Dunleavy, D. Culhane, J. Kennedy, S. Hayes, M. Barrett, M. Hennessey, A. Boyle, M. Kenchan, M. Kerins, S. S. McDonnell, Sr. M. Consalata, E. McCarthy, P. McEnery, M. Cowhey, M. Teskey, C. O'Rorke, M. Roche, D.'O'Connor, J.O'Dwyer, J. Dinnage, A. O'Dea, T. Geaney, M. Brosnan, J. Nash, M. Daly, J. O'Connell, S. Lenihan, J. Keating, J. McEniry, C. O'Donnell., E. Chawke, E. O'Connor The Pres. and V. Pres Rev Canon Costelloe and Rev W. Nicholson were automatically elected as were the five trustees, Margaret Guinane, Peter Donovan, John Griffin, Michael Neville and Patraick Johnson

At a Polka competition held in Cappagh the Abbey Polka Set group won first place in the ladies competition. In comprised: Maureen O'Shea, Marie Madigan, Margaret Kennedy, Josephine McNamara, Marie O'Dea, Orla Dillon, Eileen O'Shea and Fiona Madigan.

The officers of Rathkeale G.A.A for 1979 were: Life President, Peter Brennan Ch. Denis O'Dea V. Ch. Jimmy McEniry and Patsy Doherty. Sec. John Griffin. Asst. Sec. John Lynch. Treas. Michael Neville and Sean Hayes. Registrar, Noel Wilmott. Comm. Michael Dillon, Joe Williams, Frank Neenan, John Brennan and Tom O'Grady.

At the first meeting of the new Community Council Rev. Canon Costelloe was elected President with Rev. Canon Nicholson as V. Pres. Chairman Patrick Johnson, V. Chairman Michael Brosnan, Sec. Aine Boyle, Asst. Sec. Margaret Guinane. Treas. Peter Donovan and Pat Ahern., P.R.O. Noel Harnett.

The following were among those who took part in the swimming and life saving classes held recently at Rathkeale Swimming Pool.

*Beginners:* Kathy O'Connor, Mary Talty, Dermot Walsh, Gerard Walsh.

*Improvers:* Kathy O'Connor, Eithne O'Sullivan, Paul Daly, Gerard Barr, William Daly, Dermot Walsh

*Junior:* William Daly

*Qualifiers:* Paul Madden, William Hogan.

*Resuscitation:* Michael O'Connor, Mary O'Connor, Mary Talty, Eithne O'Sullivan, Paul Daly, Gerard Barr, Dermot Walsh, William Daly, Paul Madden, William Hogan

The course instructor was Paul Walsh.

## Community Sports results:

### Boys

U/10 60m Hurdles	1. P.Giltenane 2. T Dillon
U/8 80m	1. S.Dollery 2. T. Kenneally.
U/10 100m	1. D. Donovan 2. S.Mulcahy
U/12 100m	1. M. O'Connor 2. P. Barrett.
U/8 100m	1. P. Massey 2. R. Giltenane
U/14 100m	1. P.Mulcahy 2. P. Reidy.
U/16 100m	1. D.O'Brien 2. M.O'Shaughnessy
U/16 200m	1. J.Keating 2. P. Walsh
U/12 600m	1. P.Doherty 2. P.O'Connor
U/16 1500m	1. B.Dillon 2. S.O'Connor
U/14 800m	1. M.Duggan 2. CV.Kerins
Marathon	1. P.McCarthy 2. P.Jones
U/12 Long Puck	1. W.Daly 2. J.O'Dwyer
U/10 3-legged	1. B.Kelly and B.Riordan
U/14 L.Jump	1. S. Hough 2. B.O'Sullivan

### Girls

U/10 50m Hurdles	1. R.Hogan 2. J.Kett
U/8 80m	1. M.McNamara 2. J. Curtin
U/10 100m	1. T.Kenneally 2. L.McEnery
U/12 100m	1. A.Fennell 2. M.O'Shaughnessy
U/8 100m	1. C.Enright 2. G.Hogan
U/14 100m	1. O.Dillon 2. A.Meehan
U/16 100m	1. H.Hogan 2. M. Power
U/12 600m	1. A.Kenneally 2. B.Chawke
U/16 1500m	1. C.Fitzgerald 2. T.Fitzgerald
U/14 800m	1. B.Meehan 2. A.O'Dwyer
3.Legged	1. U. Maher and B. Massey
U/12 sack race	1. M. O'Connor 2. M Fitzgerald

Married Men 1.Mick Walshe 2. Andy O'Dea  
3.John Brennan

Married Women 1. A. Scanlon 2.M .Kenneally  
3.P.Walshe

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## From Limerick Leader 1980 **HANDS ACROSS THE BORDER:** **the Rathkeale welcome here**

By Jimmy Woulfe

Hands are being extended across the North's sectarian divide ...in a County Limerick Town.

New friendships are being forged in Rathkeale among a group of 20 children from East Belfast, who heretofore have been precluded from getting to know one another, because of the barriers in their troubled neighbourhoods.

The children, accompanied by three group leaders, arrived at Colbert Station, Limerick on Thursday last for a 12-day visit. They were greeted by members of the Rathkeale Community Council and Rathkeale Social Services Committee, who jointly organised the visit. All the expenses of the visit are being borne by the Rathkeale committees and the children are staying in various homes.

### SPONSORING

This Saturday workers at a local factory, Shannon Meats Ltd., are sponsoring a bus outing for the children, to Ballybunion. The Belfast group will be accompanied by some of their new found Rathkeale friends.

Local residents in St. Mary's Park have come together to host a special sports day for the visitors and Col. O'Driscoll will play host

to them at his historic Castle Matrix. The idea of bringing the children from Belfast to Rathkeale was first proposed by Miss Christine O'Rourke, who is very active in many voluntary organisations in Rathkeale and who has received national recognition for her voluntary work. It was hoped to bring a group from the North last summer, but the organisational work was made impossible by the postal dispute.

Said Mr. John Dinnage, a member of the community council: "It all started with an idea by Miss O'Rourke, and it was enthusiastically received in the town. The people of Rathkeale have responded marvellously to the idea and the kids really seem to be enjoying themselves. We would like to see similar visits in the years to come and maybe other towns in West Limerick could take groups from the North as well. The children have been getting to know one another and hopefully when they get back home they will keep up the contacts they have made here in Belfast. It has proved a very worthwhile effort."



*The Belfast visitors on arrival at Limerick Railway station accompanied by Very Rev. Canon Nicholson, Rathkeale; group leaders, Alison Irwin, Patsy Sloan and Ashlaigh Floyd; Mrs. Ann Dunne, Rathkeale, and Mr. John Dinnage, Rathkeale.*

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## *The Old Town* by Desmond Shier

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Some months ago in a moment of weakness I promised Peter Donovan an article for the Christmas number of 'Deel Views' and as I can remember Rathkeale over sixty years ago, I thought it would be a good idea to record some of my early memories.

I was born in Ballingrane about three miles from Rathkeale in July 1914. The family made regular trips to Rathkeale and as I got a little older I found out that there was a great war on. I can well remember the Black & Tans and the burning of Rathkeale Workhouse and the Courthouse as the Army Headquarters. We used to pass the Courthouse on our way home and the whole road was covered with barbed wire, sand bags, all over the place. On top of the Courthouse steps there was a very large Sentry Box.

At the age of about seven I used to stay at my grandmothers Mrs. Kirby and my aunt Lily Kirby at Cross Lane, the shortest street in the Town. At that time Dinny Daly used to supply fresh water from Well Lane Pumps, he used to sell the buckets of water to most of the town. In those days there was no water supply except the Pumps at Well Lane, a Pump at Church Street and a Pump at Abbeylands. The streets of the town were just ordinary dirt roads, the holes repaired with loads of stones.

Well Lane sixty years ago was a hive of industry. Joe Thornton had a large Tailoring business, The Roche family had a butcher stall, and Jack Foley had a large Drapery Shop. Mike Kane operated a Forge next to the People's Bakery who then had their Bakery on the side of the street. In later years they moved it back and built the present Shop and Offices,

as a little boy I remember taking breakfast to Charlie Mulcahy the Baker, he used to lodge at my grandmothers. I thought the smell of the fresh bread was wonderful and my reward was a hot crust from the end of the batch.

Across the road, John and Patsy Fennell operated another Forge. Rathkeale was a great Forge Town, Thomas Fennell had a Forge at Abbeylands, Frank Fitzgerald had a Forge near Patsy Scanlans at Lower Main Street. As far as I can remember it was to Frank Fitzgerald that the late Willie Dunn first came to work in Rathkeale. Then over the Bridge the Quinn family had yet another Forge. To come back to Well Lane, a short distance down lived one of the most important men in Town, Jim O'Neill the Town carrier. He kept the town supplied with all the goods for the shops. He made regular trips to Limerick City in all weathers on his large horse drawn cart. He had a very large creel on top and it was always full. He had two sons, Danny and Desmond whom both immigrated to the USA. Next there was three pubs, Tom Costelloe and Michael Hennessy on one side and Soda Hennessys family on the other side, Tim Kirby had his shoe repair shop, and I think that was a large amount of business for a small part of the town.

In the mid twenties my father had a serious illness and we had to sell out in Ballingrane and come to live in Rathkeale. First we lived in part of Paddy Mulcairs house in the Square, next we moved to part of Wards house in the Square, finally we moved to Thomas Street where the family is still there today.

There was no ESB the town got its Electricity supply from the

PowerHouse over the bridge now the Deel Hall. The PowerHouse was in the charge of Bernard Tansey, Jimmie Hassett and Michael Joe Guinane and I am sure that Mick Russell of Church Street claims a part in keeping it going. The sound of the two large engines could be heard all over the Town.

Coming on to the late twenties life seemed to settle down to a more relaxed way of life. There was no T.V.; a very odd Radio and most families made their own enjoyment. There was a great family spirit in the town. From very early spring to the end of September most of the people used to go for walks in the evening, out beyond the Five Cross Roads. Looking back now, I can still see the beautiful countryside everything so green and alive, it was a wonderful sight. The courting couples used to use the Ballingarry Road up by Danaghers Cross and the Bog Road. Does anyone now venture as far as the Dark Road?

In these years we had a big number of large families in the town, looking back now I can see the wonderful people our parents were, they lived for their homes and their families. Our mothers could make an excellent meal out of nothing, there is only one way to describe them, they were the Salt of the Earth.

In the early thirties we had three great social events in the town. The annual visit of the famous John Duffy Circus to Nevilles field at Abbeylands. They used to hold two shows and have a big Parade through the town. Next we used to have the Annual Hunt Ball, and then the best of all, the Grand Annual always held on a Saturday night. All dances were held in the local library and we danced till early morning.

Rathkeale was always a great town for pubs and fairs, we used to have thirty-seven pubs and the Cattle and Horse Fairs were famous in the South of Ireland. The local railway played a very large part in the life of the town, eight or ten trains to and from Limerick each day, we did not get the first bus until the late twenties.

We had two bakeries in the town the Peoples Bakery then owned by the Fitzgibbon Family later taken over by Mr. Binchy and Finns Bakery where Sean Hayes was moved to the back of Miss Histons (Mrs. Finns sister), later this house was the home of the Finn family. The People's Bakery had no shop in the Main Street, when May Kennedy died, her shop was closed for a long number of years, the Peoples Bakery bought it and changed it to the beautiful shop it still is today.

We had two chemists in the town, Whelans, later John Walls, and Paddy Hickeys now Donovans. When Paddy Hickey died suddenly it shocked the town, the shop was taken over by the late Dan Donovan. In those days Dan D. as he was known all over the town was a real fashion plate always with his bowler hat and beautiful suits and striped trousers. His shop became famous for his great sale each year, if you bought any Rexall product you got one free that was a great break through in those days. Today we take it for granted.

Another big change in the town in those days, there used to be a Hardware shop next to Sheahans Butchers stall owned by Brennan Brothers. They bought the Ambrose Hotel in the Square and opened up with a big splash, Hotel Bar, Hardware Shop, Timber Store, they kept a great stock of everything and were there for years, then it was sold to Joe Healy who kept the bar going and opened a large Garage.

There was two large poultry and egg stores, Joe White next to Martin Culhanes Corner Pub and Stephen Power and Jimmie McMahon with the help of Timmie Neville had a large store where the Fire Station stands today.

We had at that time a great saint in Rathkeale, I refer of course, to the late Right Rev. Monsignor Michael O'Donnell, P.P. V.G. (Dean of the Diocese) He was the shining light of the streets of Rathkeale for over 36 years. He guided both young and old in all walks of life.

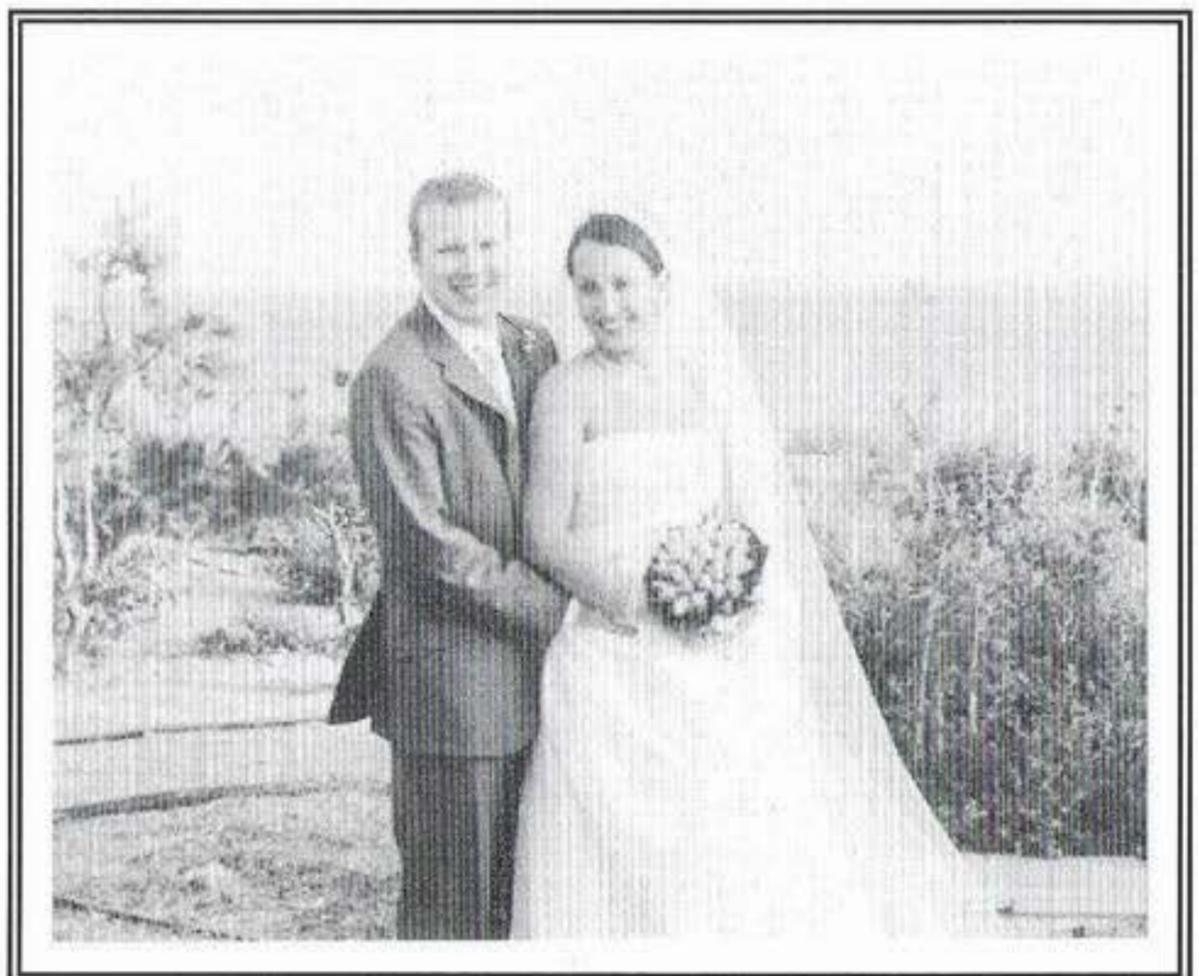
He was a great man for the poor they were always on his doorstep and nobody came away empty handed. He died at his home after a very long illness and like so many great men he died a poor man. That is poor in the goods of the world, but he did not die poor in the eyes of his Master. Some of the older people of the town believe that he still helps Rathkeale from his Heavenly home.

Well, dear friends, these are a few of my memories of a wonderful old town. I hope that the people that live there today know how lucky they are

in having such wonderful people to look after their welfare. I refer of course, to the Community Council, the excellent job they have done with the Courthouse with facilities for young and old to enjoy themselves, which will be there long after we have all passed on.

I understand there are other improvements on the way, what a change from the Rathkeale we used to know, you have an excellent Cattle Mart in the New Line a fine swimming pool and lots of beautiful new houses, I am delighted to see that a large number of the old buildings still stand as they were sixty five years ago.

We have not been to Rathkeale for the past eight years. We made our permanent home here in one of the most beautiful parts of Surrey, we have the River Thames on one side and Richmond Park on the other side. We hope to visit Rathkeale in the not too distant future please God, we still love the old place. Our nearest and dearest are laid to rest there and we look forward very much to seeing you all soon.



*Michael O'Dwyer and Marianthi Mikhalitsi who were married recently in Greece.*

# *From an Analysis of County Limerick*

## *By the County Development Board*

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### AN INTRODUCTION TO COUNTY LIMERICK

#### **It's Origin**

The County of Limerick dates from the year 1210. King John of England set up the first 12 Irish Counties that year of which Limerick was one. The new county took its name from the old Viking foundation of Limerick, which was the only town of importance in the area. The derivation of the name Limerick (in Irish, Luimneach) is still a matter of conjecture among authorities on Irish place names. Originally, the name applied not just to the Viking town but to an extensive area along the Shannon shore westward from the town. The most likely explanation of the name is that it derives from Loimneach, meaning, "bare marsh"

#### **Corporations and Town Commissioners**

Adare, Askeaton and Kilmallock were corporate towns from early Norman times, the Corporation of Kilmallock surviving, at least in name, until its final dissolution under the Municipal Corporations (Ireland) Act, 1840. In more recent times there were Town Commissioners in Newcastle West and Rathkeale. The functions of the Rathkeale Town Commissioners were transformed to the Limerick County Board of Health in 1926 and to the County Council on the dissolution of the Boards of Health in 1942. The Newcastle West Town Commissioners were dissolved in 1941, and their functions transferred to the Board of Health, and then, in 1942, to the County Council.

#### **Other Divisions**

County Limerick contains 119 civil (i.e. pre-Reformation) parishes, 58 ecclesiastical parishes, 1,938 townlands, 136 district electoral divisions, 5 local government electoral areas and 2 Dail constituencies, East and West Limerick.

The County lies mainly in the diocese of Limerick. A substantial part of the east of the county is in the archdiocese of Cashel & Emly and a small part of the north east of the county is in the diocese of Killaloe. In recent years the Church of Ireland diocesan boundary was extended to include part of the old diocese of Emly in the Church of Ireland Diocese of Limerick.

#### **The Coat of Arms of Limerick County**

The green shield and white wavy bands signify the streams of milk flowing from fertile fields of Limerick.

Superimposed on the shield is a gold cross in a ring, a decision from the Ardagh Chalice, which was found in Ardagh. Sarsfield form the crest. The motto "Cuimhnigh ar Luimneach" was the war cry of the wild geese.

### PHYSICAL FEATURES

County Limerick is slightly more than 1,000 sq. miles. Except for hilly and mountainous areas in the west, the southeast and the northeast, the county is relatively flat. Only a small portion of the surface of the county is over 500 feet. The most important mountainous area is in the southeast of the county, where the Galteemore peak at 3,018 feet is just inside the Limerick border. A number of other Limerick peaks in the Galtee range exceed the 2,000 foot mark. Peaks in the nearby Ballyhouras reach to 1,703 and 1,697 feet respectively and in the Mullaghareirk mountains in the southwest, and in the Sliabh Felim mountains in the northeast, there are a number of peaks, which exceed 1,000 feet.

The Sliabh Felim, Ballyhoura and Galtee mountains are composed of Silurian and Old Red Sandstone rocks, as are the hill ranges in the centre of the county running from Knockaderry to Liskennet, and from Kilmeedy to Dromin. The West Limerick hills, including the Mullaghareirk range are formed from the rocks of the Coal Measures and Upper Carboniferous period. Volcanic rock occurs in such places at Knockderk, Kiltely, and Derk, as well as at Knockfierna and Ballinleeny, between Bruree and Ballingarry.

The central plain of County Limerick is mainly Carboniferous Limestone, and the modern soils have developed from the vast deposits of boulder clay left after the retreat of the ice at the end of the last Ice Age. The greater part of County Limerick is drained by the Shannon, and its tributaries, the Mulcair, the Maigue, and the Deel. The Maigue is tidal for the last seven miles of its course, up to Adare, and the Deel is tidal for three miles, up to Askeaton. The Feale, which drains the south west of the County, is renamed the Cashen in Kerry, and enters the sea south of Ballybunion.

# RELAY TEAM SUCCESS

The boys U/16 Relay team from St. Mary's athletic club in Rathkeale have been making the headlines since the beginning of this year when they finished third in the Munster indoor 4 x 200 and followed up by taking the bronze medal in the All-Ireland final in Nenagh in March. The competition is much stiffer outdoors but with a lot of training the boys managed to finish third also in the 4 x 100 in the Munster's in Cork in June to let themselves up for another national final. These were held in Tullamore in July and in a very fast semi-final the boys finished fourth to qualify for the All-Ireland final. In a very fast race the boys had to be content with fifth place but they have shown a level of consistency to be proud of and to finish in the top five in the country, against some top class opposition is quite the achievement. The panel consists of Keith Wilmott, Graham Muckell, David Wilmott, John Shanahan and Padraig Sheehy.



# COMMUNITY GAMES NATIONAL FINALS

Rathkeale parish continues its success story of recent years in Community Games with four athletes travelling to Mosney in Co. Meath for the national finals at the end of August, Deirdre Curtin, Keith Wilmoth, Paul White and Eoin O'Donnell all qualified to represent Limerick on the big occasion.

## Deirdre Curtin:

Deirdre is one of the most talented and versatile athletes ever to emerge from the athletics scene in the parish of Rathkeale and this year she will be making her third appearance at the National Finals. At under ten she competed in the 200m, last year she won the hurdles and this year she won the high-jump at the county finals, which is the pre-requisite for selection on the county team. For the record Deirdre is under age again next year for the high jump. She finished second in the Munster cross-country at U/8's and has numerous county titles to her credit in track and field athletics in the sprints, long-jump, high-jump and relays.



## Keith Wilmoth:



This year Keith will be making a record fourth appearance at the National community games finals when he competes in the marathon (6miles) his previous three trips having been with the cross-country teams where he won a national bronze medal in 1999. Keith is no stranger to the big occasion with his club St. Mary's AC in Rathkeale, earlier this year he won all All-Ireland bronze medal in the relay in the indoor championships having finished fourth last year outdoors. He has many county titles in cross-country and track and field and has represented Munster in his favoured cross-country running. He is also a very accomplished soccer player with Rathkeale AFC and has represented Limerick in the Kennedy Cup.

## Paul White:

Though still only seven years old when winning a gold medal in the 80m sprint at the county finals of the Community Games this young man has a lot of experience when it comes to competition in athletics. This will be his first trip to the Community Games capital but certainly Paul will not be overawed by the event. The son of Carmel and Tom White, Paul is a member of the local athletic club for the last twelve months. Earlier this year Paul won the county league title U/8 and then had brilliant county championships winning two gold and two silver medals. He then travelled to Waterford where he reached the finals of the Munster 80m sprint finishing in sixth place. Paul is also a very accomplished hurler and footballer with Rathkeale GAA and likewise in soccer where he plays with the local U/10 team.



## Eoin O'Donnell:

Eoin is the son of Catherine and Philip of Reens Pike and for a young lad of seven who never ran before to come out and win the county U/8 60m sprint is a magnificent achievement. He is not a member of the local club (hopefully that will change now) but for sheer speed and determination he will take beating. He is a teak tough competitor and will not be overawed by the big occasion. Eoin is a member of Rathkeale GAA where he is a very keen hurler and footballer and also plays soccer with his local club.



# RICHARD ADAMS, LIMERICK

## COUNTY COURT JUDGE

*From "A Book of Ireland" edited by Frank O'Connor 1959*

He had most of the qualities that the position called for. He was born on the shores of Bantry Bay among the peasantry with whom he sympathised and whose ways he understood, he had periods of genius. Self-educated, he was widely and deeply read in all literature save law, and he knew enough law to assist his experience and common sense. Unfortunately, he had not always control of his tongue. He was incomparably witty without effort, but his wit resembled Dean Swift's, and outrageous and ludicrous phrases escaped his lips before they had entered his mind. His position on the Bench afforded him no self-restraint. His worst offences against propriety were perpetrated in court. His proceedings, if not always wise were never dull, and his actual decisions were thoroughly good, though delivered sometimes in terms that were not conventional.

"Some people," said he, "may think that my jurisdiction is limited to cases not exceeding £50. It is not. I can give a decree for fifty pounds, costs on the higher scale, enormous expenses, and a load of abuse from the dirtiest tongue in Christendom." "It is time for Crown business," he would exclaim. "The crier will please search the public-houses and bring in the Magistrates."

At Rathkeale, two gentlemen were remarkably regular in their attendance as spectators during the sittings of the court. Both were mad, one amusingly so, the other dangerously, and they were inseparables, until one retired to an institution and the other committed murder. The proceedings at Rathkeale used to open with an application by the harmless lunatic for leave to wear his hat on the ground that he had no skull and therefore his brain uncovered by a hat was liable to catch cold. To save time, permission to this effect was added to the crier's proclamation of the opening of the court, which accordingly ran, "Hear ye all manner of persons that this court is now open and any desirous of transacting business herein come forward and you shall be heard and Mr. Jones may wear his hat, God save the King!"

Notwithstanding this, one morning, Mr. Jones advanced as of old to the foot of the table. "Yes, certainly," said Adams in anticipation. "You may wear your hat." "But your Honour—" "Wear it, I tell you, and for Heaven's sake, sit down." "But I can't, your Honour. That's what I want to tell you. I went home to tea last evening with my friend, Mr. Frost" (his fellow lunatic) "and he offered to show me a trick if I laid myself down on the billiard table, but he

threw me with a rope, your Honour, and he beat me until he broke the cues, and I shall never sit down any more." "I wish he had killed you," said the judge, "then you'd be dead, and he'd be hanged and I'd be rid of both of you."

Adams delighted in luring on a tipsy witness to creating an uproar of laughter and turning on the poor man a flood of righteous corrective. On one occasion, however, he was disarmed. A rural authority was sued for destroying a cow under the rabies order. If destroyed on suspicion, the cow should be paid for, but if prior to destruction, it had been proved rabid, no payment need be made. Legal proof of the existence of rabies had been held to require microscopic examination of the spinal cord, so defence appeared hopeless. These defendants, however, produced as a witness a local cow doctor who knew nothing of microscopics or spinal cords, though something perhaps about the taste of alcohol. "That cow had rabies," he swore, "by the infallible test." "What test did you apply?" "Bring a dog into the stall with the cow, and the cow sort of barks—that's the only infallible test." "Was that the only symptom you noticed in this case?" asked Adams. "N-no, in this case there was the sudden death of the cow." "Did she die suddenly?" "V-very suddenly." "Describe what happened." "I sh-ot her."

Jurors in the County of Limerick were the worst in Munster. At the end of the trial of a bad stabbing case, the usual verdict having been returned, Adams said to the accused, "Michael, I have now to discharge you. These twelve gentlemen on my left say that you are not guilty. Take a good look at them, Mike, so that you may know them again, for if you treat any one of them the way you treated the prosecutor in this case, you will not get one hour's imprisonment from me, even if you are convicted of it."

This jurist's definition of the limit of permissible perjury was as follows: "Look here, sir," he said to a litigant in the witness-box, "tell me no more unnecessary lies. Such lies as your attorney advised you are necessary for the presentation of your fraudulent case I will listen to though I shall decide against you whatever you swear, but if you tell me another unnecessary lie, I'll put you in the dock."

*A.M. SULLIVAN (1871-1959)  
Old Ireland*

# Useful Information

Deel Views: Jack O'Dwyer Tel: (069) 64210

Banks: Late opening Tuesday

Credit Union, Rathkeale. Tel: (069) 64444

Monday 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Tuesday & Wednesday 10.00am to 4.00pm

Thursday: 10.00am to 6.00pm

Friday: 10.00am to 5.00pm

Saturday: 11.00am to 4.00pm

Library Opening Hours:

Monday & Wednesday: 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Tuesday: 10.00am to 1.30pm, 6.00pm to 8.00pm

Thursday: 10.00am to 1.30pm & 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Friday: 2.00pm to 5.00pm and 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Mart: Tuesday - Cattle, Wednesday - Calf & Pig

Post Office:

Monday to Saturday 9.30am to 5.30pm

Thursday: 9.30am to 1.30pm

Dentist: Ml. Brosnan, Thomas Street

Doctors:

Dr. Lynch Half Day Thursday

Dr. Curtin Half Day Wednesday

Dr. Teehan: Half Day Thursday

Church/ Mass Times

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Sunday 9.30am and 11.30am

Monday to Saturday 9.30am

Saturday: 7.30pm

Holy Trinity Church of Ireland

1st, 2nd, 3rd & 5th Sundays 10.30am

4th Sunday 11.00am alternating with

Askeaton & Castletown

Embury Heck Memorial Methodist Church

11.30am every Sunday

Festival Show: Mrs. Ann O'Connell

Community Council: Monthly Meeting

First Monday 8.30pm Secretary: M. Guinane

Red Cross: Secretary: Kathleen O'Dwyer

St. Vincent de Paul: J. Dunleavy

Meeting alternate Mondays

G.A.A. Hon Secretary: Jack Daly

Soccer: Juvenile: Séan Hartnett

Abrahams Golf Society: J. O'Connor, Secretary

Scout Cubs: Thursdays, Youth Centre

Community Hall: Tel: 64908

Meals on Wheels: Breda Morrissey. Tel: 64396

## Things to do and see.....

Tourist Information Centre - Irish Palatine Centre  
Open June - September 7 days 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Irish Palatine Heritage Centre  
Open June - September 7 days 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Dohyle Lough: John Griffin

Sports Complex  
Squash, Racketball, Handball, Snooker, Pool  
Tel: (069) 64622

Kyletaun Tennis Club.  
Contact: Pat O'Doherty (069) 64086  
Affiliated to Tennis Ireland.  
Floodlit international size.  
Open 7 days.

Bridge Club every Tuesday night September-June  
Contact: Lucy Noonan. Tel: 64171