

Deel Views

RATHKEALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Christmas 2003

Price: €2



*Peace at
Christmas Time*

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Editorial

The scale of activity in house building in the town over the last twelve months is very much to be welcomed. A scheme of townhouses was completed at Lower Main Street late last year and twenty houses in Ballywilliam were constructed and are now occupied since early this year. A major development has just got under way on the banks of the Deel in Church Street and the building of four town apartments is well advanced opposite the old Vocational School. There is also planning application for an extensive project, including hotel and leisure complex, at Doohyle Lough.

All this development is in sharp contrast to what was happening for many years earlier and it has to be seen as a big vote of confidence in the future of Rathkeale from all involved, both private and public.

Rathkeale National Parents Council

The 2003 A.G.M. of Rathkeale National Parents Council was held on Thursday, 9th October. The following officers were elected:

Chairman: Liam Woulfe

Vice-Chairman: John Lyons

Hon. Secretary: Mary Sheahan

Hon. Treasurer: Vera Fitzgerald

Parent representatives on the Boards of Management:

St Anne's: Laura Dinnage and James Feane

St. Joseph's: April White and John Lyons

There was a very constructive discussion on many issues of concern to parents. There was unanimous support for the current workings of both schools. The clear objective for the current year is to further embed and develop the programme which was put in place only a couple of years ago which is recognised to be operating well despite how short it is in operation.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS

The Community Employment Scheme has been renewed for a further twelve month period but with a reduced number of participants. This scheme has been of great assistance in carrying out essential works around the town for some years and continues to do so.

The restoration work on the Sports Complex is now complete and plans are being made for a formal opening of the building early in the new year. This work was grant aided from the Lottery Fund but could not have been completed without the help of the C.E. Scheme. The hall is now open fully for Squash, Handball, Racquet Ball, Billiards, Snooker and Pool. A special toilet and shower facility for the disabled has been recently added. Membership is not required - pay as you play. Opening hours at present are 6.00 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. and all are welcome.

The Community Council has taken on the responsibility for the upkeep of the Recycling Centre on the New Line. While the County Council will carry out emptying and removal of waste, the C.E. workers will be keeping the area as tidy as possible. It behoves everyone to respect this facility and refrain from indiscriminate dumping.

Work will commence shortly on the construction of a common social centre at the Sheltered Housing Scheme at Enniscouch.

The annual blessing of the crib and Christmas tree at Abbeylands is to take place on Monday, 15th December at 8.00 p.m.

A new Back to Education Initiative has been introduced in Rathkeale under the auspices of the County Limerick V.E.C. and the Department of Education and Science. It is catering for women of all ages who, for whatever reason, missed out on second level education and wish to have another opportunity to do so. The subjects being covered include communications, computers, primary healthcare, basic cookery, keep fit activities etc. The classes are from Monday to Friday and will continue for twelve months in the Community Centre. The course is being managed from the Riverside Workshop at Holycross.

The Story of William Geary

In the service of our country, members of An Garda Síochána are pledged to perform each duty 'without favour or affection, malice or ill will'. Retired Superintendent William Geary lived by that code. Those who conspired to dishonour him have been exposed and defeated. The 25th June 2003 marked the 75th anniversary of the unlawful dismissal of William Geary in circumstances remarkably similar to the notorious injustice inflicted on Alfred Dreyfus in France.

Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army, was wrongfully convicted of treason - espionage for Germany in 1894. He was condemned to deportation and life imprisonment and sent to the horrors of Devil's Island penal colony in 1895. After 1885 only criminals with sentences of more than eight years were sent to Devil's Island. In 1898 the renowned Emile Zola published 'J'accuse', an open letter to the President of France in which he accused the military and civil authority of lying. Eventually Alfred Dreyfus was pardoned - in 1906 - and was reinstated in the army with the rank of Major.

Superintendent William Geary was also accused of treason, not in a public court but in a back room with secret evidence that was not divulged to him. He was dismissed without right of appeal and endured 70 years in exile seeking to restore his rightful good name.

William Geary is one of the founding members of An Garda Síochána with a registered number of 938. He received rapid promotion to the rank of Superintendent due to his ability and dedication to duty. Indeed, it was his success at law enforcement that may have brought about his dismissal. Armed raiders of the anti-Treaty 'irregulars' robbed £27,000 from a bank in Roscrea in 1925. The investigation by Supt. Geary, stationed at Templemore, Co. Tipperary, was successful and brought about a conviction in the High Court. He was transferred to Kilrush, Co. Clare on 10th February 1926, where he intensified pressure on the I.R.A. because the region was lawless at the time. The I.R.A. conspired to get rid of Geary and, in a system of espionage and counter espionage, they conveyed false information to An Garda Síochána, which led to his summary dismissal. In the words of Supt. William Geary, "The I.R.A. dispatches were so difficult to decode, help had to be procured from Scotland yard, made it very embarrassing to have a trial. Dismissed without a trial, a win for the I.R.A., my loss, and here is the paradox - my life saved in being removed from Kilrush, thanks to the Garda Síochána".

Ambush

By June of 1928 normality was restored in the Clare region. Deputy Commissioner Coogan was making a general inspection of police stations in Co. Clare. On 15th June Geary was euphoric as he went to Ennis to meet Chief Superintendent O'Duffy, deeming that he would be in line for a commendation by Deputy Commissioner Coogan for his good work. As they climbed a back stairs to a room in Carmody's Hotel, the Chief Superintendent said to William, "Your life is ruined, you'd better tell the truth". They entered the room, seated at a table were Commissioner Eoin O'Duffy, Deputy Commissioner Eamonn Coogan and Chief Superintendent David Neligan. Without a greeting Commissioner Duffy said, "We have evidence that you took £100 for information you gave to the Republicans". William Geary denied the charge but they continued the ambush. They searched his person, his lodgings, and his office without warrant.

Commissioner O'Duffy said that he held a signed receipt but such was not shown to the accused. O'Duffy tried to extract a confession with a lure of leniency and offers of other government appointments. There was no witness other than his accuser Neligan, who did not give evidence on oath and neither was he cross examined. There was no written charge on Form D1, no written statement, no written reply to the charge. William Geary did not have a solicitor or any legal aid present. All of this was done contrary to the 1926 Regulations and contrary to the Principles of Justice, which would of course render the proceedings null and void. The charge of taking a bribe was serious in itself but that of giving information to the sworn enemies of the State would be treason and punishable by hanging at that time.

William Geary was detained at the Officers Mess in the Depot in Dublin, daily expecting a proper tribunal. However, on 25th June 1928, he was dismissed from An Garda Síochána. It is hard to comprehend the hurt inflicted on a very honourable gentleman sworn to do his duty 'without malice or ill will' and fully expecting fair treatment from his fellow officers. However, being a devout man, he pulled himself together, got on with his life very successfully and for 70 years he strove to have his honour restored. 25th June 2003 was the 75th anniversary.

History

Limerick City and County Library



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I do not propose to fully describe the history of his

representations over the years, but it is revealing to note that one Minister of Justice told him that nothing could be done because the files had been pulped. However, in 1984, the Labour Party Research Office made a discovery - Minutes of Executive Council, held in Council Chamber Monday, 25th June 1928, 12 noon to 1.45 p.m. An order was made dismissing Superintendent William Geary from An Garda Síochána with effect from 25 June 1928. Minutes signed by W. T. Cosgrove. When William Geary finally achieved his goal, the bulky Garda Síochána file CS 270/28 (marked Secret) was intact - it had not been pulped.

In his memoirs Mr. Geary has described the immense difficulty experienced over the years in pursuit of the recorded information. He wrote, "After it was discovered that the papers on my case did, in fact, exist, my godson, Judge John Patrick Collins spent many frustrating years trying to gain access to the file, under the Freedom of Information Act. He made the discovery that some of the papers were in the National Archives, but the important file was in the Office of the Taoiseach".

In a letter dated 30th January 2003 Mr. Geary wrote to the author. "To indicate how deeply Judge John P. Collins was involved on my behalf, the 'evidence' from the Minister for Justice came to him by diplomatic courier, he then gave me the envelope unopened at 404 E 51st Street, New York. My address at that time". This was the culmination of many avenues of enquiry, some of which are described below.

In a reply dated, dated 18th May 1934, the Minister for Justice P. J. Rutledge said that William Geary was dismissed on clear evidence and would need fresh evidence to re-open the case. Similarly Ray Burke, T.D., Minister for Justice in a letter dated 3rd May 1990 stated that it would require fresh evidence to exonerate William Geary. It would be difficult to offer fresh evidence since no evidence had been adduced when allegations were made on the 15th June 1928.

However, fresh evidence did come to light on the 7th December 2002 when, quite fortuitously, I met the daughter of Sgt. John Gallagher who had been stationed with Superintendent Geary in Templemore. Sgt. John Gallagher, described to me as a 'born detective', meticulously kept a confidential diary. Much of what he recorded would, colloquially, be termed 'dynamite' in the early days of the State. In the diary, which last saw the light of day in August 1928, I have read entries that clearly show that the 'mutineers' (a term used for the I.R.A. 'irregulars') conspired against Superintendent Geary. Sgt. Gallagher had procured his knowledge from an informant who was personally acquainted with the conspirators. Please study the facsimile reproduction of the confidential notes, because these verify the information procured by Gerry Collins, T.D., Minister

for Justice, when he investigated the matter in Co. Clare. As reported in the 'Irish Times' on 27th February 1999, Mr. Collins was informed that there was a conspiracy against Superintendent Geary and that the head of the I.R.A., Sean McBride, intervened to stop serious physical harm from being inflicted on the zealous Superintendent.

The investigators from Headquarters should have conducted enquiries within An Garda Síochána rather than relying solely on information planted by the sworn enemies of the State. As experienced police (especially Neligan, 'The Spy in the Castle') they should have known that sworn secret societies never use the names of its members or clients in correspondence. How did the inquisitorial trio get away with such a travesty? Where were the checks and balances? It is obvious that, as administrators, they bonded together in mutual support at a time when determination, courage and a degree of ruthlessness were necessary. The State had come through a Civil War, discipline and courage in an unarmed police force was vital. They were obviously motivated by a desire to make an example of a wrongdoer to promote discipline within the generality of the Garda'. However, for men who took pride in their ability, they lost sight of the fundamental principles. Who were these inept men?

Inquisition

General Eoin O'Duffy, the Garda Commissioner, was a rigid disciplinarian. His rather chilling dictum was 'orders, orders, orders and strident objurgations' (a harsh reproof), followed by 'obey, obey, obey and nothing but obey'. The soldier in him decided that men were expendable for the overall good of those under his command. One has only to read his GENERAL ORDERS 1922 to show that he expected unarmed Garda' to resist raiders who were using rifles and revolvers. "The behaviour of the unarmed Guards in Wolfhill, Drumlish, Killimor and Askeaton, when their little posts were attacked with rifle and revolver, will remain as an incentive and encouragement to others. I am especially pleased with the attitude of the men and have no doubt that the example so well set will be the routine for the future". It was this mindset that caused his prejudice against Superintendent William Geary. He set aside the 1926 Discipline Regulations to exercise summary punishment.

Deputy Commissioner Eamonn Coogan, B.A., B.Comm., B.L., was a well-educated career officer. He participated in the Commissioner's unorthodox interrogation of William Geary out of expediency. As a Bachelor of Law he could not plead ignorance of the proper procedure. After General O'Duffy was sacked by De Valera in 1933 an element of Coogan's patronage was dissipated. In 1936 he was removed from office in

controversial circumstances, though he was lucky enough to be re-appointed as a Chief Superintendent. He received more kindly treatment than was dispensed by him to his erstwhile colleague, Superintendent William Geary.

David Neligan joined the Dublin Metropolitan Police in April 1918 and was sworn in to 'keep the peace'. This did not deter him, as a double agent, from being instrumental in the assassination of his colleagues in the Division in 1919. Some would describe him as a "mé féiner", one who promotes self-interest. David Neligan was the 'inquisitor' on the 15th June 1928 for he was both prosecutor and judge. It is interesting to note that, after his dismissal, William Geary still had hopes that a Garda investigation would clear his name, though a prominent clergyman said to him, "Do not trust Neligan".

Happy Ending

Is there a happy ending? Yes! William Geary has been fully vindicated and his honour restored. He has enjoyed completeness in his life, a happy family, success in business and recognition of his virtue in various ways. In the Millennium year in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York, William Geary was honoured by the Papacy in Rome - he was conferred with a Knighthood in the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. The Order goes back 900 years to the first Crusade. The 'Limerick Leader' newspaper reported on 24th September 2001 that, at St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York, Cllr. John Ryan, Mayor of Limerick, presented William Geary with a Commemorative Scroll for services to the county. In a letter dated 24th September 2002 William Geary wrote, "I have the greatest affection for Clare people, reciprocated, as Kilrush Town Councillors voted to give me its keys, an unique honour".

In summation, the characters in this drama have gone to their eternal reward, so have all of William Geary's comrades of 1922. It seems fitting that, as the last survivor of the founding members of the Force, it should be left to a man of integrity, honour, courage and principle, to represent all the other great men that forged the traditions of which the Garda Síochána is justifiably proud. William Geary, born in the 19th century, flourished in the 20th century, is now vigorously challenging the 21st century. A native of Feenagh, he is brother of the late Michael Geary of Geary's Hotel.

Superintendent William Geary (retired) we salute you.

Chernobyl Children's Project

A Race Night was held in Rathkeale House Hotel on Saturday, 4th October in aid of the Chernobyl Children's Project. The organising committee would like to thank all those who helped to make the night such a big success - the race sponsors; the advertisers; those who bought horses; all who attended on the night; Anthony Fitzsimons who ensured the night went smoothly with his excellent commentary; Basil Ruttle who ran the 'Auction Race'; Michael Mulcahy, projectionist; Patsy's Fashions who sponsored the 'Best Dressed Lady'; Caroline Casey who picked the winner and the management and staff of Rathkeale House Hotel. Special guest on the night was Adi Roche, Chief Executive and founder member of the Chernobyl Children's Project.

During the evening, a video of the consequences of the nuclear disaster and the aid being given to the children of Belarus was shown, which was followed by a heartfelt talk by Adi Roche on her experiences in Belarus.

On 16th October a group of local tradesmen and members of the Granagh Outreach Group travelled to four different destinations in Belarus to carry out much needed building work in orphanages. All money made from the Race Night will go towards the project.

Belarus is the world's most radioactive environment, where two thousand towns and villages lie eerily silent. This situation will continue forever.

Please continue your kind support for this worthy cause. Anyone willing to donate time or money to help or those who would be willing to take a child into their home for a summer break should contact Anne Reidy or any member of the Granagh Outreach Committee. This holiday can be a very rewarding experience for both the child and the host family.

Rathkeale and District Historical Society

The season of talks for this winter commenced in October when Gerald O'Carroll spoke on the life of Justice Robert Day who lived between 1746 and 1841. This was followed later in that month when Tom Donovan spoke on 'The Grand Jury System in County Limerick' - the Grand Juries later became the modern County Councils. In November we listened to an absorbing lecture on the life and death of Robert Emmet from Ruan O'Donnell of U.L.

The next event will be the 'Local Night' when we will have a number of speakers, each of whom will contribute a short talk on an item of particular local interest. That will take place on 30th January in the Palatine Centre, commencing at 8.30 p.m.

On 13th February, Davie Cahill will present a talk on 'The Cork Butter Market and its connections with County Limerick'. The final presentation will be by Dr. Daith' Hogan of U.C.D. on 'The Folklore of County Limerick'.

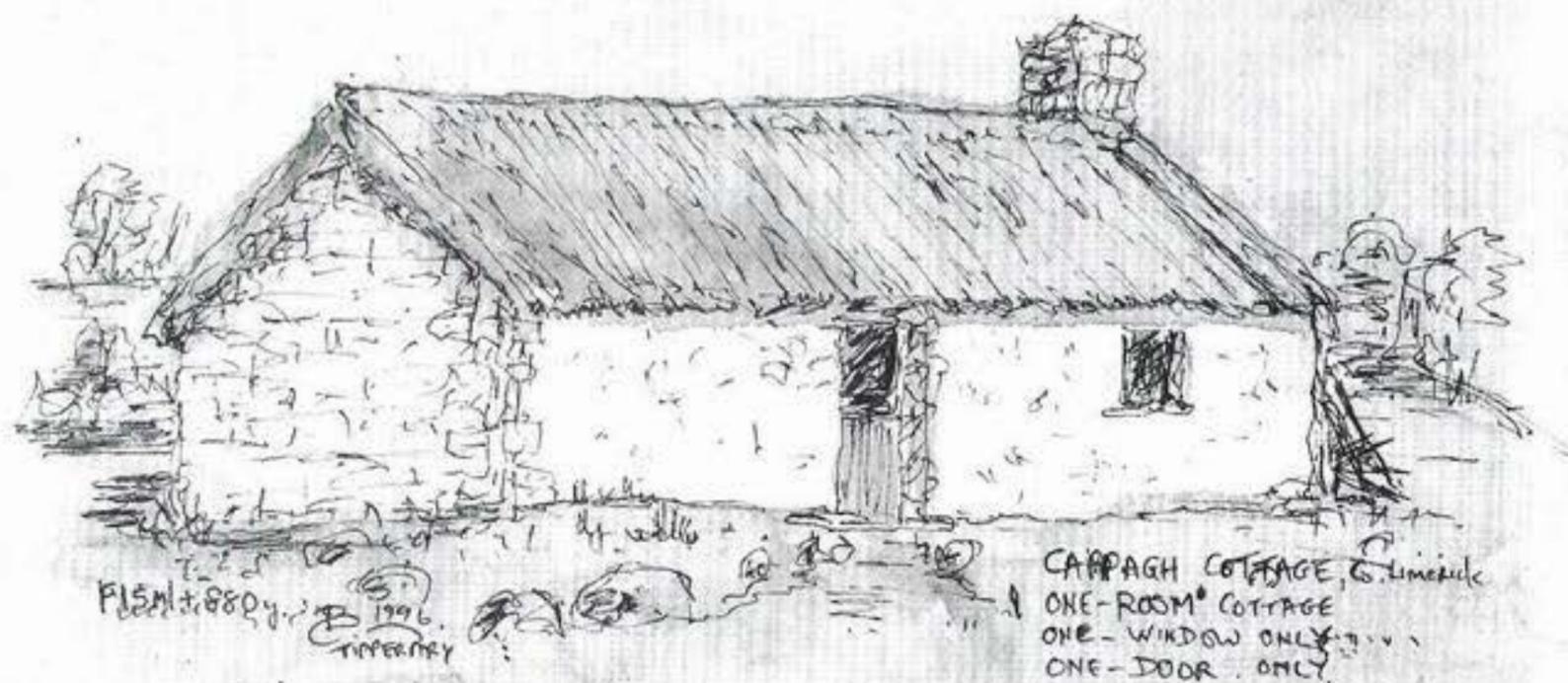
This year all the events take place in the Palatine Centre and we must thank the committee sincerely for making the premises available at short notice. Admission is free to all our talks and everyone is welcome.

• Reginald Baker - Australian all-rounder

Reginald Baker, born in Sydney, son of George Baker, Ballingrane (nicknamed Snowy - so called because of his blond hair) distinguished himself in all aspects of sport. From the age of thirteen on he won forty titles at swimming, played rugby for N.S.W. and for Australia against the British rugby touring team. In 1905-6 he won the Middleweight Boxing Championship. He boxed for Australia in the 1908 Olympics and reached the finals.

He then got involved in the Australian film industry. He acted in four Western films. In these films he rode a silver grey horse named 'Boomerang' which he got from an uncle Gideon in Ballingrane when he visited there.

In 1952 he returned to Sydney, specially invited to a civic reception in his honour. He died in Hollywood in 1952. A legendary sportsman of Irish-Australian descent.



Reconstruction of One Room Cottage in Cappagh on the Limk-Foynes Railway Line at 15½ Milepost.
7 members of O'Connell family lived there.

Memories of Schoolboy Days at Rathkeale - Incidents and Adventures Recalled

(By George Vaughan, Southampton)

For some years before the outbreak of the second World War, it was my invariable custom, on each Saturday about noon, to hie myself to Spencer's Bookstore, St. Mary's Street, Southampton, there to browse on the evergreen intellectual pastures of all the great writers and generally taking a volume away with me for weekend reading. By an arrangement with Miss Spencer, the proprietress, I had the first offer of any interesting Irish books that came her way and was thus able to gather together a good selection of such books, including two histories of Ireland, the complete works of William Carlton, Knocknagow, Moore's Poetical Works and many others. There was one publication, however, which always eluded me - 'The Shamrock', containing the adventures of Mick McQuaid - but though Miss Spencer tried in many likely places, she was not successful.

It was at this store I came across the 'Third Reading Book'. There was a tram stop for Bitterne Park quite close to the store and one day, while waiting for a tram, I passed the time looking through the books on the stall outside the shop. I picked up one from the penny box but as its title 'Third Reading Book' had no special appeal to me at that moment I was on the point of putting it down when I noticed something familiar about the cover. I turned to the title page and read "Published by Direction of Commissioners of National Education, Ireland". It was the reading book of my early schooldays in Rathkeale. I paid my penny and the book was mine.

During my leisure hours that evening I brought it forth again and my first reaction was that its original owner must have been a very careful scholar. The usual thumb marks were absent as was also the embellishment of the illustrations by the red and blue pencil so beloved by the boys of that school age. Missing was the warning "to his honest friend" of the tragic end that awaited him if he stole "this book" and there was no poem telling the world that "so and so" is his name, "Ireland his Nation" and finishing up with "This little book will tell my name when I am quite forgotten". It is a pity that the name was not included as it would have given me the greatest pleasure to have returned the book to him.

As I commenced turning the pages my thoughts went back to the old school with its large glass partition separating the two classes, the maps hanging on the wall, the Natural History illustrations in frames around the rooms, the tonic solfa system on the easel, ready for the

day's singing lesson, the view of Commons Lough from the far right hand window and, last but not least, the desk of the principal teacher, Mr. Richard Hayes, near the door. I can still hear his voice echoing down the years as he calls the roll of sixth class. "John Irwin" (here, sir) with the rest - Tommie Guinane, George Barry, Frank Ward, Paddy Chawke, Pat McDonnell, Jimmy Walsh, Joe Conway, Phil Sullivan, Gerald Scanlon, Con Connell, Tomeen Kennedy, Jer Shanahan, Jack O'Dea, Johnnie Cosgreave, Matt Quaid, Paddy Hayes, Jim Hennessy, Dan Fitzgerald, Tom Donoghue, Henry Shepherd, Jimmie Wall, Pat Scully, Jim Shea, Moss Casey, Dan (or Con) Sheahan, Dinny Madigan, Johnnie Histon, Willie Hayes, John Shaughnessy and myself.

My reason for mentioning the roll call of the sixth class is that we had all progressed from the 'Third Book' and, by this time, become a real band of brothers and old enough to take part in all games and pastimes, hurling, football and cricket with other town teams, plays and concerts, swimming at the flood gates and Condons, not forgetting cowboys and Indians at Massey's Island. Many of us were member of 'Holycross' and 'Town' Fife and Drum bands. I could write a lot about the activities of some of these boys but lack of space prevents me. I must, however, give a short paragraph to one who was a great pal of mine, Johnnie Cosgreave (John F. solicitor).

We studied for the science and art examinations together, which we passed, and I have pleasant recollections of cricket matches in the bog field near the Workhouse, of taking his pigeons for a flight (and what a grand flier that red and white one was) and of those drives in his donkey and carriage. One of the latter I remember in particular, accompanied by his brother Willie, out to the White Forge, round by the Dark Road, on to Nantenan, then to Ballingarrane, Roches Road and down Main Street in great style to his own home. I have just learned with the greatest regret that Johnnie passed to his eternal reward some three years ago. May he rest in peace.

Absence from school without leave (or 'mooching' as it was known locally), was not looked on so seriously in those days as it is now. In consequence of which there were occasions when some of the boys thought that a day in the country would be worth a few smacks across the palm, which they would certainly get if found out. Then Fr. Jerry Murphy (later Canon and P.P. of Abbeyfeale) arrived. He was a very good athlete and, as he could run like a hare, he declared war on the 'moochers' straight

away. Each morning he would get from Mr. Hayes a list of those boys who were absent and, on finding out the genuine cases, he would get on the trail of the 'moochers' and, when found, march them to school, where he would punish them himself.

I remember once when one of the pupils was looking from the school window, he saw two boys running for all they were worth behind the Workhouse and shortly afterwards Fr. Jerry came into sight about one hundred yards in the rear. The pupil excitedly passed the word around and soon pupils and teachers were straining their necks at the window to see the result of the chase. Fr. Jerry's long leaps soon brought him up to the boys and, by the time they reached the school, we were all in our places and the usual punishment was dished out. After that, 'mooching' gradually faded away.

I hang my head in shame as I confess to having mooched on two occasions, one of which ended disastrously for me and the other nearly so. It was before Fr. Jerry's time. We had a very harsh assistant teacher who will, no doubt, be remembered by many of the old boys and anyone who didn't have his lessons was for it. One night there was a large attendance at a Land League meeting held in the town, with speakers addressing the gathering from the steps of Moylan's Hotel. I was there and as it was rather late when the meeting ended my homework was not done and I couldn't face that teacher the following morning. I decided to 'mooch' - it doesn't matter where but it wasn't far from the school. I was also absent on the second day but on the third, while waiting at the chapel gate for the boys to come out from school so as to join them in the rush down Thomas Street, I happened to look across the road and saw my mother going up the steps of Miss Clyne's little shop. When she saw me she commenced beckoning, as I thought to myself, but on glancing round I noticed two R.I.C. men, who were at the time passing the school, commencing to run and seeing they were evidently after me I started to get a move on in the direction of the New Road. Knowing that if I went down the long steps with two policemen after me I would be the centre of attention to all in the neighbourhood, I therefore turned to the right and continued round the chapel building but, in doing so, I didn't reckon on the detective instincts of Constable Flaherty. He had doubled back in the opposite direction and, as I rounded the bend, I saw to my horror that he was waiting for me. Having too much speed on I was unable to control myself and ran straight in to the extended arms of the law. I was then escorted between two six-foot constables to the school and handed over to Mr. Hayes whom I am sure saw the humour of the situation for, instead of punishing me, he told me to go to my place in the class and I never heard any more about it.

The other occasion was when we were living in the Lower Main Street and my father and mother decided to have a holiday in their own home towns, Cahirciveen

and Caherdaniel in Co. Kerry. Before leaving, they asked Constable McGrath to keep an eye on us during their absence. I thought this would be a great opportunity for a 'mooch' so, one morning after breakfast, instead of going out the front gate as usual, I slipped down the long yard and then through the gate of the kitchen garden. There was a large rose bush at the end of the garden, with a seat underneath, where I made myself comfortable and commenced reading stories of adventure in 'wide open spaces of the wild west' which I had brought with me.

After reading for some time, I put my book down, thinking what a pity we couldn't have such adventures in our country when I happened to glance towards the gate. There I saw staring at me the face of Constable McGrath. Trained against the garden wall was a plum tree whose outstretched branches were as good as a ladder to me then so, when I saw the constable, I dashed across and shinned up the tree, walked along the wall for a short distance, avoiding the pieces of glass imbedded on top, and then leaned over and let myself hang by my hands. Before doing so I looked back to see if I was being chased. I was, so I let go the wall and dropped about twenty feet and ran off towards the railway line. When I was about fifty yards on I looked back again and saw the policeman looking after me from the top of the wall but making no effort to follow me. However, leaving nothing to chance, I continued for about another fifty yards, looked back and could see no sign of my pursuer. I slowed down, rested for a while, and walked leisurely along the railway line, turning into Johnstone's field near the mill stream and then home by Church Street, making sure that Constable McGrath was not around before entering. Needless to say, I was in my usual place in class the next morning.

I found out afterwards why he had given up the chase. On climbing the plum tree and grasping the top of the wall his hand came in contact with a piece of spiked glass which caused a deep gash which bled profusely. He said he was very glad to see me running as he expected to see me laid out with two fractured legs. Those were the days when, if the ground was hard with frost or the fields white with snow, we took our 'cribs' (pyramid-shaped bird traps made of twigs) to Massey's Island to catch blackbirds, thrushes and starlings. A good catch of these birds boiling in a pot with potatoes and turnips was not to be sneezed at by a half dozen hungry schoolboys. Then at night, thanks to the generosity of Major General Lloyd, a gentleman well beloved by the citizens of Rathkeale and who never forgot the poor of the town at Christmas, there would be skating by moonlight on his lake at Beechmount (by torchlight if there was no moon). Jerry Fennell would play popular airs on his English concertina as the skaters round and round kept time to the music. Yes, those were the days.

I don't suppose that any citizen of Rathkeale now remembers the Thomas Street hurling, football and cricket clubs or the Fife and Drum Band? Our group was five in number: Paddy and Dick Hayes, Willie Mulcahy, Willie Cagney and myself. After hours the school playground was our sportsfield and for hurling and football it wasn't too bad as, with short passes, the ball could be kept within the boundaries of the school ground. For cricket it was not so good as a hard smack on the ball could drive it into Kennedy's field and it had to be retrieved by going over the school wall, across the road and then over the field wall only to find it was 'lost ball' in the long grass. It might, on the other hand, take a different course down the sloping road to the railway station gates about two hundred yards away. Cricket was indeed a strenuous game as played by our club. The Fife and Drum Band (fourteen whistles and a sixpenny drum) had its band room in our house - now I believe the Post Office - and in the evenings when we were out we gaily marched away up Thomas Street, round by the school, down to the railway station, back again past the R.I.C. Barracks, on to Fair Hill and then back to the band room. What we lacked in musical ability we made up for in the noise made by the shrill tooting of the tin whistles and the banging on the drum.

And now back again to the 'Third Book' and to its lessons, comments on which must obviously be limited. The first one is appropriately the 'Story of the River Shannon'. I remember well it was on a lovely day in mid-Summer when I had my first view of that river from the high ground on the Askeaton side of Colonel White's demesne at Nantenan. What a beautiful sight it was, its broad expanse of water, steamships plying to and from Limerick, sailing ships large and small, and the lighthouse (Aughinish, I believe) did not appear so far away. I saw the Shannon many times after that - at Foynes and Limerick, also at Castleconnell and Killaloe where it expands to form Lough Derg. Is it too much to be hoped that one day the green banks of the Shannon will become hives of industry by the construction of ship building yards, employing thousands of workers in producing ocean going steamships as in other countries and that large liners will glide up the river as far as navigation will allow? Stranger things have happened - Shannon Airport and the Shannon Scheme for example - so why not Shannon Ship Building Yards. I leave the answer to wiser heads and better brains than mine. My reason for this break in the story is that I have just seen a news paragraph in an English Sunday paper to the effect that Eire is purchasing three merchant ships with a total tonnage of 13,000 tons, from Britain.

The next lesson to catch my attention in the 'Third Book' was titled 'Travel in Foreign Countries'. Little did I think then that I would visit many of these countries, my wanderings taking me to France, Italy, Russia and Malta. Still turning the pages, I pass further lessons and how familiar their titles seem now: Anecdotes of Dogs, The

Fox and the Goat, Mitchelstown Caves, Wild Geese, The Wolf and the Lamb, and the poems: Canadian Boat Song, Fairy Boy, Harper and His Dog, The Brook and Sweet Adare. As my visits to Adare were not frequent my recollections of that lovely vale are not very clear. I recall a lovely avenue of tall trees with nice houses set back from the road and each having roses entwined around the door. I remember the Dunraven Arms Hotel, near the Demesne gates, through visiting the Manor House with my parents when I was very young. I have heard that David O'Shaughnessy, brother of my pal John, and of Pat Joe (formerly M.P. for West Limerick) is going on very well there.

I would like to send personal messages to two very old friends who, although not classmates, attended the school in my time. I would like to thank Michael John Hassett of Church Street for keeping me well supplied with news of the old Borough Town for over sixteen years without a break. Twice a year, at Christmas and St. Patrick's Day, he has written to me and never forgot the sprigs of shamrock. Congratulations to Mr. Patrick (Paddy) Lynch, Church Street on the outstanding success of his brilliant son, Christopher, the successor to the late Count John McCormack as Ireland's premier singer. I remember those days in Thomas Street with his brother Christy and sister Alice. He tried very hard to teach me rugby as played by Garryowen (he was not long out from Limerick at the time). I still have in my possession a letter received many years ago from Paddy's mother.

This article was submitted by Mrs. Ann Lee from Dublin and appeared in the Limerick Leader in December 1946. Mr. Vaughan added a postscript as follows:

At the commencement of my story I mentioned Spencer's bookshop. During extensive bombing of Southampton in November/December 1940 this shop was one of the first to be destroyed. No lives were lost. Owing to our air raid shelter being waterlogged my family had to take refuge under the stairs. The blasts from the bombs shook the house to the point of collapse and we expected each moment to be our last. During the occasional lull in the bombing I would slip upstairs and the sight from the back window which overlooked the main part of town was really terrible. Many of the planes concentrated on that particular spot but none of them came within two hundred yards of my house and the only damage caused was cracked ceilings and walls. Meeting Miss Spencer afterwards she told me her loss in books was about £2,000 including many rare editions.

Having acquired the reading book just before the outbreak of war, it was my intention to write the story then, but as it would not have been possible to get it away in time to avoid censorship, I had to postpone it to a more favourable opportunity.

Some folklore stories of Penal times

..... *from Caoimhin Ó Danachair*

There are many traditions of the adventures of priests in the time of active persecution, for instance. There was a family connection of ours, a Father James Sheehy, who was active in his priestly duty around Rathkeale before the Siege of Limerick but, under the Penal Laws, he had to go about in disguise. The son and heir of Viscount Southwell of Mount Southwell - at the western end of the town of Rathkeale - was his good friend and often entertained him. When the priest hunters became active Fr. Sheehy often took refuge in Mount Southwell house - it is said that he had a secret hiding place there. The landlord, Viscount Southwell, was a good friend to some priests but a bitter enemy of others. Fr. Sheehy, whose people were tenants of the Southwells and who was young Southwell's friend, was always welcome and the priest-hunters never knew of his refuge, or if they did they stood in awe of Southwell, who was a man of some importance.

Once, young Southwell gave Fr. Sheehy a present of a fine horse. Now there was another landlord in the district, one Studdart of Elm Hill - he was the son of a Colonel of Cromwell's army. One day this Studdart met Fr. Sheehy and demanded the horse for five pounds and when the priest objected he was taken by Studdart's men and landed in jail. Word came to young Southwell, and he put a charge against Studdart of stealing a saddle and a bridle, his (Southwell's) property, and he went with the sheriff's men to land Studdart in the same jail as Fr. Sheehy. The result was that the charges were dropped on both sides and Fr. Sheehy got the horse back. The priest was glad to get back to his work quietly, but young Southwell challenged Studdart to a duel. But Studdart was a coward, not like his old father the Cromwellian, and he earned the contempt of the local gentry by refusing to fight.

This Fr. Sheehy is buried in the Moylan plot in the grounds of the Protestant Church in Rathkeale. Two graves in that plot are covered with flat stones to show that priests were buried there because the custom was that, when a priest was buried, no other burial could be made in that grave - that is why there were flat gravestones there. The stone over Fr. Sheehy has no inscription but the other, over his grand-nephew Fr. Con Deely, tells how he died in 1817 at the age of 97 of a fever contracted by attendance at a sick bed of the contagion.

We get some information too about burials and graveyards. As regards the old burying grounds, the Catholics used to be buried in Kilscannel, but in the Penal Days they were forced to bury their dead in the Protestant graveyard - some families are still buried there but most of the people have graves now in the new

cemetery. My mother's people were buried in the Protestant graveyard for two hundred years. Naturally the Catholics objected to burying their dead in the Protestant graveyard, and often they asked the landlord to let them bury them with their forefathers; this permission was often given, but with instructions to do it quietly. It was often, too, that people made a pretence of burying their dead in the Protestant graveyard, while they really buried them elsewhere by night.

One of the greatest causes of offence to the ordinary people under the Penal Laws was the attack upon education, and folk tradition has much to say of the people's efforts to meet this attack. The hedge schools and the poor scholars are familiar themes. As, for example, this little incident. My father's grandfather was a farmer and a schoolmaster; he used to have a night school in his home. Once upon a time the local landlord, Yellow George Lake, raided his house with a party of yeomen. They were hunting for Whiteboys, and Lake demanded to know where the old man was on such a night. "I was here in my own house", he said, "and you should know that well because I did two pages of Latin translation that same night with your own son". Young Lake was preparing to go to Trinity College and attended the night school for a couple of years.

And here is another anecdote which brings a bygone age very close to us. I remember one November evening when I was running home from school to my grandmother's house along the double ditch. I was hungry and my thoughts were set on a big plate of pandy and butter and a wedge of the Halloween apple cake. When I came into the kitchen my grandmother and the other old woman whom we used to call Aunty Norrey were sitting at the fire with a very old priest, all talking together in Irish and all laughing and crying at the same time. Then I heard this story, and forgot my hunger while I was listening to it. My grandmother's father was Tom Culhane of Riddlestown, and a night school used to be held in his house. My grandmother was only a small girl when this happened. It was some years before the Battle of Waterloo, because she remembered the day when the news of that battle came to the races of Rathkeale, and she was at the races that day, at the age of fourteen. Well, one of the local priests, a Father Darby Egan, used to come and teach the boys Latin, and one night when the school was over, one of the boys - his name was Connors - was on his way home when he was arrested by a patrol of military who accused him of being a Whiteboy and took him off a prisoner to Limerick jail. They all knew what that meant, either transportation or to be pressed into the British navy.

Now Mrs. Culhane, my great-grandmother - her name

was Mary Mulcahy - was a friend of the housekeeper in the big house, Blennerhasset, and had often spoken to the landlord himself, for she spoke very good English as well as Irish. She put on her cloak and went to the big house and told her tale to Mrs. Blennerhasset. The landlord was an important man, a magistrate and a member of the Limerick Grand Jury, and he took up the case. A few days later Tom Culhane went to Limerick with a load of wheat and, that same night, while the school was in session they heard the car coming into the yard and in came the man of the house and with him young Connors. When the congratulations died down, the woman of the house wanted to know all about it. "Anois, a bhuachaill", said she, "innis dæinn na h-eachtra' go léir". Young Connors swept off his hat and bowed low to her, saying "Infandum, Regina, jubes renovare dolorem". And the old priest who was there in the house with my grandmother was the same man, Father Connors, now back home after a lifetime in the American missions.

As we might expect, the attack upon the property and prosperity of Catholics was a burning memory. Here again the theme is wide, for not only the provisions of the Penal Laws, but also the various confiscations, the rackrenting, and the evictions form one picture. A typical anecdote will wander around the point, but the detail will often give a vivid glimpse of the contemporary scene.

For example, this anecdote. There were two landlord families living in the north of Rathkeale, the Masseys who were Protestants and the Whites who were Catholics - their descendants are there yet. When White was deprived of his lands, his friend Massey arranged that he should live on there, as Massey's tenant. The land was restored to the Whites by a descendant of the Masseys in Henry Grattan's time.

Once upon a time both Massey and White were asked to a party by another landlord, Hunt of Inchirourke, and when they were coming away in the morning, riding down the avenue at dawn, they came on a corpse hanging from a tree. They recognised the dead man as one Fitzgerald, a little tailor from Rathkeale, who used to make clothes for both of them, so they looked on him as one of their men. They were told that this poor tailor had come during the party to ask Hunt to pay his bill and he, in a drunken rage, ordered his men to take him out and hang him. White said he would challenge Hunt to a duel but Massey objected. "You are a Catholic, White", said he, "and if he kills you, you'll be damned, because you're not supposed to fight duels. But there is nothing like that to stop me". They argued for a while but in the end Massey had his way, and they rode back to the house, and Massey struck Hunt across the face before his guests. Then there was no refusing. Out they went on the lawn and Massey, who was a dead shot, killed Hunt at the first discharge of the pistols.

We might range far and wide over Irish folk tradition, giving example after example of this kind. But for our present purpose the examples given here show that folk tradition can supplement the written record in our investigation of the Penal Laws, as in so many other matters.



The Workhouse of Ra'kale

*Hurrah for the tramps of Ireland,
Who do not care a straw,
For all these spalpeen hirelings,
Who run the ould Poor Law.
The Guardians say they'll keep us down,
But we will make them quail,
For we'll combine in one strong line,
From Antrim to Ra'kale.*

Chorus

*So hurrah for the tramps of Ireland,
Hurrah, hurruh, hurree.
Down with the spalpeen hirelings,
Who boss the L.G.B.

Now tramps beware and do not care,
But stand up to a man,
For we must get our buttered bread,
Our mutton, cheese and ham.
With beef and pork and chicken choked,
With porter, likewise ale,
And with malt and wine we'll end our time,
In the Workhouse of Ra'kale.*

Chorus

*On the first day of October,
We're all here to be seen,
With our knapsacks on our shoulders,
Upon the Fair Hill green.
The sows can snort and grumble,
The bonhams squeak and squale,
When the cocks will crow, they we'll go,
To the Workhouse of Ra'kale.*

Chorus

*So fare thee well, Newcastle West,
Goodbye, Kilmallock Town,
And may God prosper dear old Croom,
Where the shamrock we did drown.
We won't forget old Limerick,
Where we spent some time in jail,
So we'll telephone the Governor,
When we land in sweet Ra'kale.*

Memories of Bridie Culhane, Croagh

By Miriam Culhane

More mature Rathkeale/Croagh people might remember my aunt Bridie Culhane who worked in a solicitor's office in Rathkeale for many years. The following is the story of her life and a tribute to her.

My aunt Bridie, baptised Bridget, was born in May 1903, second daughter of Bridget and Michael Culhane. She was born into a very different Ireland, still under an English government, Edwardian in terms of its rigid class divisions, gracious manners, poverty and thrift. My aunts brought aspects of this upbringing with them all their lives. Although Bridie was not the eldest, in many respects she became the eldest as her older sister Pearl, baptised Margaret, was born profoundly deaf. Perhaps Bridie put others before herself because of this.

My grandparents were comfortably off and Pearl was sent to the School for Deaf (Girls) in Cabra, Dublin. Great credit is due to my grandparents for their foresight in educating Pearl as many disabled people then were simply kept at home.

Bridie and her other sister Mary went to Croagh National School - the original school - the present Community Centre. They and my father were taught by Mr. & Mrs. O'Dwyer whom they feared, respected and sometimes liked. From there Bridie went to the Dominican Convent School in Eccles Street in Dublin. I have no idea how she liked this school - she never spoke much about it. It was a very troubled time in Ireland - there was civil unrest - letters my aunt wrote home had to go from Dublin to Liverpool by boat, then to Cork and finally to Croagh or where ever. My grandparents must have always been concerned about their daughters' safety.

Bridie obviously did some kind of secretarial course although she herself used to joke that she could only type with two or three fingers. After much searching for a job in the Limerick area, she found one at John Cosgrave, Solicitors, Main Street, Rathkeale - situated in the present Mrs. Doherty's house. This was possibly in the early to mid 1920's. She was to remain there for the next sixty years or so. Bridie enjoyed working at Cosgraves, there often was evening tea in the big drawing room with a fire in the grate. Mr. Cosgrave himself would only deal with 'suitable' legal stuff, wills and farm sales I suppose. Anything that was unsuitable, risky or 'unsavoury' simply did not come in HIS door.

There was a sad note in Bridie's life at this time. In 1927 her mother Bridget Culhane (nee Scanlan) died - I understand from complications from undiagnosed diabetes. This put more responsibility on Bridie in the home and left all the family, especially my father, with a lifelong fear of diabetes. Insulin came into use a few years later.

There was a Mulcair family in Killea, Croagh at this time. Some of this family had emigrated to Australia. On a visit home, one of these Mulcairs asked Bridie to come with them and start a new life in Australia. My aunt didn't go. I often wondered what her life would have been like if she had gone and what effect it would have had on her family and on future generations. My sisters and I might have had cousins (Culhanes)! I know why Bridie didn't go or I can guess - her widowed father, the care of Pearl and my own father who was still relatively young. I believe this happened in the 1930's but I am open to correction.

Sometime in the early 1940's the solicitor's practice in Rathkeale was bought by a Seamus Casey - known within the Culhane family as simply just 'Casey'. There is a funny story in connection with this. Seamus Casey was practising as a solicitor in Dublin and he was dating Madeleine - later his wife. Madeleine worked in a clerical job in the Mater Hospital and she lived in the residents staff quarters. In the Mater then was a formidable and strict matron called Molly Culhane from Newcastle West. These Culhanes are related to us. This matron was extremely strict with nurses and staff under her care - they had to be in at night quite early. Apparently, on some occasions while dropping Madeleine off at her digs, Seamus Casey had to dodge down corridors to avoid 'Culhane' checking up on staff. Terrified nurses would rush by whispering 'Culhane is coming'. It must have been a bit of a shock for Seamus Casey to arrive in Rathkeale and find in the office before him - yes, you guessed it - another formidable Culhane lady - Bridie - and what was worse, these two Culhanes were related!!

It seems to be a belief nowadays that people growing up in the 1920's-1940's had miserable lives with no socialising. This is simply not true of my aunts. They certainly had a social life. First of all, there was the Hunt Ball in Rathkeale, held once or twice a year. I am not sure where this event was held and I assume it must have died out before World War 2, but my aunts definitely went to these things and had lovely gowns for the occasion. It was a very formal and grand affair. Then there were the picnics at Foynes Yacht Club - with groups of Rathkeale people going there. My aunts stayed at the house of their 'great friends' - the MacNamaras at Toomdeely, Askeaton - known by my aunts as 'the Macs'.

When my aunt Mary, called Dolly, married in 1938 - she married a Jack Burke - Bridie's social life improved too. All three of them went on trips to Clare - Kilkee and Quilty - and on shopping trips to Dublin. They also went on holidays to Spain and France.

The 1940's and 1950's were conservative times and

Bridie lived a quiet life - the death of Michael Culhane in 1944 and later rural electrification were probably major changes in her life. Perhaps the biggest change of all came in 1959 when her brother, George, my father, married a Mary Ryan. It must have been quite an upheaval for this staid and middle aged family. Comments were made in Croagh about "that young girl marrying into that family and they are all old". The Culhanes were not really old, just perhaps a little settled. My mother, always tactful, managed to fit in to this family quite well - perhaps she didn't disturb the waters too much - but the arrival in the following decade of three small noisy children must have been a tornado of the severest kind.

My earliest memory of my aunt Bridie is the 'saga of the dyed green shoes'. Apparently Bridie was going to Rome to see the city and a public audience with the Pope. She had a lovely Kelly green suit - I think it was Kelly green - and she was trying not very successfully to dye the shoes the same colour. Hours went on this job. I can remember the shoes on newspaper in the back kitchen and the smell of the dye. I think she finally got the shoes dyed properly or maybe they didn't quite dye evenly but Bridie went to Rome and we have a lovely black and white photo of the occasion. After all that trouble it was a black and white photograph!!

My aunt was a fearless driver- she had never sat a test I think - but she loved driving and the freedom it gave a lady on her own. There was the story of her trip to Knock Shrine with a few Croagh neighbours. Bridie could drive this car but could not reverse it. When the party got to Knock, my aunt parked in an awkward way. When they were leaving, she could not reverse the car and had to drive several miles of a detour to get back on the Limerick road. Then there was the spooky incident at Hayes of Dohyle or Dohile. Bridie was coming home late and a thick mist or fog came down very quickly. At the bad bend at Hayes of Dohile, Bridie must have driven off the road, through an open farm gate and onto the railway tracks there - or almost onto the tracks. It gave my aunt a very bad fright but my father teased her relentlessly. "You were looking around you, Bridie" or "Is it a train you are driving, Bridie?". We never got to the bottom of how she managed to drive onto the railway line.

In 1974 my uncle Jack Bourke died and my aunt inherited, by proxy if you like, his car - a small green Clubman Estate. Now Bridie was on top of the world. A car she could call her own - she didn't actually own the car but as Mrs. Bourke couldn't and wouldn't drive, Bridie took over and drove everywhere - downtown Limerick (difficult even in the 1970's), Killaloe, Croagh, Rathkeale and mostly famously of all Tralee. One way streets in Tralee presented no problem to Bridie - she simply just went down the wrong way and kept going! Bridie was driving, with my aunt Dolly in the front seat, my sister and I in the back seat, trying to be invisible, and in the boot compartment a spaniel called Brandy. When

Bridie would get lost in Tralee - it happened often - she would stop, wind down the window and, in her poshest tone of voice, call to a helpful passer-by "Pardon me, could you direct ..." . This helpful passer-by would approach the car and Brandy would bark his head off as the stranger was too close to HIS car. It always took quite a while for us to get around Tralee!

Sometime in the late 1970's right through until about 1985 my aunts regularly went to Lourdes for Easter. When they were younger they always finished off holidays in France or Spain with a brief visit to Lourdes and they loved the place. These visits stopped for a time when my aunt Dolly was widowed in 1974. Bridie bravely took the decision to move to Limerick to stay with her sister indefinitely. This was certainly a huge change for Bridie for she had lived in Croagh all her life. She continued to travel to Rathkeale and to the solicitor's office every day - just for the chat and meeting people. By then it was for just a few hours each day but Bridie loved meeting people and chatting to them.

To return to the trips to Lourdes - these resumed in 1976, I think, and I was with my aunts on that occasion. Most people plan their holidays, fair enough, but with my aunts it was a major expedition equalling only to climbing Everest or emigration. Locking up a house and organising currency (it was before the Euro) was difficult enough but the biggest issue for Bridie and Dolly was not passports or hotel rooms but shoes - yes, shoes. They had a huge issue around shoes. They had to have comfortable shoes for walking, pretty shoes for evening wear, slippers that were presentable, shoes for the rain and, oh yes, more comfortable shoes for walking. Obviously space being limited my aunts could not take ALL their shoes but for many, many weeks before their departure date, my aunts fussed over shoes. Shoes would be purchased in such a shop, then returned the following day, another pair might be bought and returned before finally a firm decision was reached. All this and my aunts would still take most of their original comfortable shoes. Once, after a particularly long and heavy discussion in the kitchen at the house in Croagh, my father joked that when their plane finally left Shannon for Lourdes, a small plane would be chugging along behind carrying all my aunts' shoes.

By 1990 Bridie's mental health was declining a little, physically she continued to be in very good health. Reluctantly, by 1991/92, both my aunts had to make a tough decision and go into a nursing home. Bridie took a little while to settle in. Physically she was in good health as I said but her mind did deteriorate in the next year or so. She sometimes wished to come home to Croagh and this always upset my mother and us for Bridie was remembering past events.

My aunt Bridie died in September 1995. She had lived a very long and useful life and I know she had had quite a bit of fun in it. Presumably, she is in heaven typing up wills for probate and having a little kind joke about people.

Rathkeale Brass Band

Rathkeale Brass Band has a history dating back for over 150 years. The first known recorded reference to the band in Rathkeale was made in 1840 in the occasion of a visit to the town of Rev. Fr. Matthew. The Rev. Fr. Synan gave Fr. Matthew a donation of £40 but the Reverend gentleman returned £20 for the purchase of instruments for the Rathkeale Teetotallers Band, as it was then known.

In 1882 the then Town Council founded the Rathkeale Brass Band and each member of that body contributed £10. 10s. each for the purchase of instruments and get the band back on the road. The band was latter called the Parnellite Band and, at the time of the Parnell split, the band was taken over by Joseph Sheehy, The Square, Rathkeale.

During the years between 1882 and 1910 the band had rooms in a number of private houses including Sheehys, The Black Lion, Kennedys of Roches Road, Patrick Mulcair's and Jimmy Creegan's. In 1910 the band's headquarters were removed to the Old Temperance Rooms, now the Youth Centre.

During the 1920's the band was known as the Confraternity Band and paraded in Limerick City in a Confraternity celebration with borrowed uniform caps. In those days the band did not have a uniform.

One of the oldest photographs of the band was taken on 8th November, 1924 outside the Allied Irish Bank at Main Street. On that occasion the band paraded through the town, followed by members of the coursing club and their greyhounds. This parade usually occurred on the first day of the coursing which, at that time, took place at the Old Workhouse, now Shannon Meats Limited.

On 27th March 1953 a public meeting was called in Rathkeale for the purpose of re-organising the band. The meeting was attended by all the parish organisations and chaired by the local curate, Fr. Enright. Band practice took place at the senior boys school. The band turned out and played the same year at the local Corpus Christi Procession. At this time the band was known as St. Mary's Brass Band.

The band stopped functioning for some years but was again re-organised in 1966 when band classes were arranged at the local Vocational School. The music teacher was Paddy McCormack. £200 was raised by means of a raffle and band instruments were purchased in Dublin. It will be noted that among the student were

six girls and this was probably the very first time that the girls took part.

In the 1970's the band instruments were transferred to the convent and the music teacher was Mr. Twiddle. However, the band lapsed again and the instruments were transferred to the Community Centre where they remained until November 1983. At that time Rathkeale Community Council decided to have a St. Patrick's Day Parade. The band was re-organised and practice took place at the Vocational School. On St. Patrick's Day in 1984 the band led the parade to the Community Centre from Church Street. Afterwards the band travelled to the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Adare and celebrated the occasion in Croagh on the way home.

In 1987 a band room was built at the local Vocational School. The building can accommodate up to 200 people as well as a lock-up store, kitchen and bathroom. It was built through the combined efforts of local people, funding from the lottery, and the V.E.C.

During the past number of years the band has played on many occasions - in Rathkeale as well as many places throughout the country including the Rose of Tralee Contest, the Ballybunion Bachelor Competition and the International Band Competition, Limerick City where they have won a number of prizes. In 1993 the band travelled to London for the St. Patrick's Day Parade and also gave a concert at the Solls Arms at a Rathkeale reunion. This was a very special occasion for all Rathkeale people living in the London area and the fact that the band was coming there brought them together.

The band again travelled to London for the St. Patrick's Day Parade and on this occasion the party flew from Shannon. The parade in London was on Sunday and the St. Patrick's Day Parades were on Monday, 17th March so the band had to return on the Sunday evening after the London parade. The following day they took part in five parades. In the year 2000 the band travelled to Manchester for the St. Patrick's Day Parade and this was also a wonderful occasion returning from Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire on the 'Cat'.

In March of this year the band travelled to the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin and this was by far the most exciting occasion of all. The members left Rathkeale shortly after 5.00 a.m. and had breakfast at the Red Cow. They were parked near the Shelbourne Hotel for a number of hours. The Dublin parade was huge and is the second biggest except New York. This was a new

experience as the members had never played for so long on any previous occasion. There were thousands attending and it was the largest Dublin parade to date. Later the same evening the band played at the Tallaght parade and this was also a huge affair. There were thousands also at this parade and the members were really tired as a result of the long day. However, it was a great experience.

The members of the present band, who are mostly students at the Community College, are really dedicated musicians and turn up for practice every Monday night at the Band Room. They all seem to enjoy the occasion very much and long may it last.

From August 22nd, 1960

£5,000 Bathing Pool for Rathkeale

A new swimming pool at Rathkeale, built at a cost of £5,000 of which Limerick County Council contributed £1,000, was opened by the Co. Manager, Mr. P. J. Meghen, who said he hoped other towns in the county would follow the example set by the local voluntary committee in providing such a splendid amenity. He appealed to as many as possible to learn life-saving, which was really a national necessity in view of the large number of drowning tragedies that occurred throughout the country every summer.

Mr. D. O Briain, T.D., Parliamentary Secretary to An Taoiseach, also congratulated the promoters of the project. Mr. J. Collins, T.D., Chairman, Limerick County Council, said the Council were only too happy to have been able to give financial assistance.

The pool was blessed by Rev. W. J. Canon Carroll, P.P., V.F., Rathkeale, who said there had been in Ireland and in recent years too much of the spirit of defeatism.

Mr. Plunkett Walsh, representing the Executive of the National Lifesaving Association, and Mr. D. Jones, T.D. also spoke.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The role of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is to speak out on behalf of and provide help and support to the disadvantaged, those in need and anyone who feels they have no one to turn to. The world and the communities in which we live are rapidly changing. One of our strengths has been our ability to adapt to this changing world. The poverty that we in the Society encounter today is a much more complex poverty, and the challenge for us is to deal with these complexities.

We have produced an Education Park which has been issued to all secondary schools in the country. This pack contains a nine lesson programme targeting Transition Year students and aiming to raise their awareness of various types of poverty in Irish society. It also seeks to highlight the work, ideals and ethos of the S.V.P. and to encourage students to become involved in the work of the Society. Some of the services used by our local Conference here in Rathkeale are:

- * Debt Advisory Service
- * Traveller Assistance
- * Counselling Service
- * Education Grants
- * Holidays for the Elderly
- * Our local shop

Our shop in Well Lane carries a wide range of ladies, gents and children's clothes of a very high quality. We also have shoes, household goods i.e. bed linen, curtains, delph, cutlery etc. All can be purchased at a very low cost. The shop is open Monday to Friday 10a.m. to 1p.m. and 2p.m. to 5p.m. Thursday is a half day. From 3rd November the shop will be staffed by a St. Vincent de Paul member every Monday afternoon from 2p.m. to 5p.m. Anyone who needs to talk or who feels they need help with any problem is most welcome to come in at this time and speak in complete confidence with the member on duty.

Requests for Christmas Hampers should be made in the next few weeks also. These requests should be written out and handed into the shop before the end of November. The Hamper scheme is meant for those families who find it difficult to make ends meet at Christmas.

Continuation of series by Mr. William Hayes

From 'Weekly Observer' 1916

Some years after the Rising of '67 the great election contest between Mr. W. H. O'Sullivan and Mr. J. J. Kelly took place. O'Sullivan's ancestors hailed from Rathkeale, from a leading family whose name was revered by the poor people of West Limerick. The leading priests and people supported Kelly while small farmers and nationalists supported O'Sullivan. In those times the working people had no votes as the Franchise Bill was not in existence.

As the writer of these notes, my first excursion was to Ballingarry where there was a large and enthusiastic meeting in support of O'Sullivan. There was a large procession of Rathkeale Nationalists, led by Mr. John Guinane's Fife and Drum Band. Mr. M. Ryan, proprietor of Bruere Mills, presided and addressed the gathering. Mr. Henry Sheehy of Fortwilliam next spoke and was heartily received with cheers. This gentleman, his father and his brothers were great supporters and Mr. Joe Sheehy, C.T.C. Rathkeale is the only one still living. Henry Sheehy, Springmount, J. Dineen and Mr. Supple also spoke.

A large meeting was held in Rathkeale in support of Kelly and thousands came from the surrounding parishes to voice their opposition to the candidate. During this time, Mr. O'Sullivan had hand bills distributed throughout the town and district:

"Vote for W. H. O'Sullivan, a '67 man, God Save Ireland"

He was duly elected and he congratulated the electors in his constituency for their noble work in making it happen.

Rathkeale Notes from the same period

One of the largest Patterns seen for years took place on 30th July at Cappa and Nantinan St. James' Blessed Well. At 3.00 p.m. the Rev. Canon Begley, P.P., recited the Rosary and Litany of the Blessed Virgin. Afterwards he introduced Rev. Fr. O'Dwyer, President of Rathkeale Temperance Society, who gave an eloquent lecture on the lives of St. James and St. Patrick.

Mr. William Hayes was then called upon to address the gathering and was heartily cheered. He alluded to the deaths of Mrs. McDonnell and Mr. Fitzgerald of Cappa Castle and the heartfelt sorrow manifested by the relatives. He made a passing reference to the Home Rule Bill and the proposal to exclude the next counties of Ulster.

It was a most imposing sight to see all the devout people paying their rounds and the spectacle was one long to be remembered.

On Sunday next the great Pattern takes place at S. Molua's Well, Ardagh and the old village will be up and doing for the day. Sports will be held and after devotions there will be exhibitions of hurling, football, foot races and Irish step-dancing. Newcastle West and Castlemahon bands will attend.

From the 'Weekly Observer' - August 1916

A report from the R.I.C. states that, on Tuesday night last while returning to Rathkeale with Constables Barrett and Clohessy from Newbridge Races, Sergeant Samuel Paterson was accidentally thrown from his bicycle, falling on his head and been killed instantly.

The sergeant and constables were on duty at the races and were returning to Rathkeale when the fatality occurred. They were riding down the incline at Kilcoole Bridge, about two miles from the town, when the two constables, who were riding ahead, heard a crash and on going back found the deceased lying prone on the roadway with blood flowing from a deep wound in his head. He was unconscious and death had taken place.

When the occurrence was investigated it transpired that Sergeant Paterson had been complaining of defective brakes on his bicycle for some time previously. The Coroner, Dr. Hannigan, did not deem it necessary to hold an inquest.

The deceased, who was aged about fifty, leaves a widow and a large family.

Births, Marriages and Deaths

Baptisms:

Mary Teresa Flynn, Nora Quilligan,
Hannah Bridget Moran, Billie Amanda Davidson,
Luke Michael Timothy Hogan, Ellen Mary Quilligan,
Aoife Sarah O'Shaughnessy, Lee James Madigan,
Leah Cunningham, Ellen Quilligan,
Clara Angela O'Connor, Ava Goretta Madigan,
Marguerite Sheridan,
Leigh Ann Frances Stephanie Dinnage,
James Edward Mulcaire, Evelyn Dunne,
Dan McCarthy, Samantha Maureen Mary Power,
Brian Philip James Brennan, Makayla Minihane,
Kalum Malith Feane Banda.



Marriages:

Cathal Augustine Jordan and Elizabeth Mary Wilmoth
Graham Buston and Sheri Lee Baley
Thomas James Kiely and Mary Brigid Lawlor
Seamus Kelly and Jean Guinane
Jethro Switzer Shire and Angela Mary O'Sullivan
Frederick O'Donoghue and Helen Sheridan
William Finbarr Carey and Teresa Margaret O'Grady
Brian Allen Heffernan and Edel Ryan
Declan Hogan and Christine Reddin
David John Hayes and Lorraine Kay Shiels

Deaths:

Michael Hayes, Ned Fitzgerald, Denis Sheridan, Jim Dalton, Eileen Morrissey, Stephen Sheahan, Nellie Fitzgerald, William Tunney Boswell, Margaret Chawke, Julia Sheridan, Bill Casey, John Guinane, Bridie Kenneally, Kathleen McCarthy, Tim Geaney, Seamus Tierney, Johnny Hartnett.

Abrahams Golfing Society

Results of the outings during the year:

April - Woodstock:

Gents	Ladies
1. P. O'Sullivan	1. P. Supple
2. P. Donovan, Jnr.	2. M. O'Connell
3. J. Shier	3. O'Connor

May - Newcastle West:

Gents	Ladies
1. Joe Lynch	1. M. O'Sullivan
2. John Lynch	2. P. Ruttle
3. D. Donovan	3. M. Wilmott
4. T. Keating	

June - Castleisland (Team Event)

1. T. Keating, S. Harnett, B. Dillon
2. C. Cleary, P. Ruttle, E. Neville
3. A. Johnson, J. Dunleavy, T. Cordren
4. M. Cregan, J. Lynch, D. O'Dea
5. V. O'Kelly, N. Harnett, M. Dillon

August - Charleville

(Captain Gerry O'Connell Prize)

Overall: Joe Lynch

Gents	Ladies
1. D. Mooney	1. U. Finn
2. M. Noonan	2. I. Donovan
3. V. O'Kelly	3. P. O'Kelly
4. M. Cregan	4. M. O'Sullivan

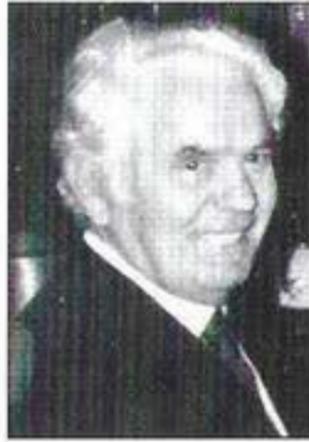
August - Adare Manor (President P. Wilmott Prize)

Gents	Ladies
1. G. O'Connell	1. P. O'Kelly
2. J. O'Connor	2. M. O'Sullivan
3. M. Noonan	3. M. Hennessy
4. J. Dunleavy	

September - East Clare

Gents	Ladies
1. V. O'Kelly	1. P. Supple
2. J. Lynch	2. E. Noonan
3. B. Dillon	3. M. O'Sullivan
4. L. Woulfe	

Tim Geaney



Tim Geaney of Killaheens who died recently is, in the first instance, a huge loss to his wife and family. Tim's death will also be a major loss to the community which he loved so much and to which he contributed in so many different ways all through his life. He was founder member of Rathkeale Community Council and Rathkeale Credit Union. He held office in both organisations and was President of the Credit Union up to his death. He was very prominent in the maintenance committees of both the Shrine and the cemetery. In his memory we would like to reprint an article which Tim contributed to the booklet produced on the occasion of the official opening of the Community Centre in 1983 by President Hillery.

MY MEMORIES OF THE COURTHOUSE

By Tim Geaney

My earliest memory of the Courthouse is attending the Sunday night dances organised by the local G.A.A. in the early thirties. They were known at the time as the 'fourpenny hops' as the admission was fourpence and the dance was from 8.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. They were a great source of enjoyment for the local young people at that time.

My next and more lasting memory was when I was appointed to the post of Engineer's Office Assistant and Storekeeper by the County Council to cover the Engineer's area of Rathkeale. This was May 1940 and I continued to work there until the Council abandoned the premises about 1971.

I can well remember the first time I entered the basement of the building where the Council Store was being set up. The basement consisted of about twelve small, very dark prison cells and the moment you entered at the door you had to have a light to see your way as the cells were very low with arched ceilings, so that you could only stand upright when in the middle of the cell. There were no windows, only narrow openings with iron bars on one wall of each cell and all the cells had iron doors. The ceilings showed signs of burns etc. where some of the inmates had bits of candles to enable them to read. All in all, it was a very morbid looking place at that time. The Council had most of the arched ceilings removed and windows etc. fitted, thus removing the jail-like appearance of the place.

The caretaker at that time was Mrs. Dufficy and she often recalled her experiences to me of events, both during the occupation by the British Forces and during the Civil War. She told me that she often longed to try and comfort

the prisoners, but they were out of bounds to her and the only time she would see them was from her own back window when they were being exercised in the small yard at the rear of the living quarters, which was for about half an hour each day.

As the Second World War was in progress when I took up employment with the Council things changed rapidly and all road making materials became scarce, as did fuel and transport, consequently all work on roads etc. at that time was manual. One part of the Courthouse building was used for drying chippings and mixing macadam by hand, which was then taken by horse and cart to areas as far west as Glin, north to Pallaskenry, east to Adare, and south to Ballingarry for the repair of potholes. This method helped keep the roads in reasonable repair in the absence of surface dressing.

Another part of the building was used for making concrete drainage pipes and fencing posts, also by hand, to meet the Council's requirements, while another part was used as a carpenter's shop where the wheelbarrows used in the quarries were made. All in all there were about ten men employed at the various activities.

In the 1940's the L.D.F. was established and the Courthouse became its centre and, for a number of years, parades and training etc. were carried out about three nights weekly. Also an L.D.F. brass band was formed; one of the rooms, known as the jury room, was used as a band room, so the Courthouse was a centre for many activities during this period.

I can also recall the disastrous outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the locality. Again the Courthouse became the centre for the Department of Agriculture officials fighting the outbreak. I can recall seeing two of the cells in the basement filled from floor to ceiling with tins of disinfectant, pumps, clothing etc. and every time we entered or left the building we were disinfected. The County Council supplied a special gang at the time whose duty it was to go in and disinfect the farms affected, when the animals on the farm had been slaughtered.

The usual monthly Courts were also conducted in the building and also what was then known as the Quarter Sessions - what is now known as the Circuit Court sittings. My early recollection of the Circuit Courts at that time is that they usually lasted more than a week at each sitting.

When I look back over the years I spent in the Courthouse, I am convinced that the building has always been a centre of the activities in the area and I think that the local Community Council deserve the support of the people in the development and maintenance of the building as a Community Centre and that the people of the parish will make full use of it as such.

“Village with no pub”

From 'Limerick Weekly Echo' 1977

Cappagh, near Rathkeale, is the village that disappeared. Before it went, however, it had as chequered a history as many places ten times its size.

Before the Famine, it had more than twenty houses, including a police station, two pubs, a carpentry shop, a forge and no fewer than four shoemakers. The surrounding countryside was also densely populated. Now there remains only a scattering of farmhouses and cottages and, what is perhaps Cappagh's greatest claim to fame, three churches. It's second most notable feature is that it now has no bar.

Few people outside the Rathkeale area know Cappagh. It is on the main road to nowhere, tucked away among the rugged little limestone hills and glens of North Limerick. It has had days of glory, however. The Geraldine Castle which dominates the parish was built by the Earls of Desmond during the reign of King John as one of their line of fortresses which dotted the Limerick and Kerry hills. After the Geraldine rising it fell into England hands, but again figures in skirmishes well into the 17th century. The castle, now reduced to a shell, was inhabited until recent years.

Cappagh is best known as the most Protestant parish in the south. In 1709, Queen Anne sent a fleet to Rotterdam to rescue thousands of Methodist refugees who had been dispossessed during the Franco-German wars. Almost four thousand of these came to Ireland, the bulk of them to the Rathkeale area, to the lands of Sir Thomas Southwell. Having come from the province of Pfaltz or The Palatinate, the newcomers were known as Palatines, a name which many of their descendants proudly recall to this day.

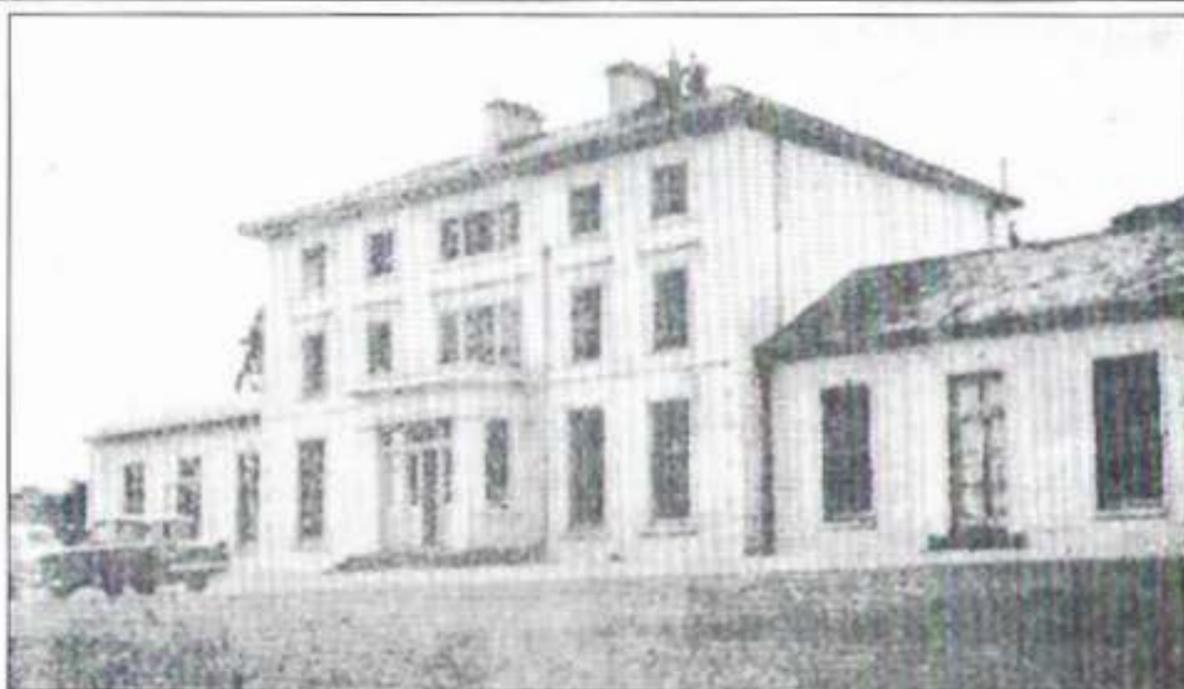
Their present church was built in 1776, as a memorial to Philip Embury and Barbara Heck-Ruttle, who founded Methodism in America. It was reconstructed in 1885 and an extension was built in 1968.

The Catholic church was built in 1986, and among the early parish priests was Dr. John Hallinan, who later became Bishop. It is a coincidence that the present parish priest is also the holder of a doctorate - Dr. P. K. FitzGerald, who worked in Italy for many years, now ministers to the little flock. Cappagh was once part of a joint parish but now stands alone.

It is perhaps the members of the Anglican community who are least served in the area. Their impressive and delicately built church at Nantenan closed some years ago but still stands elegantly off the Rathkeale to Askeaton road.

Next door to the Methodist Church is Ballingrane Station, meeting place of the Foynes to Limerick line with the now defunct Rathkeale/Newcastle West/Abbeyfeale connection. The impressive little junction, like everything else in Cappagh, is stuck in the middle of nowhere. It boasted until recently the sharpest curve on the CIE system.

But Cappagh, despite its religiously divided community and its far flung population, has more social life than many a town. The handballing centre of Limerick, it also has a very active pitch and putt club, as well as Muintir na Tire, I.C.A. and G.A.A. Perhaps it proves that people who have to make a little effort to make a community enjoy themselves better as a result.



2/9/67. Beechmount House

Christian Brothers in Rathkeale

At the earnest request of the Ven. Archdeacon Fitzgerald, P.P., two school Brothers and a domestic Brother arrived in Rathkeale, December 1859. The Archdeacon handed over to the Brothers his own residence and garden, free, and a two-roomed school had been built by the parishioners for the use of the Brothers. The school was opened for the reception of pupils on 9th January, 1860 and was soon filled with 200 boys from the town and vicinity. In the course of a few years the numbers increased to 240 and a third school Brother was sought by the parishioners through the then parish priest, Rev. J. O'Shea, P.P., V.G., a native of Kildimo, who built the present church. But at a specially convened meeting, summoned by Fr. O'Shea, a Dr. O'Halloran and others, it was decided to withhold the £30 promised for the support of the third Brother "as the money in justice should be applied to the material improvement of the town".

The Brothers had been labouring just twenty years in Rathkeale when the Superior General, Bro. Aloysius Hoare, felt himself constrained to withdraw them in the year 1880.

The period between 1875 and 1880 was perhaps the most crucial period the Congregation went through since its foundation in 1802. The Synod of Maynooth, held in 1875, passed regulations affecting the Congregation, which caused a deep sense of uncertainty and unrest in the minds of the Brothers; in consequence the numbers in the Novitiate were small, and the Superior General was forced to close a few of the smaller houses, viz. Rathkeale, Newcastle West, Manchester and Chelsea.

One good old Brother 'of the old school' who taught in Rathkeale, the late Brother Thomas Butler, who died in Galway about 30 years ago, often related the story of

how, when his footwear was past repair and no longer roadworthy, Superior and himself travelled on foot to the nearest town - Newcastle West - where he (Bro. Butler) was fitted out with a strong pair of 'secondhand' boots for the modest figure of about 3s. 6d. in some secondhand, or pawn, shop. It would be unbecoming their status to deal with the pawn-broker in their home town where they would be known. God help them! they must have found it trying to manage on £30 per year.

The following Brothers were Superiors in Rathkeale in the order named:

Brother Alphonsus Nolan (1860-1870).

Born in Thurles 1830. Entered the Congregation 1852. Taught in Cork, Rathkeale, Naas. Died in Artane 1915.

Brother Colman Flood (1870-1873).

Born in Longford 1831. Attended the Brothers' School, Mullingar. Entered the Congregation 1857. Taught in Limerick, Rathkeale, Wexford, Drogheda and Galway where he died 1902.

Brother John Norris (1873-1876).

Born in Carrick-on-Suir 1823. Entered the Congregation 1841. Taught in Bolton, Maryboro, Enniscorthy, Wexford, Rathkeale, Cashel. Died 1912. Bro. Norris was the last Brother who knew Edmond Ignatius Rice, our Founder, who died in 1844.

Brother Laurence Dwyer (1876-1880).

Born in Cork 1831. Was a pupil of Gerald Griffin (Bro. Joseph) in the North Monastery. Entered the Congregation 1848. Taught in Limerick, Charleville, Rathkeale and the O'Brien Institute, Fairview, Dublin where he died in 1908.

CALLING ALL CARD PLAYERS!

Monster 45 Drive

Community Hall, Wednesday 17th December

Special Prizes • Refreshments Served

THE BARONIES OF COUNTY LIMERICK

Limerick's Twelve

The thirty-two counties of Ireland contain, between them, something like 330 baronies. The baronies of the provinces of Ulster, Connacht and Munster are generally much larger than those of the province of Leinster; Ulster has only approximately 80 baronies to Leinster's approximate 120. Of the Munster counties, Limerick has the largest number of baronies in proportion to its size. Excluding the liberties of Limerick City and Kilmallock, County Limerick has 12 baronies: Coonagh, Owneybeg, Clanwilliam, Small County, Coshlea, Coshma, Pobblebrien, Kenry, Upper Connello, Lower Connello, Shanid and Glenquin. The latter four, until comparatively recent times, formed one large barony of Connello in the western half of Limerick. The new baronies of Shanid and Glenquin were named respectively after the largest castle within the bounds of each.

Coonagh

Coonagh, in the North-East of the County, is called after the long-vanished tribe of U' Cuanach and in it are situated, among others, the following places: Doon, Oola, Pallasgreen, Kiltely and (Sarsfield's) Ballyneety.

Owneybeg

North-West of Coonagh, and still bordering on Tipperary, is Owneybeg (Uaithne Bheag - the little pillar stone). Murroe, Abington (Mainistir Uaithne) and Cappamore are situated in this barony.

Clanwilliam

Clanwilliam (Clan Uilliam - the tribe or territory of William (de Burghs) is a large barony lying to the west of Coonagh and Owneybeg. Annacotty and Castleconnell are situated in the north of this barony, and Barrington's Bridge, Caherconlish and Dromkeen in the east of it.

Small County

South-West of Clanwilliam and Coonagh is the barony of Small County, which gets its rather unusual name from the old territory of Deise Beag. It is a very irregularly shaped barony extending from the Tipperary border westward to about Bulgaden, then northward for about eight miles before taking another turn southward in the direction of Athlacca. Before reaching Athlacca, however, it turns northward again, keeping just east of Mainister. When about as far north as Patrickswell, but about three miles east of it, it turns eastward to embrace Fedamore and Herbertstown. This barony once came far enough southward to include within its bounds the northern portion of Bruree parish. It was subsequently reduced to its present limits.

Coshlea

Coshlea (Cois Sleibhe - the foot of the mountain) is a large barony in southeast Limerick. In it are situated Kilbehenny, Ballylanders, Galbally, Knocklong, Ballingaddy, Ardpatrick, Kilfinane and Ballyorgan.

Coshma

Coshma (Cois Maighe - Mague side) - name famed in Gaelic poetry, is a long, narrow, irregularly-shaped barony in the centre of Co. Limerick. The following places are situated in it: Effin, Knocksouna, Dromin, Bruff, Athlacca, Croom and Adare.

Pobblebrien

The barony of Pobblebrien (Pobal U' Bhriain - O'Brien's Country) extends, from just west of Limerick City, for about eight miles along the Shannon. At its southern limit is Mainister. Also situated in it are Mungret and Patrickswell.

Kenry

West of Pobblebrien is Kenry (Caonrai - is the name of an ancient tribe). It extends westward by the Shannon to within about two miles of Askeaton, and almost reaches to Adare in the south. In it are situated Pallaskenry and the two Kildimos.

Connello Upper

Connello Upper (Connalach Uachtar) derives its name from the old tribal territory of U' Conaill Gabhra. It stretches from the Cork border to just slightly north of Kilfinny, Bruree, Dromcollogher, Kilmeedy and Ballingarry are situated in it.

Connello Lower

Connello Lower (Connalach Iochtar) also derives its name from U' Conaill Gabhra. It lies to the north of Upper Connello and in it are situated Croagh, Askeaton and Rathkeale - it extends for about 4 miles west of the latter place.

Shanid

Shanid (Sean Ait - the old place) is the name of the very large barony that occupies the northwest of Co. Limerick - Ardagh, Shanagolden, Foynes, Glin and Athea are situated in it.

Glenquin

Glenquin (Gleann a' Chuim - the glen of the hollow), in the southwest of the county, is another very large barony. In it are situated Newcastle West, Killeedy, Broadford and Abbeyfeale.

GREAT SOUTHERN TRAIL/SLÍ LUIMNEACH CIARRAÍ

Great Southern Trail Limited, committed to developing 53 miles of the old Limerick-Tralee Railway as a cycle/walkway.



←
*Rail Trail, Namur, Belgium -
June, 2001.*

→
*Rathkeale Railway Station (1933)
(The Waterford & Limerick Railway
by C.E. J. Fryer - The Oakwood Press)*



←
*Cycle from Listowel to
Rathkeale, July, 1991.*

→
*Rathkeale Railway
Bridge,
November 2001.*



A Childs Story....

Chasing Cats

There was once this Great Dane who lived in the town of Cavan. He used to take a stroll out the Cootehill Road every morning to keep fit. He often chased a ginger Tom Cat who lived in an elegant new bungalow out that direction. The Tom Cat would run for a long while and then climb a tree when it was tired and laugh at the Great Dane. Did I tell you the name of the Great Dane. I didn't? Well, Hamlet was his name.

This morning he went out for his stroll as usual. He walked up Farnham Street, pat the Court House and was stopped at a police check. "Well, Hamlet", said a cheeky young Guard, "have you got your licence with you?". Hamlet stared majestically at him and walked on. He was a friend of the Sergeant's dog, who often saved him from being summoned for chasing cats. He often thought the police would be better occupied preventing those common young dogs from stealing sausages from McCarren's Factory, instead of checking on a highly respectable dog like himself, who came out of the best house in the town. Further out the road Patsy Poodle ran daintily down to the gate to watch him. She always admired big dogs and hoped that Hamlet would return her admiration. But as usual he gave a deep bark in greeting, but did not stop. On he went past old Mr. Collie, who had fought in 1916 and bitten an enemy soldier. Mr. Collie was now retired on a special pension. He was half blind and looked at Hamlet under shaggy eyebrows, but thought that the big animal must be a Tinker's pony.

"Dear me," he said to himself, "aren't they an awful problem?"

Just at the edge of the town the trouble started. "Hiya, Big Ears," said a jeering voice, "been to Denmark lately?" It was the ginger Tom Cat, a real trouble maker, sitting on a wall. This was too much for Hamlet. With one great bound he cleared the wall, the cat streaking in front of him. He plunged through a row of cabbage plants, jumped a small green house, upsetting Mrs. Brady who was watering her geraniums inside. The cat leaped into the next door garden. Hamlet followed, but was slowed down when he broke the washing line. His foot went through a lady's slip and when he freed himself, the cat was a long way ahead. Hamlet made one great effort and raced like a

train down to the road to catch him. But suddenly an awful pain took him in the chest. He lay down panting with a fierce cramp running down his leg. I don't know how long he lay there. He was found by Miss Cissie Sheridan, who has loved animals all her life. "You noble animal," she said, "go straight to the Doctor and have a test to see if you are all right. There's none of us growing younger."

He decided not to go to the hospital, where there was always a very long queue. Instead he hobbled painfully to Dr. McLiver's door. "I have no wish to offend you," said the Doctor, "but you'd be better off with a vet." "I have nothing against that profession," said Hamlet, "but they're more interested in testing cattle". "All right", said the Doctor, "open your mouth and say 'Ah'." Hamlet opened his great jaw and let out a resounding bark. The whole house shook and six saucers fell off a rack in the kitchen.

"That's enough," said the Doctor hastily, as Hamlet prepared to bark again. "Can you say 99?". "No," said Hamlet. "I'm only a dog." "Were you ever hit by a car?" said the Doctor. "Well," said Hamlet, "there's a crowd out Kilmore direction with motor bikes and they're a living dread. I've a friend Mel Mongrel who was nearly killed by them. And there's lads driving tractors into the mart that shouldn't be let out on a public road. But I've escaped so far."

"Have you any children?" said the Doctor. "You know yourself," said Hamlet, "in the old days we had huge families. I've ten sons up in Dublin. They joined the Civil Service and are able to bark in Irish. Young Pauric is working with the coursing crowd. Mick's working as a guide dog for the blind. The youngest lad is up in Tracta-motors; he's apprenticed to that Alsatian guard dog. No I've been blessed. They're all very good to me."

"Well in that case," said the Doctor, "I want you to relax and take it easy. Flop about a lot. Learn to relax. Keep away from fighting."

"It will be difficult," said Hamlet. "There's a crowd of wild dogs from Mullahoran that invade the town when cattle sales are on, and they do nothing but insult all the town dogs. They near took the ear off Con Cocker and he had to go to Finbar Nolan three times before it got healed." "Well keep away from excitement," said the doctor. "Take three tables twice a day for the next week and go sparing on the meat. Now I must be off. The Mayfly is up and I don't want to miss it." Hamlet walked slowly home. "I'm older and wiser," he said to himself.

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