

Deel Views

RATHKEALE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Christmas 2004

Price: €2



*Peace at
Christmas Time*

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Editorial

What has happened to our library? Almost eighteen months ago a relatively minor roof fire resulted in the closure of both the library and the courthouse on New Line. Since then nothing appears to have been done to restore the building to its former use and not alone have we been left without our library but Rathkeale has also lost the regular District and Circuit Court sittings. The latter have been transferred on a permanent basis to Newcastle West while we have had to settle for a mobile library service once a week for five hours on Mondays.

This is not good enough and the loss of both library and court services is just further addition to the litany of neglect of Rathkeale by the powers that be. We have been promised a new enlarged County Council cum Library building on the present site but how long will it be before we see any evidence on the ground of such development? Furthermore, the Council's office space in the building is totally inadequate, both for the staff themselves and for access for the general public. We look forward to major signs of progress in this matter in 2005.



Veteran of Rathkeale Brass Band, Ned Daly, with daughter Maudie at Red Cross Christmas Party

NEW COMMUNAL CENTRE AT ENNISCOUCH

The new Communal Centre alongside the Rathkeale Sheltered Housing Complex is nearing completion and it is expected to be fully operational within the next few months. Included in the Centre will be a new and large modern kitchen. This kitchen will be used mainly for the cooking for Meals on Wheels. All the equipment for the kitchen has already been purchased and will be installed immediately on completion of the building.

There will also be a room at one end of the building for card playing, meetings etc. It is hoped that the main building will be used regularly for functions, especially for the senior citizens residing in the Rathkeale catchment area.

At present one unit in the Sheltered Housing Complex is being used as a Centre and card playing takes place there twice each week. A number of residents in the area join with the residents in the Complex for the card playing. When the new building is completed this unit will be utilized as a private dwelling.

The property where the new building is being constructed was kindly donated by Con and Mary Guiney of Enniscouch. There will be an official opening of the Sheltered Housing Complex and the Centre in the near future.

Middle England in Revolt

By Terry Brownbill

Rathkeale: a view from Cottenham

The fact-finding visit to Rathkeale has proved a revelation. Rathkeale strongly resents the wealthy and anti-social Irish travellers who return from England for three months a year and wreak havoc.

The travellers who return to Rathkeale each year have been systematically buying up property, or building properties without planning permission, and then never living in them. It has, over the last 30 years, ripped the guts out of the town and the settled community has felt powerless to fight back - until now! The town's Community Council is now joining forces with middleenglandinrevolt.co.uk and the people of Cottenham to highlight the fact that we have Human Rights to.

The website, a spin-off from the Cottenham Residents Association, was set up to share information and intelligence with other blighted communities across Britain - and now Rathkeale - in order to protect the Human Rights of settled communities and traveller communities alike.

It would be easy to fall into the trap of thinking that, because things are now quieter in Cottenham, there is no need to maintain a high-profile campaign against the expansion of Smithy Fen. However, we have taken the view that what we have learned is valuable to other communities and it would be selfish not to share it and to work together for the common good.

I spent two days in Rathkeale with Sky Television and the Daily Mail as well as the Irish media, trying to talk to the super rich leaders of the key traveller families, none of whom would answer their doors when we came a-calling. I met with 12 members of the town's Community Council who went to a great deal of trouble on a cold and rainy night to explain how the settled community were victims of the travelling community that returned from England to turn the town, and much of the surrounding country, upside down.

They were also emphatic that the settled community in Rathkeale, including the settled travellers, bitterly resented their country cousins' extreme wealth and arrogance. By buying up almost 50% of the town and leaving the properties empty, they have destroyed the fabric and the reputation of what was 30 years ago a thriving picturesque little town of between 2,000-3,000 people.

The similarities between the situation in Rathkeale and communities such as Cottenham were all too evident. Rathkeale, like Cottenham, has suffered from bureaucratic inertia and reluctance from the police to uphold law and order. The Council pointed out that the main difference between blighted communities in England and their own town was that they had suffered for 30 years - and no one had come to their aid.

It was very touching to be told by long-suffering members of the Rathkeale settled community that they felt extremely sorry for the predicament of the people of Cottenham, particularly as we have only had a very brief taste of what they have had to endure for 30 years.

The Irish media took a surprising amount of interest in the visit of a Cottenham resident to Rathkeale and it received a great deal of coverage on Sky TV Ireland, Irish Times, Irish Independent, Limerick Leader, Limerick Echo, RTE and more than 10 radio stations around Ireland. The Community Council is keen to build on the positive coverage the visit generated and can see the benefits of coming out of the corner fighting for their rights. Poignantly, one councillor said that in 30 years it was the only time they could remember where there had been any recognition by the Irish press of the predicament of the settled community.

Building links between the settled community of Rathkeale, including the settled travellers, will prove invaluable if we are to keep on top of the comings and goings of the Irish travellers who have homed in on Cottenham and more than 50 other communities in England. In return, we will do everything we can to support the people of Rathkeale by keeping their plight in the public eye in Ireland.

I would recommend Rathkeale as an interesting weekend destination. It is truly enlightening. It is pretty and it is unusual in that the olde worlde charm jars with the fortress-like hacienda-style mansions of the Fair Hill and Roches Road area of the town. If you do plan to visit Rathkeale, I can recommend the beautiful Rathkeale House Hotel, which stands in its own grounds.

There is a plush estate of executive homes, all owned by travellers, and the monumental graves are a sight to behold. No expense is spared on the graves of wealthy travellers in Rathkeale. A Community Council member took me to the graves and explained that Italian master sculptors are flown in and put up in the best hotels to create lavish monuments out of the very best Italian marble. These monuments, the councillor told me, would cost as much as a house in England.

What are particularly interesting are the names on these mausoleums. They are identical to the names on many of the planning applications for plots on Smithy Fen and of the residents currently on the site. There were particularly impressive monuments to a Roger Slattery, the namesake of the man who speaks for the travellers in Cottenham.

Limerick City and County Library



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A Visit to Rathnasare Graveyard

On a Sunday morning some weeks ago Jimmy 'Blackie' McEniry, Jack O'Dwyer and myself visited Rathnasare graveyard. It is very overgrown and consequently we found great difficulty in deciphering the inscriptions on the headstones.

I would first like to say some words about the history of the townland of Rathnasare and why there should be a ruined church and graveyard there. In the Civil Parish system, which was the original parochial divide introduced by the Normans into Ireland as it was mapped by the Ordnance Survey in the 1850s, the townland of Rathnasare and portion of Enniscouch (including Enniscouch House) were detached parts of Nantinan parish. When Ken Nicholl of U.C.C. gave a talk to the Historical Society some years ago he suggested that because of the fractured nature of Nantinan parish it may have been church land.

The historian, Thomas Johnson Westropp, in his "Survey of the Ancient Churches of County Limerick" notes that, in the early years of the 13th century, Rathnasare was a parish in its own right. He also quotes from the "Black Book of Limerick" which states that "Roger Waspayl granted lands between Rathgel and the great water of Del to Matthew, parson of Rathnaseere c. 1220". Writing in his article "Ancient Castle of Limerick", Westropp noted that while Waspayl held the parish of Rathnaseer in 1220, it later came into the hands of the Fitzgeralds. He gives the pedigree of this family which is still extant: Shanemore of Rath na Saor, Gerald, Henry, James, Henry an Forso and Phillip. Curiously, when referring to the Desmond Rebellion and Plantation, Westropp refers to the castle as "Rathnaseer or Farrentegin". The castle was awarded to Henry Billingsley during the plantation. Westropp also informs us that, in 1615, Bishop Bernard Adams claimed the Manor of Rathnaseer. In that same year Bishop Adams had attempted to reclaim all church lands that had been alienated.

By the time of the Civil Survey in the 1650's the proprietor is given as Thomas Fitzgerald, Irish Papist. The Survey places the townland in the parish of Nantinan but states "the said lands owing chief rent to the manor of Croagh in the sum of £1. 6s.8d.". The townland is estimated to have 100 acres of which arable land made up 60 acres, pasture 20 acres, shrubs 10 acres and red bogs 10 acres. The value of the property in 1640 is given as £40. The Enniscouch portion is estimated to contain 10 acres, 9 of which were arable and 1 was meadow. This valuation was noted as £3. In the Census conducted with this Survey, no population is given for same. However, the population of the Enniscouch part of Rathkeale parish

is recorded as 20, including 3 English and 17 Irish residents. Rathnasare had 16, all of whom were Irish, and all of Enniscouch was owned by Edward Southwell.

In the Ordnance Name Book of the 1840's Rathnasare is recorded as containing 483 acres and as being the property of Edmond Tierney of Dublin. It is stated that all the townland – except 40 acres of bog – is under tillage and part of the northwest area was subject to floods in the winter. By the time of the Griffiths Valuations (approximately ten years later), the immediate lessor of the land was Dowager Lady O'Brien. Enniscouch was let as follows:

James Neill

holding 8 acs, 3 rds. 38 prs. From Eyre Massey

Thomas Enright

holding 23 acs. 2 rds. 20 prs. From John Hewson

John Hewson

holding 24 acs. 2 rds. 2 prs. From Hon. Henry Wandesforde

All this, however, is a long way from our walk in the Rathnasare graveyard. Jimmy informed us that the last person to be buried in the graveyard was Hourigan from Ballingarry, a brother of Dan Hourigan of Rathkeale and a man who, in his youth, was a distinguished athlete.

We identified six headstones on which we were able to decipher the inscriptions. I have checked in all newspapers for deaths in the 19th century but was only able to trace details of one individual. I am also unable to make a suggestion as to who is buried in a very substantial tomb which was very much overgrown and on which we could find no epitaph.

Sacred to the Memory

of Patrick Benson

for 30 years Parish Priest of Kilmeedy and Feenagh

died June 4th 1870

aged 88 years

Difficult to make out but buried here are the mother of Mary McEniry of Kilfinny (died 1929) and her father (died 1959). Mary is still alive and living in a home.

In loving memory of

Patrick Allen who died

20 April 1848 aged 44 years

also Bridget wife of the above died 29 Oct 1888 aged

78 years and Catherine Allen died 1901

Patrick Allen
who died 20 April 1818
aged 14 years also Bridget wife of the above who died
20 Oct 1840

Erected by
Paul Hayes
Dohyle
In memory of his father
Edmond Hayes
Dohyle
Who died 21 Sept 1925
Aged 85 years
And his uncle Michael Hayes
Who died 2 April
aged 78 years

Patrick Ginnan
erected this in memory
of his son Jo Ginnan
who departed this life
Sept. 18 1825
aged 20 years
May he rest in peace
Passenger stop as thou pass by
As thou art now so once was I
As I am now so shall thou be
Remember man eternity

Isabel Francis Goold
Aged 40
Ob Deo

An obituary appears in the Munster News and Limerick and Clare Advocate of June 8th 1870 for Fr. Benson where it states "he had reached his home having just returned from a diocesan retreat held in the Redemptorists in Limerick. He was connected with the well known resident family of Moylan". Begley, on page 606, says that Fr. Benson was a Franciscan Friar who had resigned from his parish some years before his death. He appears to have served as a curate in Croagh where he was active in the O'Connellite movement and also in the building of the National School there.

As regards the Allen grave – it is likely Patrick Allen was married twice and both wives were named Bridget. There are no Allens listed in the Rathkeale parish records.

The Hayes family still reside at Dohyle.

The passage at the bottom of the Ginnan headstone would suggest a familiarity with the English language. If it is from the Psalms it is likely those buried there are of Protestant stock.

It is on the west side of the ruin that we found the large tomb. We knew the person or persons buried there must

have been wealthy due to its nature. Jimmy McEniry felt it might be the resting place of a landlord of the time and that may well be the case. However, Begley, in his history, notes on page 627 that Fr. Hogan died in 1847 and that the epitaph on his tomb in Rathnasare records that, at the time of his death, he was Vicar General of the Diocese of Limerick. On page 527 he states "The Rev. Thomas Hogan, P.P., Rathkeale, having passed away, was interred in Rathnasare Graveyard in beautiful tomb with the following inscription

Sacred
To the memory of Very Revd.
Thomas Hogan
Who was P.P. of Rathkeale
And Vicar General
Obit January 25 1847
Aged 65 years

Whether or not Fr. Hogan is buried in the tomb he is definitely buried in Rathnasare. He was born in St. Mary's Parish in the city and entered in Maynooth in 1798 aged 17. He became curate in St. Mary's and later in St. John's under Bishop Young. He was appointed parish priest of Newcastle West in 1813. This was very rapid promotion for one so young and would suggest a shortage of priests in the diocese at the time. It raises the possibility that Fr. Hogan was the Vicar General who persuaded Bishop Twomey to ordain his nephew as a priest after he had been expelled from Maynooth.

The young Fr. Hogan was soon in dispute with the church locally and, after these matters were resolved, he was dispatched to the American missions. There he entered into a much larger dispute and effectively established his own sept. He was appointed parish priest in Rathkeale in 1822 and Thomas Street is said to have been named after him. The sign on the PBR corner states that the street was no named as early as 1812 and Fr. Hogan had no contact with the town prior to that date.

The church used by the Catholic community prior to the building of the present church was commenced by Fr. Twomey (later Bishop) about 1811 and it is most likely that the building took a number of years to complete. It is further likely that it was not finished until Fr. Hogan's period in the parish.

In conclusion I would like to thank Jimmy McEniry, Jack O'Dwyer and Mary Kenneally for their help in compiling this article.

Rathkeale Community Council News

The Community Council is entering the 32nd year of its existence and can claim to be one of the longest surviving Councils in this region. Surviving being the operative word to describe the present body. Sadly the support for the Council has been waning in recent times, particularly from some of those elected at the last election. However, a hard core of ten or twelve members continues to keep interest alive and to strive for the betterment of our community. Meetings of the Council are held on the first Monday of every month, usually in the Sheltered Housing complex at Abbeylands and everyone is welcome to come along.

Much of the work being undertaken involves the protection and ongoing maintenance of the various properties of the Council i.e. Community Centre, Sports Complex, Abbeylands Park, Riverside Walk, Workspace Centre, Sheltered Housing Developments etc. The costs involved are very significant, particularly for insurance, and funds are not easily come by. At present the only regular sources of income are the weekly cards games and bingo. In addition to this, the Council continues to bring pressure on Limerick County Council in regard to such matters as traffic control, illegal parking of cars and

caravans, illegal waste dumping and, of course, the provision of a new library and Council building.

A new FAS scheme has commenced and will continue for at least another twelve months. The previous workforce carried out extensive repair work including painting of both the Sports Hall and the Community Centre. With this largely complete, it is now proposed to continue with the development along the old railway line and to extend the walk to the Palatine Centre and also install some old rail line and a replica platform.

The Sports Hall is now in full operation and is well worth a visit for anyone who has not already been there. It is well to note that the young people of the town are being particularly catered for with facilities for Pool, Billiards, Snooker, Squash, Handball and Racquet Ball being provided at very nominal charge.

A full-time Youth Worker has now taken up residence in the town and has opened an office at the Community Centre. In this issue Nora Casey has written further on the task facing her and the role she will play in assisting the youth of the area.

Finally, we would urge everybody to support the Community Council by attendance at meetings and particularly support the cards and bingo events.

Rathkeale Parish

Pastoral Council

In 2002 Bishop Murray launched a document "How can we know the way?". Following Dundum 11 it was recognized that the laity had great potential for sharing in and enriching the ministry of the church. The Bishop recommended that each parish take responsibility for establishing a Pastoral Council.

In October 2002 Canon Dempsey circulated a written invitation to all parishioners to attend an open meeting. Following that, seventeen people took part in a 6-week training course. Bishop Murray attended two meetings held in Rathkeale House Hotel in November and December and gave us a sense of encouragement to become more engaged.

In November 2003 a Pastoral Council consisting of fourteen people was formed. Monthly meetings are

held in Rathkeale House Hotel. Over the past twelve months the Council set about co-operating in setting up sub-committees.

The Liturgy Group was set up to help enrich the liturgy, in particular during the seasons of Lent, Easter and Advent.

New guidelines for the preparation of children for the first sacraments were discussed. A First Communion Preparation Group was set up. Diocesan guidelines are now in place for the coming First Communion Classes.

The need for Mass leaflets in the church was also discussed. A sub-committee was formed and the printing of Mass leaflets with a Newsletter commenced in November.

The current members of the Rathkeale Parish Pastoral Council are: Mary Curtin, Phil O'Shea, Pamela McNamara, Margaret Geary, Mary Geary, Anne Dunne, Bernie Naughton, Sabrina McNamara, Mary Daly, Sister Kostka, Sister Jerome, Sister Patricia, Rev. Fr. Russell and Rev. Canon Dempsey.

This paper will briefly examine the period 1913-1921 by looking at Volunteer organization and effectiveness on a local level and will conclude by examining the controversial shooting of R.I.C. Sergeant George Neazer in Rathkeale in March 1920.

Significant Dates and Events

1913

Many people will be unaware that Newcastle West has a special association with the struggle for Irish independence in the 20th century. On 25th November 1913, the modern Irish army was founded in the Rotunda Rink, Dublin. Present at the inaugural meeting was Piaras Beasla', the son of a Newcastle West woman. More importantly, it was Beasla' who came up with the Irish name for the Volunteers - namely Oglaihn na hEireann.

1916

Although the Easter Rising was largely confined to Dublin, a number of West Limerick men such as Con Collins of Monagea, Garrett McAuliffe of Newcastle West, Matty Flanagan and James Flanagan of Killoughteen, and Eamon Dore of Glin were imprisoned for their part in the Dublin fighting, while Con Colbert was executed and Donal Sheehan of Ballintubrid was drowned when the car he was travelling in accidentally plunged into the River Laune.

1919

January 21st, 1919 marked another milestone in Irish history for two reasons. Firstly, the newly elected TDs met at the Mansion House in Dublin to convene the first Dáil Eireann. Secondly, two R.I.C. constables escorting a consignment of gelignite to Soloheadbeg quarry in Tipperary were ambushed and killed by a group of men which included such legendary names as Dan Breen, Sean Treacy, Seamus Robinson and Sean Hogan. As the year progressed, an increasing number of R.I.C. men were killed by Volunteers while out on patrol, prompting the British Government to devise a strategy to counteract what it regarded as acts of terrorism. In December that year, advertisements appeared in newspapers seeking recruits to bolster the declining numbers of the R.I.C.

1920

March of this year saw the arrival of the first group of ex-servicemen who had responded to the appeal for R.I.C. recruits the previous December. Their hastily assembled uniforms consisted of dark police and khaki army clothing, but it is commonly accepted that they were named after a famous pack of hounds in Scarteen, East Limerick. The Black and Tans quickly established a reputation for themselves which has arguably never been equalled in the history of Ireland. In August a separate force of men was created to supplement the Black and Tans. The Auxiliary Division was attached to the R.I.C. and consisted of ex-officers given the rank of temporary

cadets. They were organised in military-style companies and were popularly known as 'Auxies'. Unlike the Tans, whose fighting skills were often derided by the Volunteers, the 'Auxies' were generally regarded as worthy opponents by their opposite numbers during the conflict.

Local Volunteer Organisation 1913-1921

Charles Hannon, in his survey of the history of the Volunteers, delineates certain key aspects that set them apart as an army:

Volunteers enlisted out of essentially nationalistic motives, energised by the sabre rattling of the Ulster Volunteer Force. They served voluntarily, they trained and paraded in their own time. They paid for their own equipment, buying their own rifles with their own money. They submitted willingly to authority. Discipline was self-imposed. They were Irish Volunteers safeguarding Ireland's rights and liberties as they saw them. Their effectiveness was not only due to the commitment of the Volunteers but also to their willingness to be guided and controlled by their General Headquarters. The remarkable outcome was a Volunteer army loyal to an ideal and willing to die for it. They fought, killed, suffered and died convinced of their right to do so as soldiers. Perhaps the crowning achievement of GHQ's efforts to discipline and control the Volunteers was the fact that, when ordered to cease fire in July 1921, the Volunteer army did so. (The Irish Volunteers and the Concepts of Military Service and Defence 1913-1924 - UCD PHD 1989).

Mossie Harnett provides us with some useful information regarding the history of the West Limerick Brigade in his recently published memoir "Victory and Woe" (UCD Press). In the aftermath of the Rising, Volunteer companies around the country were re-organised. Tom O'Shaughnessy became O/C of the Rathkeale Battalion in 1917 but was shortly thereafter replaced by Sean Finn of Rathkeale. Harnett remembers Finn as a "lovable character, young, handsome, athletic, a universal favourite" whom he first got to know "at a Volunteer convention held in Croke Park in November 1917 which was presided over by Michael Collins". Shortly thereafter the West Limerick Brigade came into being.

The Shooting of R.I.C. Sergeant George Neazer

Sean O'Mahony, in his book "Frongach-University of Revolution", identifies George Neazer as one of those who picked out certain of the leaders of the Easter Rising from among the large group of assembled prisoners. By way of warning to those who follow exactly what they read in books, Joe Good's otherwise excellent memoir "Enchanted by Dreams" (Brandon Press) contains the following statement of events attributed to Garrett

McAuliffe, Vice-Commandant of the West Limerick Brigade in 1920:

"Garrett explained to me that the hotel in which I had endeavoured to get lunch had been the scene of an action about a week before my visit, in which McAuliffe and other Volunteers had executed the district inspector of the R.I.C. and some British intelligence officers".

In fact, what apparently happened was that, on 10th March 1920, local I.R.A. men from Rathkeale, together with Garrett McAuliffe of Newcastle West and Sean Hogan of Knocklong fame, were ordered by Sean Finn, Brigade O/C, to disarm two R.I.C. men in Ward's Hotel, following a tip off from Liam Scully, later to lose his life in the attack on Kilmallock Barracks. Sergeant George Neazer and Constable Garret Doyle were escorting Michael O'Brien, a land steward, to the local March fair. James Roche's witness statement provides us with further information on O'Brien. We learn that he was there for the purpose of "buying cattle for a boycotted farm". Neazer allegedly failed to obey the order of "hands up" given by the I.R.A. men when they entered the dining room of the

hotel. The Sergeant drew his gun but the I.R.A. responded quickly, the resulting gunfire killing Neazer and wounding Doyle. For the record, Neazer was a 43-year old married man with two children. He was a native of Pallaskenry and had, like so many others before and after him, been a farmer before joining the R.I.C. James Roche describes the incident thus:

"We crept quietly to the door of the Coffee Room. When (Sean) Finn tried to open it he found it was locked on the inside. He was a very strong young man. He just stood back and drove it in with his shoulder and fell into the room on top of it. The Constable was standing inside on the left, Neazer was sitting at a table with a revolver on the table in front of him. Shooting started immediately. Neazer had just time to grab his gun to fire. His shot went through the ceiling. He was shot dead through the forehead. The Constable received about five shots and fell to the floor. We thought he was dead, but we later found out that he survived".



*Local
Licensed
Vintners
Outings*



The Outlaws of the Glen

Another Rathkeale Adventure

By G. F. Vaughan, Southampton (Limerick Leader 1938)

If, at that period - many years ago - of which this little adventure is written, you were to ask any citizen of Rathkeale, which of the many interesting walks in the neighbourhood was the most popular, the reply would undoubtedly have been, "Down the river", meaning that stretch of the Deel from the Metal Bridge to Massy's Island and the Glen, and if you knew anything of Rathkeale you would certainly have agreed with the choice. Standing on the Bridge, not at midnight, but on a fine day in summer, within sound of the roaring waters of the floodgates, with the old borough town in the background, and that fine old Elizabethan fortress, Castlematrix, in a state of splendid preservation, to the left, and looking down the river, a really charming tract of typical rural scenery formed by the blending of woodlands, swiftly running water, and lawns sloping to the water's edge, unfolds itself to the gaze of the onlooker. During the month of May the beauty of the scene is further enhanced by the addition of the snowy white blossoms of the hawthorn hedgerows in full flower; the myriads of trout rising to the May fly, and the joyous notes of those favourite songsters, the blackbird, the thrush and the skylark, not forgetting the occasional call of the cuckoo.

Further on at a bend in the river, and in a lovely sylvan setting, a close-up view of the castle already referred to is obtained, as it rises majestically from the riverside, overshadowing the adjacent mill, the large wheel of which in its monotonous revolutions churned the waters of the mill stream into innumerable miniature whirlpools, and sent eddying and gurgling on their way over the rapids. Surely the writer of 'The Old Rustic Bridge by the Mill' must have had such a scene in mind when he penned the lines of that ever popular song.

Special mention must be made of the orchard of Riverlawn House nearby, the trees of which must have been originally planted so as to give very good boys the opportunity of saying later on "those ripe, juicy apples and pears will not tempt me to go through that concealed hole in the hedge". From here the river takes its normal course for some distance through more pretty scenery, until it eventually reaches Massy's Island (the scene of the adventure), and that gem of a beauty spot, The Glen (from which the outlaws took their name), and thence onwards to join up with the lordly Shannon below Askeaton.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

At the Clonarold entrance to Massy's Island there stood a large house, uninhabited for many years, once the

property of a country gentleman, but then in such a state of decay that it would be only a matter of time before it became a complete ruin; it was known locally as "Dudley O'Grady's" and had the reputation of being haunted. Again, if you were to ask that Rathkeale citizen if he was aware that in the midst of all those peaceful surroundings a gang of outlaws roamed the land whose equals could only be found in the Wild West, or between the covers of a 'penny dreadful', the answer would most certainly have been that he had never heard of such a thing. Yet it was, nevertheless, a fact, and their roles were many. As pirates, they made their victims 'walk the plank' - whatever that may mean; as highwaymen, they held up stages coaches and relieved the occupants of their valuables; as trackers, they trailed the Red Indians to their doom in revenge for the scalps taken from the white man. What more appropriate place could have, therefore, been found as the headquarters for such a gang than a haunted house, and as for their Great White Chief - well modesty forbids that his name should be mentioned here.

The midday sun shone brightly on the outlaws as they sat, disconsolately, on the long stone step outside Fitzgibbon's Pharmacy in the Main Street. It was the last Sunday of the summer vacation and all too quickly had the time passed in playing cricket matches - "pinny a man" - against other local teams; in swimming at the flood gates and Condon's - they had long since been promoted from the mill stream - and in other games and pastimes dear to the heart of schoolboys on summer holidays. (Mention of the mill stream must bring a memory to many old 'Rakalians' of that great thrill and proud boast of early boyhood days - "I swom the mill strame" - but it had to be done fair and above board - or should it have been said above water and not with one leg on the bottom). The future did indeed look very black for the outlaws as on the following Monday morning they would assemble at Kennedy's and O'Grady's corners, over the way, with other boys from up street and down street respectively and, at the first sound of the convent bell at half past nine, would wend their weary way to the school at the other end of Thomas Street. Then one of the gang had an inspiration - "What about a run to Massy's Island?", said he, "we haven't been down there for quite a long time".

RECEIVED WITH ACCLAMATION

The suggestion was received with acclamation and there was an immediate scattering to their various homes to return in a short time, each with some hard-boiled eggs, slices of bread and butter, and a bottle of milk. Soon afterwards they were on their way down the river, and it

was noticed that after passing Riverlawn orchard their pockets had somehow bulged considerably. When they reached the Glen they crossed the river by the stepping stones to Massy's Island where, under the shade of the trees, they had a most enjoyable meal.

After resting for a while a Council of War was held and a plan of campaign as follows evolved. The 'haunted house' was a ranch on the prairie which was being fiercely attacked by Red Indians; of course the outlaws were not supposed to know anything of this at the time. They had just returned from a long trail in the glaring sun and were going to snatch a few hours sleep prior to leaving again. Before laying down they would take the precaution of posting a sentinel on duty over the camp and sending a scout forward to give warning of any danger that might arise. Both were supplied with small mirrors and signals, which the scout would send, were arranged. Slow, steady movements for 'all clear'; quick, sharp ones for 'danger ahead, come quickly'. One of the gang accompanied the scout and his functions will be described later.

The plan was immediately put into execution and, with the exception of the sentinel, all the others were soon in deep slumber. The 'all clear' signal was coming in regularly and then, all of a sudden, came the danger signal which was at once noticed by the sentinel. Instantly, the sleepers were aroused, and mounting their imaginary mustangs they rode off at a terrific pace over imaginary mountain passes, by steep precipices, down canyons, everything was taken in their stride. Danger was ahead and when danger threatened, the outlaws were there to a man. On, on they thundered until at last they pulled up at the outpost and, throwing themselves from their foaming steeds, awaited the arrival of the scout.

THE OUTLAWS ADVANCE

When he appeared from his hiding place among some bushes, it was noticed that somebody else was accompanying him (this was the outlaw already referred to). The report was soon given. A warlike Indian tribe was attacking ranch 556 - defenders in a bad way, food and munitions giving out, one of the defenders, at great risk, managed to escape. Here he is! The escaped defender confirmed the report and added that if help was not immediately forthcoming the little garrison would be wiped out. The order was then given for the outlaws to advance stealthily as ranch 556 (the haunted house) was not far away, and in a short time the imaginary Indians were sighted. The command to open fire was then given and - bang - a volley was poured into the attacking force, then another and another and, before they had time to recover from the shock, the battle ended having left many imaginary dead and wounded on the field. But what is this? Their beloved chief was seen to stagger and fall wounded by a parting shot. Gently they roused him up and laid him away on the hillside - well, it was exactly a

hillside, rather was it a small grassy mound but how were those dear comrades to know that it was infested with ants, as they had gone off to investigate the extent of the damage to the ranch. The luxury of a feast off an outlaw's body did not come to the ants very often and swarms of them were soon crawling all over him, nibbling here, pinching there, until at last he could bear it no longer and was on the point of 'hopping' it when his loss of dignity was saved by one of the outlaws rushing over and shouting, "Gore, gore, real gore". (Blood was too commonplace an expression for the outlaws). Ants and wounds were instantly forgotten and, on joining the gang, he found them gathered near a pool of newly shed blood, the commencement of a trail which they followed and which led up to the 'haunted house'. They stood round the door and, on looking in, saw a man stretched on a bed of straw and who appeared to be in pain. "Come in, boys", said he, "ye needn't be afraid, but would one of ye be after gettin' me a drink of water as I am very weak from the loss of blood". Two of the gang went outside and picking up a couple of empty tins from the many lying around went to the well nearby and soon returned with both full of water. One was handed to the man who drank eagerly from it, and the other was used for bathing a gash in the fleshy part of his left hand.

BINDING THE WOUND

Remembering the efficacy of spider's cobwebs for staunching the flow of blood they got a couple of clean ones and, with the aid of some handkerchiefs, they made a good job of binding the wound and making him fairly comfortable. Again he spoke, "Thank ye very much, boys", said he, "and now might I make so bold as to ask if ye have got anything to ate, not a bit has passed my lips for the past twenty-four hours and I'm nearly starvin' ". Some of the food which the gang had brought with them was hidden away near the Glen and a couple of them volunteered to get it and while they were gone he told his story.

"My name is Billeen Corrig and I come from Askeaton. Yesterday there was a row in the town during which I knocked a policeman down and I had to run for it. Knowing the country round here very well I made tracks for this place straight away". Although the chief outlaw had been many times to Askeaton with his father, who was connected with the law, and had heard a lot about Billeen Corrig (a noted Askeaton character in those days) he had never seen him, so the man's word was taken for granted.

He continued, "I was down at the river havin' a wash when I heard a lot of shoutin' and thinkin' the peelers were after me I made for the big house, and in doin' so stumbled and fell, and cut my hand on a broken bottle, as ye have seen. On Monday I'll be on the road for Limerick to try and work my passage on a boat to Glasgow, but before partin' I should like to thank ye all for ye have done for me".

By this time the food had arrived and the outlaws handed over the remainder to the man who was 'on the run'. Shortly afterwards they were on their way home, never expecting to hear of that man again.

THE SEQUEL

On the following Monday morning the outlaws, with other boys, assembled at the school and, as is always the case after the holidays, the first day dragged its weary course until four o'clock came the dispersal which was signified in the usual manner by the pupils after leaving the precincts of the school.

Later on that same evening the chief was in the hall of his father's house when there was a loud rat-tat on the knocker and, on opening the door, he saw Sergeant Hoey, one of the highlights of the local R.I.C. and Constable Barry on the step. "Is your father in?", asked the sergeant. "We have urgent business with him". "Yes, father is in, and would they please step inside," was the reply.

On their way to the office the sergeant gave the chief what might be called a 'very knowing look' and this determined the latter to be present while the business was being transacted. When all were seated, after the usual salutations, Sergeant Hoey commenced, "We are sorry to disturb you at such a late hour but this is a matter of urgency. As Constables Barry and Sullivan were on patrol duty at the Commons this morning they picked up a man who is wanted for a brutal assault on an old farm labourer in a lonely part of Kerry and robbing him of the few shillings he had saved for rent, and we should like you to make out the necessary papers for him to be sent back to stand his trial at the Assizes. Constable Barry will tell you what actually happened".

Constable Barry - About eleven o'clock this morning Sullivan and I were passing Paddy Burke's cottage at the Commons when he hailed us and said that a man went down the road about five minutes before who he thought was an impostor. "What makes you think that?", I asked. "Well", said Paddy, "he wanted something from me to help him on the road to Limerick, and on enquiring from him who he was and where he came from, he said Billeen Corrigan from Askeaton". Now Paddy happened to know Corrigan very well. "Ye are as much like Billeen as my ould ass there", said he, "and if the peelers are around I'd give ye in charge, for ye are usin' his name for no good purpose. The man then went away", continued Paddy, "and if ye hurry ye'll soon get him". We both hastened along the road and saw a man climb a wall and make for the fields. We soon caught up with him and brought him back to Paddy. "Is this the man who says he is Billeen Corrigan of Askeaton?", I asked. "Yes", said Paddy. "Are you Billeen Corrigan of Askeaton?", I asked the stranger. "I am", said he. Of course there might be two of the same name but by a bit of luck, before going on patrol this

morning, I noticed in the 'Hue and Cry' the description of the man who is wanted in Kerry - as mentioned by the sergeant - and as the person in our charge seemed to answer that description, we took him to the barracks and handed him over to Sergeant Hoey for interrogation.

THE REAL BILLEEN CORRIG

Sergeant Hoey - As the man still persisted in his original statement as to his identity, I sent a wire to the sergeant at Askeaton asking if Corrigan was still there and, if so, to interview him as to his recent movements; also if there was another man of that name in the district, and telling him briefly what the information was required for, and I soon had a reply saying that only one Billeen Corrigan lived there and he had not left the town for over a week. He said he was bringing him along and when they arrived and both men were brought face to face the Askeaton Corrigan said, "That is the man I met in a public house the other day. We had a couple of pints together and he then told me that he got into some trouble in Kerry and was now 'on the run'. I mentioned that Dudley O'Grady's house, near Massy's Island, would be a good place to hide for a day or two, and I directed him how to get there, and I have not seen the man since then until this moment. He had no authority to use my name. I did not mention it to the police, as I did not want to get mixed up in that business".

Well, the upshot of it was that the stranger in custody owned up that he was the 'wanted' man and before putting him away in the lock-up he said that while in Massy's Island he received great help and kindness from a number of Rathkeale boys and he hoped they would not get into trouble over the matter. I assured him they would not. I made some discreet enquiries afterwards and found out who the boys were, but I was keeping the information to myself. (Here he gave the chief another very 'knowing look'). He continued: We have got in touch with the Kerry police and they are sending an escort for the prisoner by the train which arrives at nine forty tonight and who will take him away tomorrow morning.

The papers were duly made out and the sergeant and constable departed and then, one day two or three weeks later, the case came off at the Assizes and, as reported in the press at the time, the so-called Billeen Corrigan got five years penal servitude. At a meeting of the outlaws some time afterwards it was unanimously agreed that if they had known as much that Saturday afternoon as they did then, they would have gone straight to Sergeant Hoey and told him where he could find the 'wanted' man.

RATHKEALE SCOUTS

Scouting in Ireland is entering a new era as the former groups CSI (Catholic Scouts) and SAI (Scouting Association of Ireland) have merged to become one organization known as SCOUTING IRELAND.

In Rathkeale we have beaver scouts (6-8 years old) and cub scouts (8-11 years old) currently meeting on Monday nights. With the help of local parents, we hope to start scouts for 11-15 year old next year. Anyone interested in becoming a Leader can contact the Group Leader, Tim Donovan.

At the moment there are no places available in the beavers or cubs, but if you would like to give your child's name to any of the Leaders, their name will be added to the waiting list.

On Monday, 29th November, 2004 there were 12 beavers invested in a ceremony in St. Anne's School Hall. The Limerick beaver co-ordinator, Angela O'Sullivan, officiated at the investiture and she congratulated all the children involved on the night. A further 9 beavers received their first year award badge on the night.

We look forward to many years of successful scouting in Rathkeale. The children are really enjoying being involved and we are delighted to see the group expanding every year. Anyone interested in getting involved as a parent or as a leader would be welcomed with open arms.



Leaders Grainne Fitzgibbon and Esta Donovan with the invested beavers: Karl Mullane, Christopher Mulcahy, Aaron O'Connor, Sean Hayes, Darragh O'Grady, Lauren Dinnage, Sinead Fitzgibbon, Kate Geary, Eadaoin Lyons, Tara Coleman, Clodagh Barrett, Ashlee Barrett.

RATHKEALE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

In 2003 West Limerick Resources Limited, the Local Development Partnership Company, contracted an independent consultant to develop a Strategic Plan for a youth service in Rathkeale. Out of their plan a project worker has been employed in Rathkeale since September 2004. This worker will work and report to the Interim Management Group, governed by an agreed service between the Interim Management Committee and Limerick Youth Service who will facilitate the employment of the project worker.

Aims – Youth Development Project

The aims of the Youth Plan for Rathkeale is to foster respect, equality, fairness and inclusion amongst young people, adults and the many communities and cultural interests in Rathkeale.

Goals – Youth Development Project

To offer a wide range of supports to the young people of Rathkeale so that they gain knowledge and to enhance their personal, social, educational, economic and political development.

To create a climate to facilitate a greater integration between young people and adults from both communities in Rathkeale and the promotion of citizenship in Rathkeale.

To develop and implement creative educational programmes and initiatives that respond to the clearly identified needs of the young people in Rathkeale.

To build an inclusive society in Rathkeale that creatively manages and promotes diversity.

The project is currently advertising a logo competition in Rathkeale. All young people in Rathkeale are encouraged to take part in the competition. The winning logo will be used to represent the youth project and promote the youth in Rathkeale. There will be an open day held in the Community Centre on 17th December where the winners of the competition will be announced and presented with their prize.

For further information please contact Nora Casey, Youth Development Officer. She can be contacted at Rathkeale Youth Office, Community Centre, Rathkeale, Co. Limerick on 087-2127153.

Cackagay Cider Apple - alive and well

Reprinted by kind permission from Irish Seed Savers Magazine

Last autumn, at our apple tree sale day, a man from Ballingrane, West Limerick by the name of Billy Maguire arrived to buy a few trees. He had spotted us on the website and so made the journey to Scariff and, in doing so, he also brought us news of a man still making what he called 'Cackagay' cider! Dug's ears pricked, as this was an apple variety which was listed but lost from the collection of UCD and now here was a chance to recover it and, better still, a man still making the 'golden brew'!

A Clare man coined the name Cackagay Cider. Combining Irish wit and the Palatine custom of keeping geese within the orchard and feeding them on windfalls, the term Cackagay is the anglicised version of cac a gheidh, the Irish for goose droppings! Billy Maguire also made reference to the custom of feeding the geese on windfalls for at least 6 weeks prior to Christmas and nothing would compare with the flavour from the goose, a childhood memory for him.

The following week I was on my way to visit Billy, bubbling over with excitement, and by golly, nothing could have prepared me for what was to come. Billy lives on the hill at Ballingrane behind two yew trees, a landmark I was to aim for. Sure enough there he was, mounted on his Garryowen cob, just after a run around. Having had a cup of tea in the old house, in Billy's own style, which I was to become well accustomed to, we set off to visit Norman Teskey, the cider maker. Norman is retired and was at home with his wife Maureen relaxing in his dining room when we called. We began talking about apples and it was as though a light switched on inside him.

We headed off to see the trees at Court Matrix which once belonged to Norman's aunt. Norman makes his cider from the three trees there. At the butt of a huge trunk were the remains of a cider press. This was a flat slab of stone and, in this case, concrete, about 3ft square. Around the edge a channel was taken out leading into a spout. Norman tells me they would fix a large log, the butt inserted into a notch taken out of the tree low down and the log supported with ropes from the branches. The apples were filled into sacks and placed on the stone, the log then lowered, which crushed the apples and the juices collected at the spout. To get the last drop they had an extension bar which they fitted onto the log to exert more pressure.

Down the cul-de-sac road into Court Matrix two other houses also had flat stone cider presses or their remains. There is no official record as to the quantity of cider made/drunk/sold etc. A famous character of the area, Mr. John-Tom Teskey, who lived at what is now Egan's farm,

kept a barrel of his brew at the back door with an enamel mug on top and all who visited or strayed to John-Tom's were on many occasions seen staggering their way out the road, having sampled the brew.

There was also a pear tree on the site with two distinct varieties on it and a plum tree but sadly lots of other trees had fallen and died.

On returning to Norman's house he told us how he had learned the art of making cider from a Palatine as a teenager and he is still practising it today. I was anxious to see the actual finished product so I popped the question as to where he made the cider. In his shy, retiring manner he replied, "Oh yes, I'll show you now" and down the garden we went to the little shed in the corner. The creaking door was opened to reveal his inner sanctum. Two shelves of flagons (I presume from the previous year), some Elderflower wine and his homemade cider press in the corner. The initial fermentation happened in his old chest freezer in which he had installed a light bulb to increase the temperature. This is a man who knew his methods. There was a stuffed badger on the table, the skin curing with time. What a world Norman was to share with Billy and myself within the confines of the 'garden shed'.

To mark the occasion he brought up an old cider bottle with the screw top for us to share. I thought I had died and gone to heaven as I tasted his brew, crystal clear, bubbly with red colouring due to the addition of red grapes, very refreshing, juicy, almost champagne-like, a drink for kings and queens. Norman's life should definitely be spared if only to make cider!

The conversation flowed and we proceeded to finish the bottle between us. My return to my fellow seed savers, with only pictures of the event, left me in danger of being lynched but they magnanimously claimed to understand how irresistible it must have been for me to quaff the lot and forget about the folks at home.

(The Irish Seed Savers Association's main objective is the conservation of Ireland's very special and swiftly disappearing native varieties of fruit, grain and vegetables. Their work includes the preservation of traditional varieties that are suitable for Ireland's unique growing conditions).

Rathkeale FAS Scheme

Rathkeale Community Council have been sponsors of the FAS Scheme in Rathkeale town for the past twenty years. The Scheme has been a great success as indeed it has been in towns and villages throughout the country. During the past twenty years many useful projects have been undertaken and completed by the sponsors, with the help of the excellent workers including many craftsmen.

The first major project was the restoration of the Abbey which was a big undertaking at the time. If it were not for this Scheme the Abbey would have fallen completely. This project took approximately three years to complete and, at that time, the work was supervised by Eugene O'Sullivan of Cappagh who was an excellent craftsman. He was the first supervisor of the Rathkeale FAS Scheme. Later the FAS workers built a bandstand in the park alongside the Abbey. This building enhanced the area very much.

Major works were carried out on the Sports Complex and a room extended for a second snooker table. A lot of work was also carried out on the Community Centre.

Recently FAS workers developed the walkway which was originally the old railway line and this walk extended from the old railway station to the junction with Castlematrix. A lot of work was also carried out on the river walk between the bridge at Lower Main Street and the old railway bridge connecting with the walkway. Many people use this area on a regular basis and it is a wonderful facility to have in the area. There is a lot more work to be carried on the walkway during the coming twelve months, especially at the entrance to the Palatine Centre.

Maintenance of the Abbey Park as well as the Sports Complex, the Community Centre and the Sheltered Housing complexes at Abbeylands and Enniscouch involves a lot of work, especially with the grass cutting in the summer period.

At present FAS are involved at the crèche in Enniscouch, St. Vincent de Paul shop at Well Lane, supervision at the Sports Complex and in the Meals on Wheels at the Community Centre. There are a total of eighteen workers presently employed in the FAS Scheme which is a big increase in numbers from the previous year when there were eleven workers. The supervisor of the FAS Scheme is Michael Hunt from Newcastle West.

R.I.C. Members in Rathkeale

1901

**Charles Scanlon
Edward Kiernan
John McEnery
Daniel Driscoll
Edmond Casey
James Eskins
Edward McCabe**

Ex-Army

**David Daly
John Burke
Edward O'Brien
William Hayes
Thomas Sheehy
Daniel Daly
Peter Walsh**

1911

**Patrick Barrett
John Fahey
William Farrell (Head R.I.C.)
Michael Shiel
William Lucas
Michael Ryan
Patrick Gayner**

Ex-Army

**David Cosgrave
John Wayman
Major Langford
James Scanlan
Fintan McNamara**

Cappagh

**John Enright
.....Travers
John Buckley
.....King**

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Verses of a local poet

THE MASTER'S QUESTION

In childhood our mother would seek to comfort us,
with the advice that these "would be the happiest days of our
lives".

Halcyon days? I think that was too optimistic, less cruel than
what went before, certainly.

I know too many who are still embittered by slap or scold.

I cannot now recall the source of this particular classroom tumult.
Perhaps a note was being exchanged, or a boy was gazing into
space.

It may even have occurred that two lads were playing ducks and
drakes.

"What is going on there?" the teacher asked.

The stock reply for such occasions was unveiled. "Nothing, Sir".

Nothing", the Master echoed. "Nothing", he exclaimed, his ire
becoming obvious.

We feared his anger. Then, suddenly his countenance softened.
A grin became evident on his weather beaten face.

"Nothing", he said more gently. The smile broadened.

"I will give to any child in this classroom, the sum of half a
crown,

if he can tell me, how one Kerry boy defined the word "nothing".

Memory has dimmed my recall of our attempts on that day at
pecuniary advancement.

I know the Master's wit prevailed.

"Nothing", he informed us, "is what you get on a fair day,
from a wealthy farmer, for minding his animals".

PLASTIC PADDIES

What were the younger sons to do?
Many choose to forage in English factories
to raise their families in Manchester or Crewe.

On their brief sojourns home, when frequenting the local inn,
they hear their children ridiculed
for accent, attitude and love of Irish dance.

And when this sport has ended,
a momentary smile would pass his lips, when the question was
put,

"How come Steve McMahon or Martin Keown never choose to
don the Irish shirt?"

RATHKEALE

I stand on the mile long Main Street of a once noted town,
a place of empty houses, no inner voices,
no outer soul, the voiding of spaces.

This is my demesne, where Protestant tower and bank
pay tribute to Deity and Mammon. The Catholic spire, a grey
needle,
punctures the sky, a monument to a mundane God.

I remember the optimism here, of a small town resilient on its
own terms,
a prosperity betrayed in factory, trade and the friendliness of the
voice.

Childhoods spent in Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, GAA and tennis
club,
fun found later in dance hall and cinema.

Today, scattered among the faded Georgian splendour and council
estates,

are boundaries of cold conceit and unheralded arrogance.

This town welcomed the stranger,

the usual plethora of our island's invaders and more.

The Palatines feature in this town's history,

A German people, seeking refuge from a Catholic king,
farmed, kept orchards, made cider, erected Meeting Houses in
their outlying villages,

to nurture the word of Wesley.

The traveller acquired wealth, purchased house and street,
the Fair Hill, Roches Road, the town Square, the fields of O
Faolain.

These were the illegitimate children of our unwanted daughters.

Modern Ireland chooses its neighbours carefully,

these are people with whom it does not wish to associate,
bureaucracy creates its own indifferences,
manufactures its own cruelties.

DIMENSIONS

A grey masquerade of dormant colours,
a festival of black and white,
places of speckled stone.
Shafts of dancing light,
on distant hills,
fog on lowlying ground.
Walls of cut stone,
monuments to the institutions of the past,
places of occasional grim beauty.

I recall brisk November mornings,
cycling over the brow of the New Road hill,
encountering rolling mist at Holy Cross.
The rising wall of the meat factory,
erected from the Workhouse ruins,
the morning chill, lasting until the mid-day soup.

Constrained by these self imposed boundaries,
awaiting the colours of an evening sunset or a summer dawn,
a point of departure for the liberated self.

Taken from a talk given by the late Bertie Cussen to the I.C.A. in Rathkeale in the early 1970's

CASTLES OF RATHKEALE

There is much confusion and very little known about the castles of Rathkeale but everyone agrees there were only three castles on the Newcastle West side of the River Deel. These were strung out in a straight line running east and west, probably for defensive purposes, with the river forming a semi-circle on the Croagh side.

The first and oldest, known as Rathkeale Castle, was built by the Normans in the 13th century and stood on the site now occupied by Mount Southwell. This castle was the watchdog of the town and guarded the approach to the bridge which must have been a very ancient structure. Because of its location it was constantly in the wars, especially during the ill-fated Desmond Rebellion of the late 16th century when we read of Malley, the Viceroy, attacking and burning it one year and repairing and garrisoning it the next. His successor, Pelham, arrives in Rathkeale to find that the bridge has been burnt by the Earl of Desmond and, having repaired it, he then burnt the castle.

After the Spaniards landed in Smerwick in the Autumn of 1580 the armies of Lord Deputy Grey and the Duke of Ormond assembled at Rathkeale before striking camp and marching into Kerry. Whereupon the local people, who were starving because of the rigours of the war, flocked to collect whatever scraps of food had been left behind. They reckoned without the diabolical ingenuity of one Captain (later Sir) Walter Raleigh who remained with some soldiers in concealment and fell on the gleaners, slaughtering them mercilessly. For this bloodthirsty business the Corporation presented Raleigh with the freedom of the town. In return he undertook to repair the castles of Rathkeale and Castlematrix. He then followed the main army to Smerwick and was in time to take part in the attack which culminated in the surrender of the Spaniards under conditions which were immediately broken by the appalling butchery of 700 troops - so the less said about Raleigh in Rathkeale, or indeed Ireland, the better. Some national spirit entered the Corporation between Elizabethan and Cromwellian times because they refused Cromwell's army a sufficient supply of provisions, whereupon he disenfranchised the Corporation and Rathkeale ceased to be a Borough town.

The second castle, known today as the Glebe Castle, was probably built in the 15th century. There is reference in the 1641 depositions to a 'Chancellor's Castle' in Rathkeale but I think was another name for the Glebe Castle. It is described in the Ordnance Survey letters of 1840 as follows: "A castle stands in the glebe of Castlematrix which commonly goes by the name Glebe

Castle. It measures 21 feet by 13 feet in the clear and has three stories. The walls are 40 feet high and 6 feet thick. It has no arched floors and is in good preservation". At that time it was occupied by Rev. C. T. Coghlan, the incumbent of Killscannell. He was succeeded by a man named Spread and even today it is sometimes called Spread's Castle. In recent years it was the residence of the late Paddy Liston and today it is occupied by Mr. Bryan Coleman.

The third castle, where we are assembled tonight courtesy of Colonel O'Driscoll, was erected some time in the 15th century, probably by James, the 6th Earl of Desmond, commonly called James the Usurper. He was fond of architecture and erected most of the buildings at Askeaton and Newcastle West. The site chosen for this castle was anciently known as Bun na Traisce because it marked the confluence of the Trask stream with the River Deel. Inevitably the castle was called Caislean Bun na Traisce, which in time was softened to Caislean Bun na Trass and the anglicised to Castle ma Trass. (When Thomas Southwell was made a Baron in 1717 he called himself Baron Southwell of Castlematrix). Finally the name was changed to Castlematrix, probably by John Southwell Brown who repaired and fitted the ruined building as a residence. He also established a flour mill there. I should mention that Trask is the Irish for a water-hen, that gentle elusive bird that graces many of our streams. Is it too late now to return to the old name Castlematrix?

This castle has the melancholy distinction of being associated with a foul murder towards the end of the 15th century. Here is the story as well as I have been able to piece it together. The onset of the Winter of 1487 saw James Fitzthomas, 9th Earl of Desmond, in residence with his family at Castlematrix. He had then been Earl for over twenty years and his powers were waning. He was married to Margaret, daughter of Tadhg O'Brien, Prince of Thomond and, as they had no male heir, there was a lot of talk about the succession to the Earldom. James had three brothers in order of age: Maurice, who was a complete cripple, called Baccagh; Thomas, commonly called Maol or bald, and John who was known as Sir John of Desmond. They were three determined men and were married to three ambitious women and all had sons and daughters. Sir John was the most determined and his wife, an O'Brien, the most ambitious with the result that they planned to kill the Earl in the hope of succeeding to the title. The instrument employed for the purpose was a kinsman called John the Stammerer or, to give him his full name, Sean Mantach Mac Gibbon of Mahoonagh. He had a distorted personality and was an apt assassin for, on the night of 7th December 1487, he fell on the unfortunate Earl in one of the rooms of the castle and murdered him. The conspirators reckoned without Maurice Baccagh who took a strong line and, having executed the Stammerer, he banished Sir John and his accomplices and assumed the title of 10th Earl of Desmond.

Marriages



Noel Sexton and Triona McDonnell
Daniel Quilligan and Margaret Sheridan
Noel McNamara and Sabrina Naughton
Daniel Sheridan and Bridget Sheridan
James O'Donoghue and Bridget Flynn
Patrick Flynn and Jane Kealy
David Evans and Claudine McCarthy
Paul Allen and Sandra White
Eoin Duggan and Lorraine Lynch
Michael Fitzgerald and Mary Naughton
James O'Donoghue and Elizabeth Quilligan
James Barry and Valerie Noonan
Michael Madigan and Catherine Govan
Paul Picard and Sinead Dunne
James Sheridan and Mary Flynn
Jeremiah Gammell and Joanne McCarthy
John McCarthy and Nora Gammell
Michael Sheridan and Jeanne O'Brien

Deaths

Philomena Fennell, Bridget Sheridan, Connie Sheridan, Tony Gammell, Frank Walsh, Elizabeth Brennan, Johnny Daly, Tom O'Sullivan, Brendan O'Kelly, Sister Noreen Larkin, Aidan O'Grady, Danny Boy Sheridan, Sammy Gammell, Jerry Neville, Mary Cawley, Michael Stackpoole, Martin (Sunny) Lynch, Paddy Cawley, Dan O'Brien, Pdraig Roche, Michael Cahill, Maura Meehan, Jerry Mulcaire, Darren Roche, Anthony William Forrest, Sean Fitzgibbon, Tom Baggott, Dan Dare Sheridan, Peggy Keane, Eileen Dore, Michael Neville, Dick Naughton, Nellie O'Connor, Michael Dore, Rev. Fr. Ernan Neville, Toss Markham, David Sheridan, Sister Maura Burke, Patricia Harte, Paddy Geaney, Julia Sheridan, Billy Lynch, Nellie Geaney.



THE POOR LITTLE SWALLOW

Once upon a time there was a non-conformist swallow who decided not to fly south for the winter. However, soon the weather turned so cold that he reluctantly started to fly south.

In a short time ice began to form on his wings and he fell to earth in a barn yard almost frozen. Presently a cow passed by and proceeded to do his droppings on the little fellow. The swallow thought it was the end, but the manure warmed him and defrosted his wings. Warm and happy and able to breath the swallow began to sing. Just then a large cat came by and upon hearing the chirping came to investigate. The cat cleared away the manure, found the swallow and ate him.

Three logical conclusions which you arrive at:

- 1. Anyone who sh..s on you isn't necessarily your enemy.*
- 2. Anyone who gets you out of the sh.. isn't necessarily your friend.*
- 3. If you're warm and happy in a pile of sh... keep your mouth shut!*

Paddy Collins (R.I.P.)

There was great sadness in the parishes of Cappagh and Rathkeale at the untimely passing of Paddy Collins. Paddy was a musician without equal. Since he first joined Rathkeale Brass Band in 1960 he played and marched in St. Patrick's Day parades, carnivals, marches and processions in cities and towns all over Ireland and England.

A skilled fisherman, he was a self-taught musician. His first choice of instrument was the saxophone but he also played the bass, mandolin and violin. Not content with just playing music he turned his hand to making instruments and had only recently finished making a violin.

Playing with Rathkeale Brass Band was his first love. He started life on the road with his father and other family members in the Bluebell Ceili Band. However, it was in the 1960's that he became a household name when he fronted showbands like the Legionnaires and the Berwin.

To his family Paddy was a very special person but to his community he was also special. He would always volunteer his talents to play at some gig to raise funds for someone or something in need. Perhaps it was his jovial manner, his husky laugh, his sense of humour or the bit of devilment in him that endeared him to so many people.

Last week, as the angels in heaven blew their trumpets, there is little doubt that Paddy arrived (possibly a little late) with his sax.

A guard of honour was provided by past and present members of Rathkeale Brass Band. To his wife Helen, sons Mike and Alan and to his many friends we extend our deepest sympathy.



Taking part in the Adare Parade 1992

1970

St. Mary's narrow win

**St. Mary's (Rathkeale) 0-7
Ahane 0-5**

St. Mary's (Rathkeale), fresh from their exciting two point win - 1-9 to 2-4 over Athea in the Western final - qualified to meet Treaty Sarsfields in the County Minor Football championship when they defeated Ahane 0-7 to 0-5 in a rugged semi-final at Croom on Sunday.

This was a hard fought and well-contested game between two determined sides. The conditions were not conducive to good football - a strong gale blew across the pitch - but both sides mastered the elements admirably. St. Mary's deserved success because they used their craft and speed to great advantage and had a deadly marksman in midfielder, Art Supple. Ahane will long bemoan their missed chances, but overall it was their tactics which brought about their downfall. St. Mary's led 0-5 to 0-4 at half time, and in a titanic struggle in the second moiety held on for a hard-earned win.

Best for St. Mary's were Art Supple, who had a deadly kick of a ball; Joe Fitzgerald, John Enright, Tom Larkin, Denis O'Dea and Michael Cunningham while Pat Herbert, who had a five start performance at right half-back, Paddy O'Brien, Paddy Meskell, Flannan Connolly, Michael Hyde, Pat Hassett at full back, and substitute Sean Aherne were most in the picture for Ahane. Scorers were:

St. Mary's: A. Supplie (0-3), J. Fitzgerald (0-2), B. Neville and J. Lynch (0-1 each).

Ahane: G. Jennings (0-3), B. Berkery and S. Aherne (0-1 each).

The teams lined out:

St. Mary's: Niall Hogan, Jim Lodge, Michael Cunningham, Gerard Cunningham, Ted Clyne, Denis O'Dea, Tom Larkin, Art Supple, Billy Neville, Con Naughton, Joe Fitzgerald, Pat Naughton, P. J. Barrett, John Enright, John Lynch.

Ahane: Matt Gibbons (goal), Pat Kelly, Pat Hassett, Michael Bridgeman, Pat Herbert, Pat Shanahan, Pat Lawlor, Flannan Connolly, Michael Hyde, Ger Jennings, Paddy O'Brien, Bernard Berkery, Dan Meskell, Paddy Meskell, Sean Conway.

Referee: Tommy Murphy (Hospital).

1972 A.G.M.

ST. MARY'S G.A.A. CLUB

The annual general meeting of St. Mary's G.A.A. Club was held in Patsy Doherty's residence on Thursday, 17th inst. In a short address, the outgoing chairman, Mr. J. Kennedy, extended a welcome to the large attendance. He congratulated the club's teams on their performances during 1971. In particular, he thanked all who had contributed to the outstanding success of Scór 72, the G.A.A. talent competition. It was a competition which had come to stay and one which would attract many more entries this year.

The outgoing secretary, Mr. T. McNamara, thanked all the members of the committee for the help they had given him during his years as secretary. He was not seeking re-election this year as he felt that it was time for a change. However, he would always be available to help the club and he wished it every success in the coming year.

The outgoing treasurer, Mr. P. Brennan, gave a report on the club's finances.

Presentations were made to the following members of the club who were married during the past two years: Stephen McDonnell, Ml. Murphy, Vin White, Ml. Cunningham, Tadgh O'Connor, Con Guiney, Jas. O'Shaughnessy, Wm. Mulcair, John Brennan. The presentations were made by the club's president, Very Rev. Canon Costello, P.P., who congratulated the recipients. He also praised the good work done by the teams and the officials whom he described as the most dedicated that any parish could have. He asked all teams to practise during the coming season and to co-operate with the officials.

Rev. D. Wall, C.C. endorsed the remarks of Canon Costello and expressed the wish that the club would be successful during the year. Rev. J. Irwin, C.C., said that the fact that the u-21 team won the West final last year was a hopeful sign. He paid tribute to the good work being done by the teachers in organising football and hurling leagues. The fruits of this would be seen in the future.

The following were presented with u-21 plaques: Niall Hogan, Denis O'Dea, John Enright, Pat Naughton, Connie Naughton, Wm. Mulcair, John Lynch, Aidan Supple, John Daly.

Egan Cup medals were presented to: John O'Connor, Jim (Blackie) McEniry, Tadgh O'Connor, Aidan Supple, Andy O'Dea, Wm. Mulcair, John Brennan, John Lynch, Pat Naughton. Any players who were entitled to plaques and medals and were not at the meeting would be given their

awards later.

The following officers were elected for 1972:

President:	Very Rev. T. Canon Costello, P.P. V.G.
Vice-Presidents:	Rev. D. Wall, C.C. Rev. J. Irwin, C.C.
Chairman:	John Kennedy
Vice-Chairmen:	Michael Neville Peter Fitzgerald
Treasurer:	Peter Brennan
Secretary:	Pa Wilmott
Assistant Secretary:	Tom McNamara

Committee: Paddy Naughton, John Griffin, Patsy Doherty, John O'Connor, Ml. Hanley, Patrick Collins, Niall Duggan, John Lynch, Tim O'Donnell.

Senior Hurling Captain: Jim McEniry. Vice-Captain: John O'Connor. Junior Football Captain: John Lynch. Captains and Vice-Captains of Junior Hurling and U-21 Hurling will be announced later.

Selectors for Senior Hurling team: Rev. D. Wall, C.C., Peter Fitzgerald and Andy O'Dea.

Selectors for Junior Hurling and U-21 Hurling teams: John O'Connor, Paddy Naughton and Ml. Hanley.

Selectors for Junior Football and U-21 Football teams: Ml. Neville, T. O'Connor and Patsy Doherty.

Delegates to West Board: Pa Wilmott, T. McNamara, Niall Duggan, Ml. Hanley and Ml. Neville.

The following were elected to take charge of the U-14's: Rev. J. Irwin, c.C., Ml. Hanley, Noel Wilmott, John Griffin, P. Naughton, J. Kennedy and Patsy Doherty.

Tidy Towns Competition 2004

Adjudication Report

Centre: Rathkeale County: Limerick
 Category: C Ref. 385
 Mark: 209 Date: 28/06/2004

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2004	Mark Awarded 2003
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	33
The Built Environment	40	30	28
Landscaping	40	35	35
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	20	18
Litter Control	40	20	24
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	31	31
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	209	209

Overall Developmental Approach

Rathkeale is welcome to the 2004 National Tidy Towns Competition. Thank you for your submission this year together with your sketch map. We note the absence of a planned work programme and urge you to submit one for next year, it is difficult to progress in the competition without one. Rathkeale is a fine town with an interesting layout and the gentle rise and fall of its streets create attractive street scapes. The town has potential for success in the Tidy Towns Competition, however general maintenance throughout is not good. The remarks of last year's adjudicator can be reiterated this year. How can three people look after a town the size of Rathkeale? It is sad to see what little support you receive from the local community. We wish you every success in the future.

The Built Environment

Congratulations on the refurbishment of the Rathkeale Sports Complex; this development will be considered for the Sustainable Development Award. At the time of adjudication work in progress was noted at the Community Centre and this looks set to be another fine development. The AIB premises was admired also as was 'Kathleen's Bar'. Continue to encourage business premises to remove inappropriate signage such as the dated beer signs on 'Molly's'. The town is a successful mix of single, two and three-storey buildings, many of which still retain some of their original architectural features; encourage property owners to retain these upon refurbishment. The rusted roof of Naughton's Garage is visually obtrusive and the buildings which go to make up the Cattle Mart together with the old Cinema need urgent attention/redevelopment.

Landscaping

The perimeter fencing at the ESB sub-station should be planted for greater enclosure. The retaining walls of the Cattle Mart might also be planted with climbing plants. Some well maintained stretches of grass verge were noted, particularly beyond the sports grounds and the green located across from the Fire Station was admired. Future tree planting should feature deciduous broadleaved native trees as these are supportive of wildlife.

Wildlife and Natural Amenities

The sports ground is a fine amenity development, however the blue sections of the retaining wall need to be repainted. Congratulations on the development of the amenity walk along the old railway line; this should be signposted now from the town center. A wildlife survey should be undertaken to identify wildlife habitats; perhaps the schools could become involved in such a project. A survey is important as it is well nigh impossible to take protective measures when it is not known what species are present.

Litter Control

Congratulations to St. Anne's National School for its achievement of a second green flag. What a pity the community at large is not as litter conscious and as committed to the quality of their environment as the schoolchildren. Litter control was not good during adjudication. Plastic bottles were noted around the entrance to the sports grounds and a variety of litter was noted in the main shopping areas and throughout the town in general. The loss of marks involved under this heading would have been greater had it not been for the achievement of St. Anne's National School. Well done again!

Tidiness

Weed growth along the base of walls, kerbs, gutters and eaves of premises must be kept in check. Other elements of untidiness have been noted by previous adjudicators. The committee will have to devise a strategy to deal with both the litter problem and the problem of untidiness. The recommendation of last year's adjudicator regarding meeting with the Environmental Officer of Limerick County Council is reiterated.

Residential Areas

Competitions for the best-kept housing estate are an excellent initiative. Each residential area should be circulated regarding the presentation of their curtilage areas, gardens, boundary walls, roadside areas to boundary walls and green areas and verges within their development. A big job for a very small committee.

Roads, Streets and Back Areas

Rathkeale performs well under this heading. Road surfaces and footpaths in general are excellent in presentation and all grass verges of all approach roads surveyed looked well. Stone walls were admired also. The black cast iron finger posts are a nice touch. Some nameplates were defaced and need to be cleaned down. A good overall presentation here.

General Impression

The overall impression of Rathkeale is one of a town with potential to do well but where perhaps the biggest challenge facing the committee is to adopt a public relations exercise to try and attract more interest by the community at large to their town.

FROM THE SHANNON MEATS GAZETTE



The smiles that tell it all - L-R: Fred O'Brien, Billy Nestor, Mike Dunne, Martin Doherty, Pa Sheahan, Butch White, Joan White, Sean Hennessy, Veronica Hennessy and Mary Kenneally (1977)



Liam Woulfe being presented with the Joe Cuddy Perpetual Trophy by Club Chairman Seamus Tierney, surrounded by his family and fellow prize-winners. 1977

We are survivors

This is an article for those born before 1950

We were born before colour television, sugar lump immunization, frozen food, Xerox, videos, Frisbees and the Pill. We lived before credit cards, split atoms, laser beams, dishwashers, tumble dryers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip dry clothes and before man walked on the moon.

We got married first and then lived together. We thought "fast food" was what you ate in Lent. A "Big Mac" was an oversized raincoat and crumpet we had for tea. We existed before house husbands, computer dating, dual careers. A meaningful relationship meant getting along with your cousins and sheltered accommodation was where you waited for a bus.

We were born before day care centres, group homes and disposable nappies. We had never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electric typewriters, artificial hearts, word processors, yoghurt and young men wearing earrings.

For us "time sharing" meant togetherness, a chip was a piece of wood or a fried potato, hardware meant nuts and bolts and software wasn't a word. Before 1948 "Made in Japan" meant junk; the term "making out" referred to how you did in your exams; a stud was something that fastened a collar to your shirt; going "all the way" meant staying on a double decker bus until it reached the depot.

In our day, cigarette smoking was fashionable; grass was mown, coke was kept in the coalhouse; a joint was a piece of meat you had on Sundays and pot was something you cooked in. Rock music was a grandmother's lullaby; El Dorado was an ice-cream; a gay person was the life and soul of the party and nothing more and AIDS just meant beauty treatment or help for someone in trouble.

We who were born before 1950 must be a hardy bunch when you think of the ways in which the world has changed and the adjustments we have had to make. No wonder we are so confused and there is a generation gap!

But, by the grace of God we have survived. Alleluia!

FROM THE SHANNON MEATS GAZETTE



The Hanley and the Barry families at the Livestock Show 1985

Some of the most stupid things ever said

Would the congregation please note that the bowl at the back of the church labelled "For the Sick" is for monetary contributions only. (**Churchtown Parish Magazine Gloucestershire**).

Britain was very different in my grandfather's day. There were children walking around without any feet. (**3rd Earl Atlee on Radio 5 Live**)

It's wonderful to be here in the great state of Chicago. (**Former U.S. Vice-President Dan Quayle**)

The Manager has personally passed all the water served here. (**Hotel sign in Acapulco**)

That's a wise substitution by Terry Venables, three fresh men, three fresh legs. (**Sports Commentator Jimmy Hill, BBC 1**)

This is lap 54 – after that it's 55, 56, 57, 58... (**BBC Commentator Murray Walker**)

No man is an Ireland. (**Richard Daley, Mayor of Chicago**)

Miami man admits taking his own life. (**Headline from Orlando Sentinel**)

I always wait until a jury has spoken before I anticipate what they will do. (**Attorney General Janet Reno**)

What disappointed me was that we didn't play with any passion. I'm not disappointed, you know, I'm just disappointed. (**Kevin Keegan**)

Reporter! Do you think it's going to rain? (**Bill Peterson, Florida State Coach**) What do you think I am? A geologist!

Were you alone or by yourself? (**A lawyer at a court case**)

I don't want to cast asparagus at my opponent. (**Chicago politician during a TV debate**)

I never like you and I always will. (**Samuel Goldwyn**)

The lift is being fixed for the next day. During that time we regret that you will be unbearable. (**Sign in a Bucharest hotel lobby**)

Drop your trousers here for best results.

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 & Friday 10.00am to 5.00pm

Saturday: 10.00am to 4.00pm

Library Opening Hours:

Rathkeale House Hotel

Mobile Library 10am to 1pm

2pm to 4pm

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

Shannon Doc 1850 212999

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

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: D. Malone, Secretary

Community Hall: Tel: 64908

Meals on Wheels: Breda Morrissey. Tel: 64396

Scout Cubs Mondays - St. Anne's Hall

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: Ml. McNamara Tel: 63091