# LOUGH GUR & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL 2015-2016

NO. 18

1916 2016

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**Front cover designed by Rev. Fr. Seán Fennelly**

**ISBN 978-0-9551585-8-2**

# Chairperson's Address

Dear Reader,

Thank you for your support in purchasing our Historical Society's Journal. Within its covers you will find a gold-mine of information, history, folklore, people, places and points of fascination and interest. This 2016 edition contains many articles referring to the Easter Rising marking this very special centenary. There are also a fine selection of other submissions not related to the events in Dublin one hundred years ago. These also provide you with a wealth of information both local and from further afield. I want to sincerely express my gratitude to all who have contributed in any way. It is very fitting that I thank Michael O'Sullivan (Hospital) for his years faithfully and successfully wearing the hat of Editor. Michael stepped down from this position but remains a very valued and essential member of the editorial team. I want to congratulate Sean Gallagher, the new editor, on this excellent publication. This book is an exceptionally noble and very fine maiden-voyage for him as 'commander and chief'. To all in the Society who played invaluable roles in making this journal a reality, it would be remiss of me not to mention Michael Quinlan for all his hard work and his integral role with Lough Gur Historical Society.

A sincere "thank you" to Bridie Daly and the team in the Lough Gur Information office for keeping everyone informed and up to date regarding events and on-goings in our organisation. We are also very grateful to Joan Dempsey, our Minister of Finance, for her impeccable management of fiscal matters. To all members of our Society thank you for your interest and participation over the two years since our last publication. I am especially grateful to all who supported our lectures, talks, our field-trips and fun and informative excursions. New members are always welcome - just contact Joan (087 - 7755376) or make contact through any member of the Society.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the people of Hospital for the wonderful way they both marked and celebrated their Eight Hundredth anniversary in 2015. It was a wonderful success worthy of the mile-stone which it marked.

The two years between each Journal publication are often marked with moments of sadness and grief for our Society and community. This edition is no exception. I would like to offer my prayers and sympathies and the condolences of our entire society to the Ryan and Callanan families on the deaths of Thomas and Michael. Ar dheis De go raibh a n-anamnacha.

I hope you enjoy reading this Journal as much as I have and maybe you might even consider submitting an article for consideration in a future edition.

With my gratitude to you all,

*Rev. Fr. Seán Fennelly*
Chairperson of Lough Gur Historical Society.

## Editor's Address

A century has passed since one of the most heroic and defining episodes in Irish history occurred in Dublin and a few other locations in the country at Easter 1916. The Rising has generated a certain amount of debate about whether it should have taken place. But the fact is it did take place and five years later the independent Irish state emerged from that momentous week. It is also fair to say that those who led and participated in the Rising were motivated by the purest of ideals and wanted to see their country – our country – take its place among the nations of the earth on the basis of equality, social justice and self-determination. While the area around Lough Gur was not directly affected by those events at that time, it is appropriate that this journal should remember the Rising and those who participated in it. In this regard a number of articles in this edition relate specifically to this seminal event. These include the reprinting of items that were first published in the 1990 edition of the journal, an article written in 1951 by Dr Richard Hayes of Bruree who participated in the Rising in Ashbourne, Co. Meath, and original contributions from others on certain aspects of the Rising. You will also note that the front and back cover of this edition were inspired by the rebellion and they too are an attempt to pay tribute to the event that created the Irish Republic. I want to particularly acknowledge the feature on the front cover which was designed by our chairperson, Fr. Séan Fennelly.

But this journal also consists of other contributions on the history and heritage of the Lough Gur area and beyond, as well as other features of our past. Historian John A Murphy once wrote that the history of the county "is a vast and patchy fabric, destined never to be completed", ("Anatomy and Essence" by John A Murphy in *Cork History and Society*, Dublin, 1993). One could say the same about the Lough Gur and District Historical Society catchment area. And that makes the articles that are included in this journal, and previous editions, all the more valuable. I also hope that you, the reader, will find them to be enjoyable and informative. I wish to thank those who wrote and contributed them and to acknowledge their contribution to creating the fabric that is the history and heritage of the Lough Gur area. I would also like to encourage others who might wish to contribute articles to future editions of the journal. They are always welcome. They are, in fact, the life blood of the journal.

I want to thank the Society for asking me to take on the role of editor of this journal. I hope that my efforts have not disappointed anyone. If they have not, a large amount of the credit must go to Fr Séan Fennelly, Michael Quinlan, Joan Dempsey and Michael O' Sullivan, who have wisely guided and advised me over the past six months or so in my endeavours. Thanks very much indeed to each of you. I also want to thank Catherine Power, Caoimhe Power Gallagher and Aine Barry for their indispensable technical skills which were required in laying out the journal. Thanks also to Eamonn Sheahan for printing. And, of course, thanks to you the reader for your continued support for the Lough Gur and District Historical Society Journal.

Seán Gallagher
Editor, 2016

## *Contributors*

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**Tom Cassidy** –Conservation Officer, Limerick City and County Council.

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**Fr. Seán Fennelly** – History teacher and Chaplain to Scoil Eoin Baiste, Hospital.

**Garry Ahern** – Caherconlish native living in Dublin: has done detailed studies on the schools in his native parish.

**Joseph Lennon** – Historian and author of forthcoming *Castles and Tower Houses of Limerick 1199 – 1703*.

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**John Carew** –Lough Gur storyteller and poet.

**Dáithí Ó h-Ógáin** (R.I.P.) – Professor of Folklore U.C.D.

**Tom Toomey** – Historian and author with an interest in the War of Independence.

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**Seán Gallagher** – Hospital native now living in Fedamore. Editor of this edition.

**Bridie Daly** – retired teacher and secretary of Lough Gur and District Historical Society.

**Mary Slattery** – Galbally native living in Pallasgreen. Regular contributor to journal.

And other contributions from members and friends– **Anthony Daly, Betty Leahy, Bríd Foster, John Keane, Bobby Ryan, Joe Moloney, Michael O'Sullivan, Niamh Hehir, Jennifer Broom, Peadar O'Callaghan.**

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# Eamonn Ceannt and His Family

**by John Sheehy**

My granduncle, Eamonn Ceannt, was born in 1881 in Ballymoe, Co. Galway. His father, James, was born near Clogheen outside Mitchelstown, to William and Ellen Kent (nee Cleary). Ellen, according to family tradition, was descended from the same family as the Donegal Franciscan Brother Micheal O Cleirigh (1590 - c. 1643), who led the team of scribes known as the Four Masters. James married Johanna Gallway in Buttevant where he was stationed after he joined the Royal Irish Constabulary. James and Johanna had a total of seven children born between Buttevant and Ballymoe and from oldest to youngest they were John P. (my grandfather), Ellen, William, James, Michael, Edward (Eamonn) and Richard.

Eamonn was baptised Edward Thomas Kent. He did his early schooling in Ardee and Drogheda in Co. Louth as his father had been promoted and transferred to Ardee. His father subsequently retired to Dublin with the rank of Chief Constable (the present day equivalent of Garda Superintendent) where Eamonn finished his schooling.

Eamonn did not study Irish in school as it was only optional. The first time he signed his name in Irish was in 1897 when he was sixteen but he did develop an interest in Irish nationalism and joined the Gaelic League and through it he learned Irish. The Gaelic League was formed to revive and promote everything Irish- language, music, dancing, poetry, literature and history. Eamonn apart from learning Irish also learned to play the flute, the tin whistle, the violin, the Irish war pipes and the uileann pipes. He travelled to the west of Ireland to take part in Irish language and music festivals and formed the Pipers Association Club with Edward Martyn. Because of his commitment to the Gaelic League he eventually became a member of the governing body and in 1902 he proposed that they should hold a "Language Procession" through Dublin on St. Patrick's Day to highlight the various aspects of the organisation. Seven hundred people took part in the procession and Eamonn started it by playing the war pipes. This was the start of what is now the St. Patrick's Day parade that are enjoyed all over the world.

In 1908 the Catholic's Young Men's Society sent a team to Rome to take part in an athletics meeting and wishing to show that Ireland had an independent identity to England, they brought Eamonn with them, dressed in a red and green traditional Irish costume. Eamonn led them into the arena playing the uileann pipes. The Pope heard about this Irish piper and invited the Irish team to the Vatican for an audience with him. The team filed into the audience chamber and then Eamonn marched in and went three times around the room playing "O'Donnell Abu". The Pope remarked that all the Irish priests had tears in their eyes.

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Eamonn met his wife, Aine, through the Gaelic League and the Pipers Club of which she was the honorary secretary. Aine was Eamonn's nickname for her as she was born Frances Mary O'Brennan. She herself came from a Nationalist background. Aine's father, Frank O'Brennan, had to escape in disguise to Dublin from Tipperary after the British became interested in him due to his association with the Fenians and her mother's father had been in the United Irishmen. When Eamonn and Aine got married he insisted on using French five franc coins instead of British money. They both insisted on the entire ceremony being held in Irish and they also signed the register in Irish even though the registrar said they could be fined £10 for doing so. In the period from 1900 to 1910 Eamonn was involved in Cultural Republicanism but after corresponding with several newspapers he came to the attention of advanced nationalists to the extent that he was sworn into the Irish Republican Brotherhood in 1912 by Sean Mac Diarmada who saw his potential as a separatist revolutionary. He advanced within that organisation to be on the Military Council that planned the Rising by 1915. In 1913 Eamonn joined the Irish Volunteers after being invited to a meeting by Michael (The) O'Rahilly - whose mother in law (maiden name O'Kennedy-Hickey) incidentally came from the vicinity of Hospital. Eamonn stayed with the more militant side after the movement split in 1914, following John Redmond's call for Volunteers to join the British army at the outbreak of World War One. Eamonn and the 4th Battalion which he commanded took part in the Howth gun running along with other Volunteer battalions and the Irish Citizens Army. On the way back, after being confronted by the British Army, one of the 4th Battalion along with several others was wounded by a bayonet and Eamonn drew his revolver and shot a soldier in the ankle. This caused the British Army to retreat. Eamonn was also Director of Communications for the Volunteers. In this capacity he created "An Post Gaelach" a secure postal system for the organisation.

Many meetings of the Military Council were held in his house and when they eventually decided on the date of the Rising, Eamonn and the 4th Battalion were assigned to the South Dublin Union (now St. James Hospital). The South Dublin Union (a poor house) was a strategically vital position for the rebels as it was in close proximity to British garrisons at Islandbridge barracks, Richmond barracks and the Royal Hospital in Kilmainham and also the area to the front of Kingsbridge (now Heuston) station where troops arrived from the Curragh. Due to Eoin McNeill's countermanding orders on Easter Sunday all volunteer battalions were severely undermanned on Easter Monday. This meant that in Eamonn's case only 120 Volunteers turned up out of a membership of 700. The South Dublin Union covered approximately fifty acres of buildings, streets and fields. As his battalion had to cover several outposts in the area he actually ended up with less than 60 people between Volunteers and members of Cumann na mBan to take and hold this vast area. The presence of over 3,200 staff and inmates in the union added to the difficulty. The Volunteers moved them to some of the rear buildings and put Red Cross flags on them. Some of the notable members of the 4th battalion were Con Colbert, William T. Cosgrave and Cathal Brugha who received 25 wounds when he was defending the nurse's quarters on his own for a short period. When they surrendered, as ordered by Padraig Pearse, at the end of the week the British

commander expressed surprise that 45 people could hold two battalions of soldiers at bay. When it came to the trials one of the unusual aspects was that even though General John Maxwell had promised to release the transcripts the British Government decided in 1917 that in the case of Eamonn the proceedings would not be released into the public domain. At 3:30 a.m. on the morning of 8th May a twelve man firing squad carried out the execution only to discover that Eamonn was still alive and the commanding officer had to administer a "Coup de Grace" shot to end his life.

Wedding photograph of John P. Kent and Elizabeth Cummins (my grandparents)

**Back Row – Left to Right**: William Kent, Michael Kent, Richard Kent, Eamonn Ceannt, Áine Ceannt (nee O'Brennan).
**Front Row – Left to Right**: John P. Kent, Elizabeth Kent (nee Cummins) James Kent (Senior) Ellen Casey (nee Kent), John Casey.
(James Kent Junior deceased before picture was taken)

During the trials and for up to six years afterwards there were regular raids on all the leaders' widow's houses. In Aine's case, her house was raided a total of eleven times during which the soldiers and Black and Tans would steal whatever they wanted and damage any pictures and foodstuffs they came across. One particular raid after Bloody Sunday had nine lorry loads of Black and Tans searching the house for Michael Collins. He was not present at this time but Aine had given him shelter on several occasions. Aine assisted an organisation called the Irish White Cross

which was set up in Ireland in 1920 to administer funds which were received from America. These funds were distributed across all 32 counties and benefitted approximately 100,000 people. When the Treaty was signed in 1921 the White Cross felt its work was done and allocated the remaining funds to a new group to be called The Irish White Cross Children's Relief Association. As secretary of this organisation Aine stood in "Loco Parentis" to an entire generation of Irish orphans. Part of her job was to visit each orphan in their home which like the White Cross did not recognise boundaries and she visited all counties with the exception of Cavan where there were apparently no children to be helped by the association.

Even though the British referred to those opposed to them during the Rising and afterwards as "Sinn Feiners", Sinn Fein was a political organisation which refused to recognise the British administration in Ireland. During the War of Independence they were involved in setting up the Dail (Republican) Court system as part of the alternative administration. Aine operated within this system particularly in regard to labour disputes in various parts of the country including Limerick, Clare and Cork. She had two areas that she operated in around Dublin, one opposite Dublin Castle and the other opposite the R.D.S. which housed the Black and Tans. Countess Markievicz, who as Minister for Labour in the First Dail was her boss, took great pride in the fact that her offices were never discovered by the British forces. As a result of this system Supreme, Circuit, District and Parish courts were set up. Aine was heavily involved in Cumann na mBan from its inception in 1914, (there were 600 branches in the country by 1918), and she went on to become one of its vice presidents.

In 1937 Aine received an annual pension as a widow of one of the seven signatories but when she became eligible in her own right in 1949, based on her service, she was turned down by the Department of Defence. Her son, Ronan, appealed on her behalf listing all she had done and she was awarded the extra amount but by the time of her death in 1952 no payment had been received. Following a complaint of discourtesy towards his mother Ronan received a letter from an anonymous civil servant saying that he regretted that the money had not been paid but that they had not received any notification from the Revenue Department.

Ronan was ten when his father died. He became a solicitor. He never married and he spent the next 36 years of his life being the man of the house and looking after his mother as Eamonn asked him to do in one of his final letters. Of the rest of Eamonn's siblings, James was single and died at the age of 29 from tuberculosis; Ellen married but had no children. Michael worked in Dublin, married and had four children. He kept a diary which has been very useful to our family regarding its history. Richard worked in Dublin, married and had three children. John P. (my grandfather) had been in the R.I.C. until 1914 and then worked in Dublin. He was married but his wife (my grandmother) died on Easter Sunday morning 1916, two and a half weeks after giving birth to my mother. (My parents met and married in Dublin but they finally settled down in this area as my father was from Knocklong.) Finally, William was in the British Army in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers where he served in Malta, Crete,

Egypt and South Africa (during the Boer War). He was based in Cork as a training officer when the Rising broke out. He was court martialled for stealing food from the canteen to give to Thomas Kent, (who may be a distant relation from some information I have got through research), who was awaiting execution in Cork Prison, having resisted arrest, along with other members of his family in Co Cork, after the Easter Rising. Our family believed for years that William was being punished when they found out he was Eamonn's brother and he was sent to the front but the timing of his posting and subsequent letters from William would indicate that he volunteered. He died exactly one year after the start of the Easter Rising attacking a machine gun post in Flanders. Our family was notified of his death on 8th May, 1917 – exactly one year after Eamonn's execution.

Eamonn had/has a total of 8 nephews/nieces (all deceased), 13 grandnephews/nieces (1 deceased) 19 great grandnephews/nieces (2 deceased) and 6 great great grandnephews/nieces. While there are a lot of books about 1916 covering all aspects of what happened there are two books written specifically about my grand uncle – the first is called "Supreme Sacrifice" written by William Henry and the second is part of the 16 Lives series and titled "Eamonn Ceannt". It was written by one of his grandnieces, Mary Gallagher.

*Left to right: Cathal Brugha, Con Colbert and W.T. Cosgrave, all of whom were under Ceannt's command in the South Dublin Union in 1916.*

# Small County Barony in 1640: Land and Power before Cromwell

By Joseph Lennon

From 1641 to 1703 two wars and three settlements formed different phases of one continuous process, the struggle between Catholic and Protestant for the land of Ireland. Of the three settlements the Cromwellian was the most drastic and the least complicated. It involved the expropriation of virtually all the Catholic landowners east and south of the Shannon, and the division of most of Connacht and Clare between the transplanted Catholics and the original proprietors.[1]

Land ownership has long been the subject of controversy in Ireland, never more so than after the Cromwellian invasion of 1649. The genesis of many enormous English land grants from confiscated Irish estates originated during the (attempted) Munster Plantation after the end of the second Desmond Rebellion (1579–83), and these events simmered on until the outbreak of the 1641 Rebellion when the conflict spread to Munster. Thus, instances of the former are pertinent to the latter conflict. The consequences for the barony of Small County in County Limerick – similar to the rest of Geraldine Munster following the eventual suppression of the Desmond revolt – were twofold; militarily and politically. Militarily: it took the near full-force of the English Crown under Elizabeth I to subdue the Geraldines on the battlefield. Politically: in the aftermath came the inevitable land confiscations that followed the death of Earl Gerald in County Kerry.

These land-grabs by the Tudors were not entirely indiscriminate, however: the vast majority of displacement from these vast estates only applied to those 'attainted' and 'guilty' of treason against the crown by supporting the late earl. Indeed, those declared in 1584 as 'not in rebellion' against Elizabeth include many of the same prominent Small County families attainted by the Cromwellian Parliament in 1653: Dundon, Browne, Fox, Baggot and Hurley. Moreover, a perusal of the Tudor Fiants of the late 1580–90s illustrate the numerous royal pardons granted to Irish men and women who retained their lands after pledging allegiance to Elizabeth (an allegiance; incidentally, that also applied to her English and Scottish subjects).[2] Those who did fall foul of the regime forfeited their lands to the queen's 'undertakers', an assortment of thirty-five gentlemen, businessmen and soldiers who either invested monies or served in her army and were rewarded with Munster estates owned by the late earl of Desmond and his allies. In official Tudor policy, this meant 'The plot of Her Majesty's offer touching the peopling of Munster [in 1586]. The gentlemen that will undertake the having so much ground as is contained in those divisions, must undertake therewith the peopling of the same with [English] families convenient according to this proportion … a seignory that doth contain 12,000 acres.'[3] Figures as high as 577,645 English acres of plantation lands in Munster

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[1] Simms, J.G., *The Williamite Confiscation in Ireland, 1690-1703*, p. 14.
[2] *The Irish Fiants of the Tudor Sovereigns during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Philip & Mary, and Elizabeth.*
[3] *Calendar of State Papers Ireland: 1586–1588*, p. 61 (36).

have been claimed according to some estimates, but MacCarthy-Morrogh argues that it was closer to 298,653 acres. The latter figure was probably due to a combination of factors, including royal pardons, the Irish still in situ on their lands, and a failure to bring in the required amount of English tenants. All of this brought about a realisation by the undertakers that they could not possibly hold onto all the lands in their letters patent.[4]

*Fig.1 Small County Down Survey Map (copy from 1840 Ordnance Survey)*

The two undertakers who benefited in Small County barony were Sir George Bourchier of Tawstock, Devon, son of John, earl of Bath, and Sir Edward Fitton of Gawsworth, Cheshire.[5] Captain Bourchier served in the royal forces in Limerick during the rebellion and in 1589 held Desmond estates of 12,000 acres.[6] He made his chief seat at Lough Gur Castle after remodelling the old fifteenth-century FitzGerald stronghold. The Bourchier family retained their estates in Small County until 1654, when Henry Bourchier, the last earl of Bath, died without issue.[7] Upon Henry's death, the earldom became extinct and the estate passed to his widow, Rachael Fane (daughter of Francis Fane, earl of Westmorland).[8] Fitton, an Irish administrator, and the other beneficiary of Geraldine estates, was granted the manor, town and 'Black' Castle of Aney in 1587 and held, by patent, 11,515 acres in County Limerick in 1589. Most of these lands, it was noted at the time, were 'in controversy' and still inhabited by Irishmen. (The O'Grady family retained the 'White' Castle of Aney. Fitton's brothers, Richard and Alexander, both Tudor undertakers, held over 3,000 acres, predominantly in Coshlea barony).[9] When Edward Fitton died in England in 1606,

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[4] MacCarthy-Morrogh, Michael, *The Munster Plantation, English Migration to Southern Ireland, 1583–1641*, pp. 288–89. Nevertheless, he does concede that the figure could exceed 500,000 acres if including unprofitable land.

[5] Gawsworth Hall was the seat of the Fitton family for many centuries.

[6] *CSPI: 1588–1592*, p. 258 (51).

[7] Henry (George the undertaker's son) opposed Parliament and was imprisoned in 1642 for his actions. He was one of the king's commissioners for the defence of Oxford in 1644.

[8] The Bourchier family (through marriage) still held a large estate in Baggotstown in the late nineteenth century.

[9] *Tudor Fiants*, pp. 19–20 (5032); *CSPI: 1588–1592*, p. 258 (51).

his son, obeying his father's will, sold off large parts of the Fitton seignory to pay off family debts.[10]

Following the Nine Years War (1593–1602) and another series of royal pardons, a relative peace ensued under James I (1603–25) until the outbreak of the English Civil War (1642–51) and subsequent Confederate wars in Ireland, or the Wars of Three Kingdoms. The conflict lasted in Ireland until 1652, by which time Oliver Cromwell's battle-hardened New Model Army had effectively conquered the country. As a result, the decade that followed saw the largest confiscation of lands and displacement of the Irish since the Norman invasion of 1169.

In 1653, the Cromwellian government claimed the amount due in Irish land to the English 'adventurers' was £360,000. These adventurers, an assortment of gentlemen, ladies, clerics, esquires, yeomen, knights and lawyers, like the Tudors before them, had invested money with Parliament in 1642 under the Adventurers' Act in order to suppress the Irish rebellion and were to be rewarded with forfeited Irish lands totalling 2,500,000 acres.[11] In order to satisfy what county and barony their lots would fall, a lottery was held in 1654 in Grocers' Hall, London.[12] This set the stage for the Cromwellian Civil Survey of Ireland – conducted from 1654–56 – which measured all estate sizes in lands (profitable and non-profitable), including castles, houses, watermills and any other possible source of income for the new parliamentary rulers. In effect, its job was 'to determine and record the possessions of the [1640] proprietors of lands and the tenures and titles of their respective estates.' Suffice to say, this contemporaneous document serves as the definitive guide as to who's who in mid-seventeenth-century Ireland or, as in this case, the barony of Small County.[13]

In 1640, the largest combined estate in any one Small County townland was that of Henry Bourchier, earl of Bath (2,800 and 1,000 acres in Glenogra and Lough Gur respectively) and then of Thomas and Barbara Browne (Hospital, 2,400). William Fitton and Annabelle Browne held 2,600 acres in the barony (2,000 in Aney townland).[14] The following persons all held estates comprising of 1,000 acres: Morris Baggot (Baggotstown), Brownes (Camas), Anne Casey (Rathmore), Barnaby O'Brien, earl of Thomond (Fedamore), Sir David Burke (Kilpeacon), Rawleys (Rawleystown), Rawleys (Ballynamonamore) and Dundons (Howardstown).

The following table, whose figures are taken from the Civil Survey, confirms all the landowners (Irish and English, Catholic and Protestant) at the outset of the 1641 Rebellion and subsequent Cromwellian wars in Ireland.[15]

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[10] MacCarthy-Morrogh, Ibid., p. 140.
[11] Prendergast, John P., *The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*, p. 9.
[12] *Ireland Under the Commonwealth*, ed. Robert Dunlop, vol. i, p. cxlii.
[13] *The Civil Survey, 1654–1656, County of Limerick*, ed. Robert C. Simington.
[14] Fitton held nearly half of these estates (1,220 acres) jointly with Annabelle Browne.
[15] *Civil Survey, 1654–1656*, pp. 93–118. Note: These parishes appear in the same order as on the Civil Survey.

## LANDOWNERSHIP IN SMALL COUNTY BARONY, 1640–1655

| *CIVIL PARISH*<br>*Total Barony Size:*<br>*28,499 Acres* | *TOWNLAND* | *PROPRIETOR* | *ESTATE SIZE* | *RELIGION* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| BALLINLOUGH<br>Total Parish Acreage: 1,860 | Garryncahera | Sir Morris Hurley[16] | 200 | Catholic |
| | Ballinlough | Henry Bourchier, earl of Bath[17] | 750 | Protestant |
| | Cromwell | William Fitton[18] and Annabelle Browne | 600 | Protestant |
| | Ballynagranagh | Thomas and Lady Barbara Browne[19] | 310 | Protestant |
| KILTEELY (part) | Carrigkittle | Sir Morris Hurley | 300 | Catholic |
| HOSPITAL<br>Total Parish Acreage: 2,400 | Hospital | Thomas and Barbara Browne<br>(Incl. Hospital Castle) | 2,400 | Protestant |
| KILFRUSH<br><br>Total Parish Acreage: 600 | Kilfrush | Sir Morris Hurley | 600 | Catholic |
| ANEY[20]<br><br>Total Parish Acreage: 6,087 | Aney | Thady Grady[21]<br>(Incl. Aney 'White' Castle) | 200 | Catholic |
| | Aney | James Grady | 54 | Catholic |
| | Aney | Dermot Grady | 147 | Protestant |
| | Aney | William Fitton and Annabelle Browne<br>(Incl. Aney 'Black' Castle) | 320 | Protestant |
| | Aney | Thomas and Barbara Browne | 220 | Protestant |
| | Aney | Richard Boyle, earl of Cork | 06 | Protestant |
| | Baggotstown | Morris Baggot<br>(Incl. Baggotstown Castle) | 1,000 | Catholic |
| | Elton & Brittas | Nicholas Haly[22]<br>(Incl. Elton Castle)[23] | 600 | Catholic |
| | Ballynagallagh | John Haly[24] | 200 | Catholic |
| | Ballygally[25] | Edmund Fox[26] | 100 | Catholic |

[16] Sir Thomas Hurley of Knocklong Castle in Coshlea barony.
[17] Deceased in 1654.
[18] Grandson of undertaker, Sir Edward Fitton.
[19] Lady Barbara is Thomas's mother.
[20] Modern parish of Knockaney.
[21] Thady Grady of Kilcullane was deceased in 1655.
[22] Nicholas Haly Esq. of Tooreen Castle in Clanwilliam barony.
[23] The castle was in ruin in 1655.
[24] John Haly, late of Limerick City.
[25] Modern Ballydaly. Mearing on the east with Kilgobbane and Hospital and on the south and west with Adamstown & Gormanstown respectively.

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| | Lough Gur | Earl of Bath (Incl. Lough Gur Castle) | 1,000 | Protestant |
| | Ballyvrany[27] | Darby Grady[28] | 470 | Protestant |
| | Raggamusbeg | Darby Grady | 50 | Protestant |
| | Gortacloona | William Fitton and Annabelle Browne[29] | 300 | Protestant |
| | Ballyhaukish | William Fitton | 80 | Protestant |
| | Kilgobbanbeg & Rathanny | William Fitton and Edmund Perry[30] | 700 | Protestant |
| | Kilgobbanmore[31] | William Fitton[32] | 600 | Protestant |
| | Kil Donnogh Duffe[33] | Thady Grady | 40 | Catholic |
| ATHNEASY (part) | Adamstown & Gormanstown | Edmund Fox (Incl. two castles)[34] | 500 | Catholic |
| UREGARE (part) | Bulgaden Fox & Garryscullibine | Edmund Fox (Incl. Bulgaden 'Fox' Castle)[35] | 600 | Catholic |
| | Ballincolloo | James Verdon | 210 | Catholic |
| TULLABRACKY (part) | Crean[36] | Earl of Bath | 400 | Protestant |
| MONASTERANENAGH (part) | Camas | Thomas Browne, Patrick Lysaght and Ellen Browne | 1,000 | Catholic |
| | Grange | Earl of Bath | 600 | Protestant |
| | Rathmore | Mrs Anne Casey[37] (Incl. Rathmore Castle) | 1,000 | Protestant |
| | Ballyvord & Cloghnamanagh | Richard Harte[38] | 150 | Protestant |
| | Carriggaslagane[39] | Richard Harte | 50 | Protestant |
| | Kilderry | Barnaby O'Brien, earl of Thomond[40] | 200 | Protestant |
| GLENOGRA Total Parish Acreage: 3,040 | Caherguillamore | Elizabeth and William Stritch[41] | 240 | Catholic |

[26] Edmund Fox of Bulgaden 'Fox' Castle.
[27] Mearing on the east with Baggotstown and in the north with Lough Gur, with half a ploughland of both Kilballyowen and Milltown.
[28] Darby Grady of Ballinscoola.
[29] Browne is named as Dowager in this entry.
[30] Perry, who had mortgaged these lands for £1,000, was deceased in 1655.
[31] Mearing on the east with Rathany and Hospital and on the west with Baggotstown. Kilgobanbeg/more roughly equivalent to modern Bottomstown according to the 1840 Ordnance Survey.
[32] Thomas Baker mortgaged these lands for £800.
[33] Also named Kil McDonogh Duffe. Mearing on the east with Baggotstown and on the west with Milltown.
[34] Both castles were described in 1655 as decayed.
[35] The castle was then in ruin.
[36] Or Dun I Creane.
[37] Anne Casey of Dublin.
[38] Richard Harte of Kilmallock.
[39] Modern Rockfield. Mearing on the east with Fedamore and Fanningstown and on the south with Kilderry.
[40] Died in 1657.
[41] Late of Limerick City.

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| | Glenogra, Crean & Drombeg | Earl of Bath (Incl. Glenogra Castle) | 2,800 | Protestant |
| FEDAMORE (part) Total (part) Parish Acreage: 2,760 | Fedamore & Ballyea | Earl of Thomond | 1,000 | Protestant |
| | Fanningstown | Earl of Thomond (Incl. Fanningstown Castle) | 500 | Protestant |
| | Traverstown[42] | Capt. George Ingoldsby[43] | 200 | Protestant |
| | Cloghadoolarty | Capt. George Ingoldsby | 120 | Protestant |
| | Banoge | Capt. George Ingoldsby | 120 | Protestant |
| | Skool | William Stritch (Incl. Skool Castle)[44] | 420 | Catholic |
| | Carnane | Tibbot Burke[45] | 200 | Catholic |
| | Garryellen | John Lysaght | 200 | Catholic |
| KILPEACON & CAHERCORNEY<br><br>Total Parish Acreage: 2,000 | Kilpeacon & Kilmorishmore | Sir David Burke (Incl. Kilpeacon Castle)[46] | 1,000 | Catholic |
| | Rawleystown & Ballingoola | Redmond, Margaret and Ellen Rawley (Incl. Rawleystown Castle)[47] | 1,000 | Catholic |
| KILCULLANE<br><br>Total Parish Acreage: 872 | Kilcullane | Teige Grady (Incl. Kilcullane Castle)[48] | 500 | Catholic |
| | Herbertstown (South) | Thady and Darby Grady, John Roche and John Óg FitzGerald[49] | 86 | Catholic & Protestant |
| | Herbertstown (North) | Darby Grady (Incl. Herbertstown Castle)[50] | 86 | Protestant |
| | Gortnaskagh | Darby Grady | 29 | Protestant |
| | Ragamusbeg | Darby Grady | 45 | Protestant |
| | Ballinscoola (two- | Darby Grady | 126 | Protestant |

[42] Mearing on the east with Boherload (Clanwilliam barony), on the south with Fanningstown and on the west with Kilpeacon.
[43] Ingoldsby (then of Rochestown, Clanwilliam barony) held all the above lands in right of his wife Mary Gould.
[44] Skool (Skule) was held in 1658 by John and Michael Croker.
[45] Tibbot Burke of Ballinagarde Castle in Clanwilliam barony.
[46] Kilpeacon Castle was in ruin in 1655.
[47] The castle was then in ruin.
[48] Kilcullane Castle was in a decayed state in 1655.
[49] Thady Grady was Catholic, Darby a Protestant. John Roche of Limerick City and John Óg of Ballinard were both Catholic.
[50] The castle was then in decay.

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| | third parts) | | | |
| BALLYNAMONAMORE<br><br>Total Parish Acreage: 1,240 | Ballynamonamore & Ballincurra | Edmund, Richard and Morris Rawley[51]<br>(Incl. Ballynamonamore Castle)[52] | 1,000 | Catholic |
| | Ballynamonabeg & Knockmanihidd | Morris Baggot | 100 | Catholic |
| | Ballynamonabeg & Knockmonehy[53] | Thomas Browne | 100 | Protestant |
| | Ballinscoola | Darby Grady<br>(Incl. Ballinscoola Castle) | 40 | Protestant |
| BALLINARD<br><br>Total Parish Acreage: 1,100 | Cloghaviller | William and Margaret Marshall[54]<br>(Incl. Cloghaviller Castle)[55] | 500 | Catholic |
| | Ballinard | Capt. Garrett FitzGerald | 600 | Protestant |
| RATHGOGGAN[56] (part) | Ffarrengellen Vranra[57] | Patrick Meade[58] | 30 | Catholic |
| | Ballincolly | Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill | 200 | Protestant |
| BRUREE (part) | Howardstown | Richard and Margaret Dundon<br>(Incl. Howardstown Castle)[59] | 1,000 | Catholic |
| | Kilbreedy | Nicholas Haly | 300 | Catholic |

The land in the barony was very arable. Out of a total of 28,499 acres, 26,719 were deemed as being profitable for its owners.[60] Most of the Irish gentry (named above as proprietors in 1640) were transplanted from their estates to Connacht by the parliamentary authoritie between1653–56. Those transplanted include Maurice Hurley, Richard Dundon, David Burke, and John Lysaght.

These estates were then awarded as 'payment' to Cromwellian adventures, and to soldiers in lieu of military wages – though the vast majority of these soldiers sold their lots to the adventurers and returned home. The Cromwellian era was a short –

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[51] Rawleys of Ballynamonamore.
[52] The castle was then in ruin.
[53] Knockmonihy Castle in shown on the Down Survey Maps.
[54] Marshalls of Cloghaviller.
[55] The castle was then in decay.
[56] In the barony of Orrery & Kilmore in County Cork. Rathgoggan (Rathgogan) rectory was partly appropriate to the rector of Kilpeacon.
[57] Or Farrengellenvranra.
[58] Patrick Meade of Kilmallock.
[59] The castle (better known in the Irish as Ballysiward) was then in decay.
[60] *Civil Survey, 1654–1656*, p. 114.

albeit bloody – one, lasting less than a decade because of the dictator's death in 1658, and the Restoration Settlement of Charles II raised Catholic expectations of the reversal of land seizures. Unfortunately, the majority of those transplanted were to be disappointed. Many arguments are heard as to why Charles did not pardon all 'innocent Catholics' and regrant to them their estates. But the delicate political climate of the time prevented him from doing so and, fearful of a backlash and suffering a similar fate as his father (beheaded by Parliament in 1649), he pardoned and confirmed nearly all of the Cromwellian grantees in *their* new Limerick estates. One exception in Small County was the case of Margaret Rawley. Parliament had transplanted the Rawleys to Connacht in 1656 and confiscated their 1,000-acre estate.[61] After the Restoration, part of Rawleystown was regranted in 1663 to Margaret Rawley (and part of the estate was sold in 1666 to John King, Lord Kingston).[62]

What is unquestionable, however, was the phenomenal transfer of Irish lands (2,500,000 acres) to English and, on a smaller scale, Scottish settlers. Nevertheless, they, in turn, like the Elizabethans before them, found that in order to run their new estates efficiently and profitably, they had to have, and employ, Irish tenants and workers. When the king's commissioners were sent to inspect the conditions, tenures, and rents concerning the Munster Plantation in 1622, they reported that a number of the Limerick estates granted to the Tudor undertakers – including Lough Gur and Aney – were in a ruinous state.[63] Ironically, the 'absentee scholar' Sir Henry Bourchier, who had spent his life in Trinity College Dublin, and then London, was one of those inspectors.[64] A perusal of the statistics demonstrate that, in 1640, the number of 'English proprietors' in Small County (this number included persons loyal to the English Crown, such as the Protestant earl of Thomond) was ten; the number of those deemed as Irish Catholic was twenty-nine.[65]

As a result, the 1659 Census, conducted between Cromwell's death and the Restoration, gives researchers another pivotal window into the demography of the county after the catastrophic wars of the preceding two decades. The census states that the overwhelming majority of persons living in Small County (figures emulated in the remainder of the county) were Irish: out of a total figure of 3,070 citizens in the barony, 2,950 were Irish and only 120 English.[66] In the light of these figures, it can be argued, that the Cromwellian Settlement of Limerick was another unsuccessful attempt at overall English colonization and of the eradication of Irish culture, customs, language and identity. The general failure of the transplantation is indicated by Parliament in a clause (or change) in the 1652 Act of Settlement (Ireland):

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[61] O'Hart, John, *The Irish and Anglo-Irish Landed Gentry when Cromwell came to Ireland*, p. 346; Barry, James Grene, *The Cromwellian Settlement of Limerick*, p. 25.
[62] Books of Survey and Distribution, Co. Limerick (RIA, Dublin), p. 6. Rawleystown Court was later sold to the Croker family who lived there prior to building Ballinagarde House in 1774.
[63] *The Irish Commission of 1622*, ed. Victor Treadwell, pp. 477–90.
[64] MacCarthy-Morrogh, *Munster Plantation*, p. 171, p. 245.
[65] *Civil Survey, 1654–1656*, p. 115.
[66] *A Census of Ireland, circa 1659*, ed. Seamus Pender, pp. 269–71.

> And whereas the children, grandchildren, nephews, uncles and next pretended heirs, and other active kindred of the said persons … do remain in the province of Leinster, Ulster, and Munster (besides the said county of Clare) having little of no visible estates of subsistence, but living idly and coshering upon the common sort of people who were late tenants to or followers of the respective ancestors of such idle and coshering persons waiting an opportunity (as may justly supposed) to massacre and destroy the English who as Adventurers and soldiers or their tenants are set down to plant upon the several lands and estates of the persons attainted.[67]

In short, what this meant was that Parliament wanted shut of 'Popish proprietors' of land – not their tenants and their sub-tenants, who were needed to run these estates profitably in order to pay taxes to London. A primary example of these reversed measures is found by the inclusion of the names of Hurley, Verdon, Baggot, Rawley and many other Irish (tenant) families in the 1659 Census. On the other hand, it was successful where the Munster Plantation of the 1580s (largely) failed and, from 1653 onwards, Irish Catholics, both gentry and tenant, had lost their footing on their native lands. Major William King, a former Cromwellian soldier who held lands in Small County in 1656, was granted the castle, town and lands of Kilpeacon in 1667. Some of the other Cromwellian grantees confirmed in their estates by Charles II include Major George Ingoldsby, Scool and Cloghadoolarty; Captain Robert Morgan, Bulgaden Fox, Gormanstown and Caherguillamore; and Captain Arthur Ormesby, Ballynamonamore. Camas (and other estates) was granted to Lord Kingston in 1666. Robert Reading was granted Cloghaviller and Elton in 1674. Other grantees of parcels of Grady lands in Aney parish in 1666 were Richard Coote and TCD.[68]

The Baggot family, in particular, had mixed fortunes. John Baggot served as a colonel in the Irish Confederates in the 1640s and was one of the Irish commissioners who signed the Articles of Limerick with General Ireton in 1651. His son Morris was 'excepted from general pardon' by Ireton following the surrender of the city, and their estate was confiscated.[69] Nevertheless, John, James and William Baggot were still named as Small County gentlemen in 1659. The estate was back in the family by the 1670s, but the Baggots later fought for the Jacobite cause (nine were attainted in 1691). John Baggot's forfeited estate was sold in 1703 to Alderman Benjamin Burton, who also purchased Cromwell and parcels of Knockaney.[70] Members of another illustrious Small County family, the Brownes of Camas, went on to serve with great distinction in the higher ranks of the imperial armies of the Russian and Austrian empires.[71]

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[67] *The Transplantation to Connacht, 1654–58*, ed. Robert C. Simington, p. xxv.
[68] For more grantees in Small County, see Books of Survey and Distribution, Co. Limerick (RIA) and Grene Barry, *Cromwellian Settlement of Limerick*.
[69] Fitzgerald, Revd P., and McGregor, J.J., *The History, Topography, and Antiquities, of the County and City of Limerick*, vol. i, pp. 308–09.
[70] Simms, Ibid., p. 177.
[71] Fitzgerald, Ibid., p. 316.

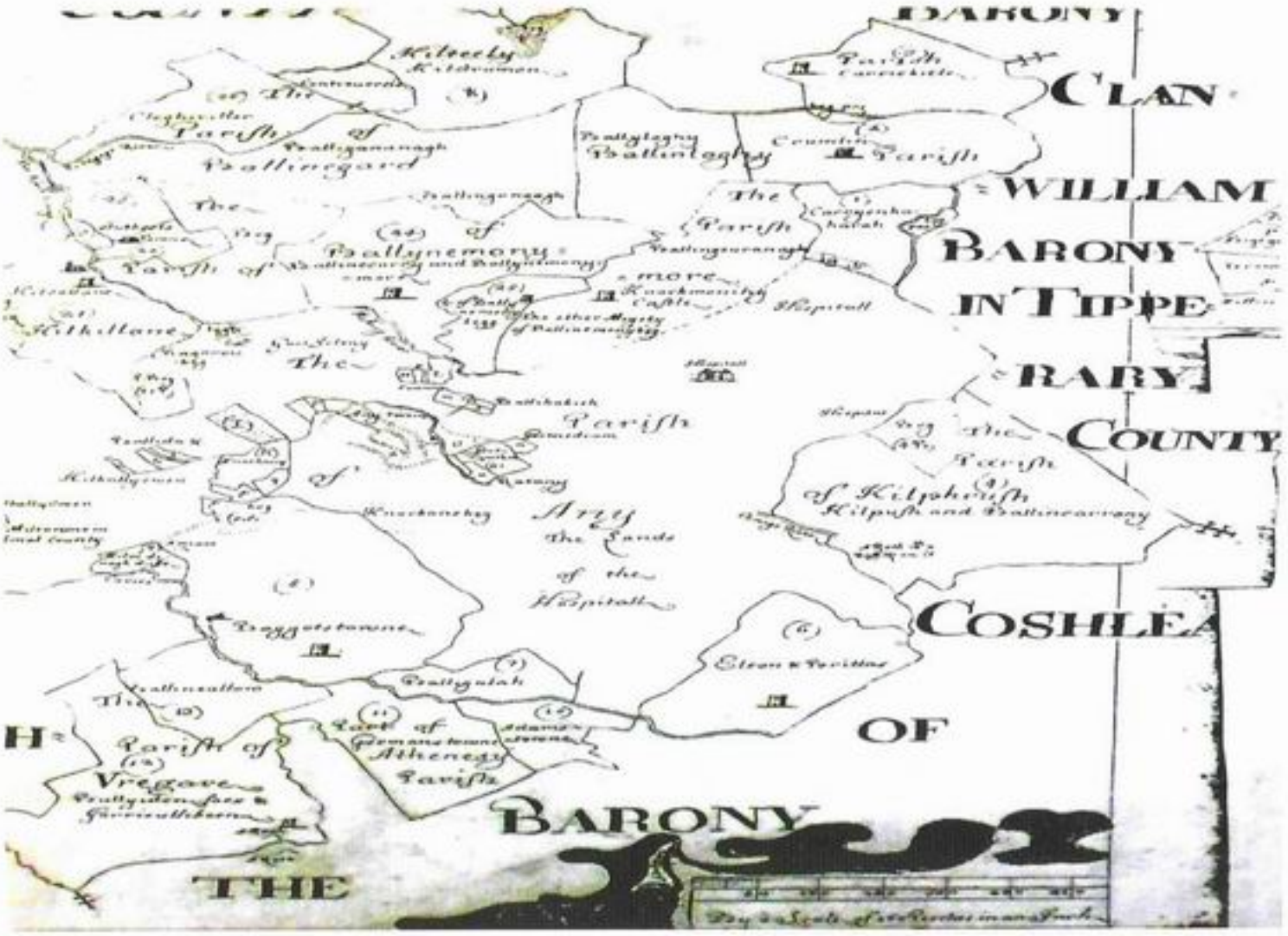


*Fig. 2 Small County Barony Down Survey Map (c.1658)*

What conclusions can be drawn from the evidence offered above? Evidently, the environment of Small County had transformed dramatically from 1641–52 and the fortunes of all the Irish Catholic landowning families were affected. While most Protestant estates had escaped forfeiture, and others, like Rawleystown, were later restored by royal favour, nearly all estates were in loyal Protestant hands at the time of the Lord Protector's in 1658. Despite the fact that this part of Irish history remains a contentious area of research, the power and wealth that the Irish held (illustrated in the above table) until the Cromwellian invasion is not in question. Nevertheless, it set a dangerous precedent, and following the Williamite War (1688–91) and the final Irish estates sales of 1703, the history of the country had been substantially altered and these islands entered the Georgian era with a new breed of landowner. Indeed, between1641–1703, Catholic holdings in Ireland dropped from 59% to 14%. A religious anomaly that was not addressed until the beginning of the Land War in the 1870s.[72]

Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon, perfectly summed up these land-grabs and English attitudes towards Ireland in a contemporary letter: 'Ireland', he wrote, 'was the great capital out of which all debts were paid, all services rewarded, and all acts of bounty performed.'[73]

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[72] Simms, Ibid., p. 195.
[73] Bottigheimer, Karl S., *English Money and Irish Land*, p. 43.

## Looking at My Past: Fr. Nicholas Sheehy, Clogheen, Co. Tipperary (1728 – 1766).

By Mary Slattery

Fr. Nicholas Sheehy was born in the Newcastle area of Co. Tipperary, at the foot of the Comeragh Mountains. His father, Francis, was the son of John Sheehy of Drumcollogher, a descendant of the McSheehy family who were large head tenants on the Earl of Courtenay Estate. They became wealthy graziers and were able to make loans to Protestant gentry. His mother was Power, of Bawnfune, Parish of Kilronan, Co. Waterford. Her family were head tenants to over six hundred acres under Lord Midleton. My own great-great-great grandmother Bridget Hennessey (nee Cleary) was closely related to Fr. Sheehy's mother and this led me to finding out about his life and times.

Fr. Nicholas Sheehy was educated privately in Waterford and is thought to have studied in Louvain, Belgium. He later studied in Salamanca and Santiago de Compostela. He was ordained in Rome in 1753. He was appointed Curate to Newcastle parish, Co. Tipperary and later was appointed Parish Priest of Shanrahan, Ballysheehan and Templetenny, now called Clogheen and Burncourt, Co. Tipperary.

The Penal Laws were more relaxed in this area and a priest could perform his priestly duties. There was even a small thatched church in Carrigavisteal used for religious services. Fr. Sheehy was an unregistered priest in this area. He was greatly admired and had a great sense of social justice. He practiced herbal medicine and helped heal people with his remedies.

During 1740 and 1741 there was an unusually severe spell of cold weather in Ireland. The potato crops failed and famine resulted. Many people died from cold and hunger. Many also emigrated to America and elsewhere. People were under severe strain to pay their rents. The Tithes Tax, which was collected for the upkeep of the Protestant clergy, was levied only on tillage land. Tenants with very small holdings were compelled to pay this tax, while grazing lands, which were owned mostly by the landlords and gentry, were exempt. It was a very unfair tax and caused a lot of resentment among the tenants. People unable to pay rents were evicted and those unable to pay Tithes could have goods seized and given to the landlord.

Fr. Sheehy spoke out about these injustices to his people and Protestant landlords feared him for his outspoken views. There was great unrest when some Protestant landlords began building enclosures around common lands, which had formerly been used by tenants rent-free to graze their animals. The tenants no longer had access to these grazing lands, thus reducing their already meagre income.

At this time, the Clogheen area was a centre of Whiteboy activity in Tipperary. The Whiteboys were an agrarian group who had taken an oath of secrecy and meted out their own form of justice to the Protestant landlords and some Catholics. They

roamed the countryside by night, often in large groups, wearing white shirts over their clothes with blackened faces and cockade hats.They knocked down enclosures around the common lands, threatened Tithe proctors (collectors) sometimes maiming them, damaged crops and cut down trees. At this time the Protestant landlords feared that Fr. Sheehy was in conspiracy with the Wild Geese (soldiers who had left Ireland after the Williamite Wars to join French and Spanish armies) and planning an invasion. The landlords feared that they would lose their power over the Catholic people should this come about.

**First Trial**

The Protestant leaders in Clonmel accused Fr. Sheehy of conspiracy against the State and also of involvement with the Whiteboys. He was accused of the breaking down of an enclosure that prevented entry to common lands in Drumlummin, near Clogheen. A trial was held in Dublin and he was acquitted of all charges.

**Second Trial 1765**

Following his acquittal he was later accused of being involved in the disappearance of a man named John Bridge who was said to be an informer. Some time previously, Bridge had stolen a chalice from a church near Clogheen. Fr. Sheehy had spoken to him about it at the time and this led to an accusation that Fr. Sheehy had assaulted him. On Bridge's disappearance, a warrant was issued for Fr. Sheehy's arrest accusing him of being an accessory to Bridge's supposed murder.

There was a fifty pound reward leading to his capture. Fr. Sheehy feared for his life and went into hiding. A Protestant farmer offered him a hiding place in his O'Callaghan's family tomb in Shanrahan graveyard. He passed his time here, spending his days in prayer and saying daily Mass and sleeping in the farmer's house by night. After about a year of being in hiding he decided to go to his cousin's home in Feoghanagh, Co. Limerick, travelling there during hours of darkness. He spent some time here and said Masses in Auglish cemetery. He became frustrated with this arrangement after a time. In 1764 the Irish Parliament offered a reward of three hundred pounds for his capture. This was a huge amount of money at the time and there was great interest among the "priest hunters" in the search for him. The foothills of the Galtees were thoroughly searched. Fr. Sheehy wrote to Thomas Waite, Under Secretary for Ireland and offered to surrender on condition that the trial be held in Dublin as he knew that he would get an unfair trial in Clonmel. The offer was accepted and he was escorted to Dublin under heavy military guard in March 1765. However it was eleven months before the trial took place.

During this time he made several petitions for the procedure of the trial and the granting of bail, which was eventually given in June for the amount of four thousand pounds. This was a huge amount and he had great difficulty in raising the money. When the trial went ahead, he was charged with treasonable conspiracy and rebellion and with being an accessory to murder. The prosecution witnesses proved unconvincing and he was acquitted.

**Third Trial 1766**

He was immediately rearrested on the charge that he was involved in the murder of Bridge. The prosecutors immediately had a motion accepted that he be tried at the next Clonmel Assizes three weeks later. By allowing this, the Government in Dublin had relented on their previous commitment that he was not to be tried in Clonmel. They had been influenced by the local landlords and gentry in this decision.

Fr. Sheehy was brought back to Clonmel on horseback with his hands tied behind his back and his legs manacled to the underbelly of the horse. The trial was held on Thursday, 16th March, 1766 in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation. Fr. Sheehy knew that he had no chance of a fair trial in Clonmel. He was led into the court with another man, Ned Meehan, who was accused of killing Bridge with a billhook during a Whiteboy riot. The magistrate read out the charges. Fr. Sheehy was charged as an accessory to the murder of John Bridge. The presiding judge, Richard Clayton, an Englishman, was said to be an honest and humane man but did not seem to understand the political background of the area at the time.

The jury had been chosen by Thomas Maude, landlord of Dundrum House, and Rev. Hewetson, an Anglican clergyman, based in Clonmel and living in Co. Kilkenny. The jury was composed of bitterly anti Catholic Protestant landlords. Evidence for the witnesses had been fabricated during a meeting at Maude's house in Dundrum prior to the trial. Mr. Keating, a "respectable man and a man of property" spoke in defence of Fr. Sheehy, saying that Fr. Sheehy had visited his house on the night of the supposed murder. His evidence was dismissed by Rev. Hewetson, who claimed that Keating had killed a man in a riot and he was an unreliable witness and he was not allowed to testify. Keating was then taken to Kilkenny Gaol.

A trial was held at a later time and there was not a shred of evidence to convict Keating of any crime. Fr. Sheehy's cousin, Edmund 'Buck' Sheehy, James Buxton and James Farrell gave evidence in his defence but again it was dismissed as unreliable. The evidence put forward by the witnesses had already been dismissed by a previous trial in Dublin. The witnesses were said to have taken bribes and perjured themselves.

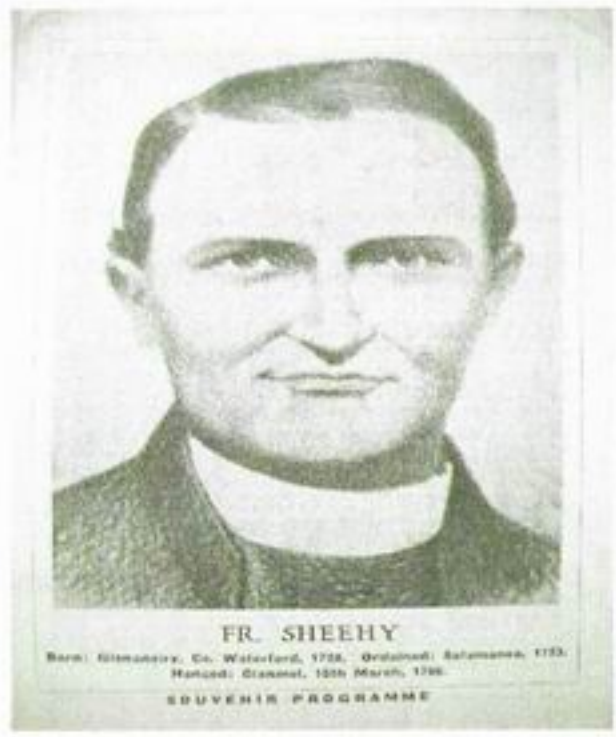
The witnesses were not the most reputable and included a horse thief and Moll Dunlea, (Mary Brady), a woman of ill repute, who was said to have been wined and dined and given new clothes the night before the trial. Moll Dunlea said that she saw Fr. Sheehy and other men carrying a dead body over a bridge near the estate. Others said they saw the body being carried to a field where it was buried. The field was later searched for signs of a burial and no evidence was ever found. The bridge is known as the Black Bridge to this day. Some of Fr. Sheehy's parishioners offered to testify in his defence but he did not allow them as he feared for their fate. Mr. Hewetson and the jury retired for a while and returned with a guilty verdict on the charge. The judge pronounced the sentence that Fr. Sheehy "be hanged, drawn and quartered" and may God have mercy on your soul and grant you the sight of the

enormity of your crime. Ned Meehan was also found guilty and sentenced to be hanged.

Fr. Sheehy thanked the magistrate and wished that God would have mercy on his soul. He gave an eloquent speech against the shameful injustices, the gross perjury and deadly malice of which he, Ned Meehan and all Catholics were victims. He concluded, declaring "I leave to God to distinguish between the innocent and the guilty". Fr. Sheehy's defending attorney shouted to the members of the jury "if there is justice in heaven you will die roaring."

There was never any evidence that Bridge was murdered or that a body was found. Fr. Sheehy was found guilty of an offence that there was never any proof or evidence of having ever taken place. It is said that John Bridge was found two years later in Newfoundland but there is doubt that he ever emigrated. Many landlords were relieved that Fr. Sheehy was no longer a threat to them. There was great anger among the Catholic people and protest marches were held against the hanging of an innocent man.

Fr. Sheehy's reputation as a troublemaker had been reported on disapprovingly to Rome. During the trial, the Diocesan clergy did nothing to help Fr. Sheehy's case. Pierce Creagh, Bishop of Waterford, who resided in Clonmel, did not intervene in the case, nor did James Butler, Archbishop of Cashel. Fr. Sheehy's neighbouring parish priest, Fr. William Egan, did nothing to help either. It is supposed that they were wary of drawing the attention of the authorities on themselves and their positions.


FR. SHEEHY

SOUVENIR PROGRAMME

**The Execution - 15th March 1766**

The execution took place outside Clonmel Gaol across the road from the Church of St. Peter and Paul where a scaffold was erected. As the ropes were put around their necks, Fr. Sheehy's two sisters and Ned's wife broke through the cordon. The men's eyes were filled with tears. Ned stretched out his hands and said "Biddy, Biddy dear, may God pity you and protect you and our children, my poor wife." Fr. Sheehy was hanged and his head was severed from his body, stuck on a spike and put up over Clonmel Gaol house. His headless body was harnessed to a horse and dragged through the streets of Clonmel before it was eventually given over to the family for a respectful burial at Shanrahan graveyard. As his body was borne away for burial, some of his blood was daubed on Fr. Egan's door to remind him that the people held him responsible for not intervening on his behalf.

His head was said to have remained on the spike for twenty years. This served as a warning to others not to engage in agrarian attacks on landlords. His sister

Catherine begged on several occasions to have the head removed and it was eventually restored to her and she "carried it home in a bag under her arm" and it was interred with the rest of the body. Edmund 'Buck' Sheehy (1st cousin), James Buxton and James Farrell were executed two months later, having been accused of being involved in the death of Bridge.

According to folklore many of the jurors and those involved met with unusual and gruesome deaths themselves. Thomas Maude, Dundrum House, died a raving lunatic, uttering blasphemies and screaming that Fr. Sheehy was dragging him down to hell. William Bagnalll of Marlehill, Ardfinnan, shot himself. John Bagwell of Kilmore near Clonmel, became an idiot and incapable of speech and rationality. Matthew Jacob of Mohernane House, Fethard died from a violent epileptic fit. William Barker of Kilcooley Abbey, dropped dead on the street. Shaw choked himself to death. Ferris, a draper on Main St. Clonmel went mad. John Dunville, a chandler, was kicked to death by a horse. Alexander Hoops went beserk and drowned in a stream. Minchin died destitute, a beggar, ridden with disease. Another dropped dead grinning insanely. Osborn Tothall, Clonmel, cut his own throat. His family were prevented from burying him as the local people had filled the grave with stones. Another died in his lavatory. Moll Dunlea fell down into a cellar and cracked her skull. It is said she got very small and was said "to be the size of a hen". Toohey got leprosy and another witness got a disease and died an agonizing death. It is said that when Maude died his horses refused to pull the hearse. It had to be unyoked and the estate workers had to pull it to the graveyard. His ancestor Robert Maude was an officer in the Cromwellian army who received vast estates in the Cromwellian Settlement. Darby Brohan, the hangman, was stoned to death by an angry mob in Phillipstown, Kilkenny in September, 1770.

**Tomb in Shanrahan**

In 1867 a proposal to erect a monument to Fr. Sheehy was rejected by Lord Lismore. In 1898 on the centenary of the 1798 Rebellion a tomb was erected on his grave and a beautiful iron railing, imported from Mc Farlane Iron Foundry in Glasgow was built around it. Thousands of people from all over the country attended the unveiling. Over the years the tomb became neglected and overgrown, the marble slab was unreadable, the railings became caked with coats of paint and the little gate at the end had subsided and was unable to be opened. It is said that that when people were emigrating to America and elsewhere that they would come to the grave and open the little gate and take a bit of soil from the grave to take with them. It was said to have healing powers.

The people of Clogheen decided to raise funds for its restoration. Conservation work was carefully carried out and was finished in July 2013. It is a fitting memorial to Fr. Nicholas Sheehy who will be long remembered in Clogheen for his defence of his parishioners against the injustices of landlordism.

*Fr. Sheehy's tomb in Shanrahan*

*Clonmel Courthouse where Fr. Sheehy was tried and sentenced to death.*

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# Molly Gleeson of Hospital (1885 – 1949) and An Stad

By Philip O'Carroll

My grandaunt, Molly Gleeson was born in Emly Road, Hospital, Co. Limerick in 1885. She grew up there with her brothers, Jim and Paddy, and her sisters, Nora and Katey. She went to Dublin with Nora and joined Cumann na mBan. Molly later became proprietor of An Stad which was a tobacco shop, restaurant and guest house in 30, North Frederick Street. A surviving guest book was signed by Eamon Ceannt and makes reference to Seán T.O'Kelly, Maud Gonne, and others including James Joyce, Michael Collins, Douglas Hyde, William Butler Yeats, Michael Cusack, Arthur Griffith, William Bulfin and Seán O Casey. Apart from the many advanced nationalists who lauded An Stad there were also some who opposed it, the most notable being Pádraig Pearse who felt that the tobacco and alcohol stained atmosphere tainted the purity of the republican ideal.

When the War of Independence started Collins and other I.R.A. and I.R.B. members hid at An Stad which was used as a safe house for the movement. Molly became an integral part of Collins' intelligence group. He also asked Molly to identify the body of Seán Treacy when he was killed by British agents in 1920. History books indicate that many different I.R.A. agents under Collins hid at An Stad. Molly died on the 10th February 1949 aged 64 years. She is buried in Dean's Grange Cemetery, Dublin.

**An Stad**

An Stad was founded in the late nineteenth century by Donegal native Cathal Mac Garvey (1866 - 1927) and became a meeting place for nationalists and Irish language enthusiasts. He was a well-known song writer, best known for *The Star of the County Down.* In its early years it was a haven for those who sought Irish freedom from England and many of the activities which took place there were directed towards independence. An Stad began as a tobacconist shop and public house, but Mac Garvey later opened it as a guest house also, and it was favoured by athletes competing nearby, in what is now Croke Park. Among his guests was Michael Cusack, founder of the G.A.A. It became famous for its Gaelic evenings at which Arthur Griffith promoted Sinn Fein and Douglas Hyde the Gaelic League, both advocating a distinct Irish identity and culture independent of Britain, and doing it by peaceful means. But as we know that was not how Irish independence was achieved.

An Stad was a literary centre but lost its prominence when the Abbey Theatre opened in 1904 and Mac Garvey sold it in 1905. Its role was then different but it was to revert to its nationalist origins during the War of Independence (1919 - 1921). Molly Gleeson was working in a restaurant in Parkgate Street. The Westgate was frequented by some members of the Black and Tans and Molly became friendly with some of them. This friendship allowed her to gather intelligence which was passed

on to Michael Collins, who considered her to be a valuable agent. She then became the proprietor of An Stad and it became chief guesthouse for republican activists including Michael Collins. They were friends but were divided on the issue of the 1921 Treaty and Molly chose the republican side. We hope that their friendship continued.

A number of statements made by veterans of the Easter Rising and the War of Independence which are recorded in the Bureau of Military History collection - www.bureauofmilitaryhistory.ie/bmhsearch/.jsp - refer to both Molly Gleeson and An Stad. Readers might be interested in searching this website for further information by searching under the following terms: "Molly Gleeson", "Mollie Gleeson", "Maire Gleeson" and "An Stad".

An Stad continued as a literary centre for the Gaelic Revival until the late 1930s. In 1938 a group of I.R.A. members planned to blow up Nelson's Pillar and they gathered in and used An Stad as their safe house and a place to store gelignite. The plan was cancelled at the last minute. The Pillar was eventually blown up in 1966.

Molly Gleeson of Emly Road, Hospital played her part in the struggle for Irish freedom.

*Left to right: Douglas Hyde, Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith, all of whom frequented An Stad.*

## The Great Irish Pike: Lough Gur, a Cooke and Three Hugheses

By Mark Wormald

Last December, local angler Darren Hughes took a 30lb pike from the shallow waters of Lough Gur. In January Michael Quinlan emailed me a picture of captor clutching the leviathan on the Lough's south western shore. Darren, grinning wildly, keeps the beast understandably close to his chest: its lower jaw was streaked with blood – I want to believe its own. I opened Michael's attachment as I was leaving the manuscript room of the British Library, where I'd spent the afternoon reading the fishing diaries of Darren's namesake, the great English poet and compulsive fisherman Ted Hughes (1930-1998), on whose life and work Lough Gur and its pike left their own memorable mark.

Englishmen have a history with monstrous Irish pike. In 1979, the great Fred Buller's *Domesday Book of Mammoth Pike* had reclaimed from fable the greatest of them all, the Lough Derg pike landed by John Naughton in May 1862 and, at 5 foot 8 inches, an improbably tall story. Buller's meticulous account of the catch, and his confirmation of its weight, at 90 lb 8 oz, in turn inspired Barrie Cooke, the major English-born expressionist painter whose passion for fishing lured him to County Clare in 1954, to paint his magnificent life-size 'Lough Derg Pike, with relics' in 1980. Painting and those relics – old pike gear in a wooden frame beneath -- now hang in the Crawford Gallery in Cork.

Ted Hughes – let's call him Ted, to avoid confusion with Darren-- had his own unique perspective on all this. He'd fished for pike as a teenager in South Yorkshire, and written an early verse fantasy about a night-long battle with a forty-pounder. He claimed to have dreamed of them throughout his years in Cambridge: he studied at Pembroke College, where I now teach. On the eve of his wedding in 1956 to the American poet Sylvia Plath, he found himself back at Crookhill, landing only the first twenty feet of a pike three times as long. Two years later, his memories of that pond, 'as deep as England', inspired one of his finest poems, 'Pike', which he wrote while living in Massachusetts in 1958. The poem knows that pike 'spare nobody', and ends with early proof of the horrifying fascination they would always compel in him: casting as late as he dared into the night, whatever 'dream / Darkness beneath night's darkness had freed,/ … rose towards me, watching.'

Pike carried on watching, and catching, Ted. In May 1962, Assia Wevill seduced him at a stroke with an account at breakfast of a dream she claimed to have had the night before, featuring, according to Hughes' 1998 poem 'Dreamers', 'a pike with a golden eye, and in that eye a foetus'. Their affair set in motion events that led him first, in flight from a marriage in collapse, to go fishing with Barrie Cooke in County Clare – the two had first met in 1960, after an introduction by a mutual acquaintance Jack Sweeney -- and then, in February 1963, to Sylvia's suicide.

Remarkably, the poet's fascination with pike survived both this horror and Assia's own later suicide in 1969. It became what he would later call 'a lifeline', and it led through Ireland. In 1966, while living for three months in Connemara, Ted took his two young children Frieda and Nicholas fishing, 'to stir the dormant passion for the art', and with great success. Thereafter fishing, often with Barrie, mostly for Irish pike, became central to Ted's relationship with Nicholas.

In his library of over two hundred books on fishing, Hughes owned Fred Buller's seminal *Pike* (1971); Nicholas, at fifteen, read it late into the night on their first Irish pike holiday, in County Clare in October 1977, a trip Barrie had orchestrated. It worked: on his late mother's birthday, Nicholas caught a 24 ½ lb female from Castle Lake near Sixmilebridge, which he refused to release until his father had rowed over to share the moment of triumph with Barrie. The following March, the Hugheses called unannounced at Buller's fishing cottage near Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo, seeking expert advice on where to catch big pike. Late March being when pike spawn, and in England the close season, Buller deflected their inquiries. Undaunted, they pressed on, braving wild weather and huge waves on the great Western loughs. It was Ted's copy of *The Domesday Book of Mammoth Pike*, which he lent to Barrie, that inspired 'The Lough Derg Pike': a monochrome reproduction features in later editions. Barrie showed me one of Nick's home-made pike lures, a glinting relic of their friendship, when I visited him at his home above Lough Arrow in May 2012.

But some relics are more eloquent than any beaten metal. Such are the fishing diaries I was reading that day in January at the British Library, where I've been stealing memorable days for the past three or four years. Ted's first dates from Clare in 1977, and he went on keeping them for the rest of his life. They record each of the ten trips he made, mostly with Nicholas and Barrie, in school and university holidays at Easter, autumn half terms and occasionally in December through the late 1970s and early 1980s. In Ireland father and son honed and developed skills, tested tackle and techniques: their friendship with Barrie deepened too. The diaries combine vivid observation with deep insight. They're awash with brilliant, sensitive impressions of the environment, the weather and wildlife they fished among, as well as of the people they met and the conversations they had. Reading them brings you unnervingly close to the conditions they fished in, and to what was evidently a genuine empathy with their quarry. Fingers and toes burned with cold. In one squall on Lough Ree, Ted compares the minute agitation of currents on the water's surface to rippling skin; a constant element is the sheer concentration and attention he gives these fish, on the water and after. Holding a pike in the water before, revived, it surged back into deep invisibility in a couple of seconds, always left him admiring their quarry's brute strength and beauty: one fourteen pounder disappeared, he notes, with a python's writhe. Imagining his way into the pike's habits, even their psychology, he clearly admires and even identifies with their involuntary ferocity.

The same couldn't be said of their attitude to their rivals. Germans in particular touched a nerve. In October 1979 in Sligo and Leitrim, Hughes, Nick and Barrie picked up local rumours about the efficiency and blood lust of visiting German pike

anglers. The Germans didn't just catch too many big pike; they were thought to kill them all, mounting their heads as trophies on their boats, bilges awash with blood. A meeting with one German started amicably enough – until his interlocutor realised that Ted was English. Suddenly stares froze: they were enemies.

But these vast and tempestuous north-western loughs were not the waters Hughes and Nicholas knew best. Those lay two hours' drive south in gentler terrain. Barrie found what he told Dorothy Cross in 2011 was

*the perfect lake. It had to be shallow, it had to be a lake where the bait fish are unusually large. I found one and fished it and scored very, very well, so I immediately wrote to Ted and said you've got to come over because I think I've found the perfect place. He did and we had fantastic fishing for ten years.*

The next challenge was to keep it perfect. Here, subterfuge was required. Barrie told Cross: 'we used to lie and lie about how many we caught.... And people said why do you fish there so much?' Asked whether he wouldn't tell them how many he caught, his answer was both emphatic – 'Damn right you wouldn't!' – and, still, in 2011, protective. He withheld the lake's name.

Barrie's estimate of the decade they fished there may be generous: Michael Quinlan remembers meeting him and Ted and only three or four times, in the late 1970s and 1980s. But Ted's fishing diaries confirm what pike they caught. In four days in late November and early December 1980, Ted and Nicholas caught 28 pike, nineteen of them over 10 lbs; it was where Ted caught his biggest pike, at 18 1/2 lbs, on 24 March 1981. An envious fisherman like me understands why they'd keep that to themselves. And it was in fact only in December 1997, fifteen years after their last visit to the lough, when Hughes finally named it in print, in a poem called 'Some Pike for Nicholas', itself published in *Waterlog* magazine, and in lines that suggest how completely it embodied their vision of fishing in close company. Seamus Heaney read them aloud when, in December 2011, Ted Hughes was admitted to Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey.

> The pike's broad grin, ruffed with Lough Gur's ice,
> Stoniest, oldest eye of reality,
> Welcomed your welcome, where crannogs pondered
> My boy, my dream alive without distraction.

What that stanza doesn't reveal is how thoroughly they lived that dream. The five diaries concerning Gur, in the cooler months of the years 1979-82, reveal a consistent pattern of visits: they arrived for visits of between four days and a week in length. Though summers took them elsewhere -- to the Rivers Nore and Barrow in Co. Kilkenny, where Cooke lived until 1979 – these trips too helped equip them for Gur. A trout farm near Thomastown enabled Nick one morning to catch seventy-five escapee rainbow trout, which they froze for pike bait, along with seatrout, sprats and

mackerel. Ted convinced one landlady to keep a supply of frozen baitfish in her freezer – even after they started staying elsewhere, at Anne O'Neill's at Holy Cross.

They brought the same dedication to exploring the water. Hughes (pictured below) and Nicholas probed it exhaustively in March 1981, with an echo sounder, confirming its shallowness: with an average depth of six to eight feet, a couple of much deeper holes, and two long trenches running along its northern and southern arms, and north up its connecting spine, it had fishy hot spots and feeding lanes they came to know intimately. Gur sustained a healthy population of those large rudd that, as Barrie knew, kept the pike larger, and provided fishermen with useful bait, whether mounted on hooks alive or dead. Pike fishermen aren't squeamish.

But it also had other advantages in these years, which made it as highly prized and cherished as it was lightly fished. That gentle giant of a farmer, Tom Carroll, from whose field on the south-eastern shore of the lough they used to launch their boats, remembered catching or seeing caught large pike from the early 1960s, and a stuffed and rather imperfectly painted 32 ½ lb pike hung in the community centre. But Ted and Barrie clearly thought the lake was no longer fished much, if at all. They were aware of little, if any, competition. Tom did keep wondering why they came back. And though, as readers of this journal of course know, it's hardly a secret lake – the hills of Knockadoon to its West and Knockfennell to the North both give fine views across its waters, as do the large houses overlooking it and a road running past the ruined New Church to the south – they soon realized why they had its waters to themselves. The local shooting club had designated it a sanctuary: rich in bird life, the population of ducks attracted to its waters were safe so long as they stayed on it, but were considered fair game on their flight path to and from the reserve. Other species – swans, wigeon, teal and geese – were there in abundance, as were the fish-eaters: cormorants, whose daily traffic features in Ted's diaries. Though the bird-life too was threatened from a source the three anglers were well placed to appreciate. Meeting Gur's guardians one wild wet evening, hours after Ted's prize 18 ½ pounder materialized out of a wave near the North shore to launch itself at his lure, there was a tense moment when the shooting enthusiast, who was also a taxidermist, started referring to the danger rapacious pike represented to young ducks and swans. He said he'd stuff any really large pike Ted caught; he was planning a series of pike, from parr to monster, which he would take round local schools.

That evening, on 24 March 1981, was a revelation. Though earlier diaries reveal a general relish for the landscape in which the lake lay, it was only tonight that the fishermen looked up and listened. At the newly opened Heritage Centre, opposite Bolin Island, one of Gur's two crannogs, Michael Quinlan played them a film detailing the area's phenomenal archaeology and more recent history. Readers of this journal may find this surprising, but it was the first time Ted's diaries had mentioned the Neolithic and Iron Age remains, including the Grange Stone Circle beside the Limerick road on the south east shore, and the double walled houses on Knockadoon, dating from 5,000 B.C. but first excavated in the 1950s. Other eras, other legends and folk tales, crowded in, layering archaeology with later historic and legendary accretions. Some clung to Bourchier's Castle, occupied in the fourteenth century by the Earls of Desmond. One married the beautiful enchantress Áine, daughter of a goddess who inhabited a city beneath Gur's waters; their son, Gearóid, or Garrett, Fitzgerald, had spied her, and suffered accordingly, condemned to ride the waters of the lake one moonlit night in seven years until the silver shoes of his white horse wear away. Garrett's island's herons remember him. Another local, a herdboy, had crept up to Áine while she rested on the shore of Knockadoon, which had been an island until sustained drainage in the mid nineteenth century produced a nine-foot drop in Gur's waters: it was at this point that a number of bronze daggers and other archaeological remains were discovered. This herdboy stole Áine's golden comb, and suffered years of torment for his crime; only when his parents flung the comb far into the waters of Gur did the family's troubles cease. Michael Quinlan confirms that no golden comb has ever been recovered.

Amongst those gathered at the bar that evening were advocates for the promotion of Gur's cultural and natural resources. Tom MacNamara had already begun recording oral versions of those stories on film, now online. But despite these and other extraordinary riches, in terms of wildlife, atmosphere, history and the lake's propitious configuration – if neolithic Gur had been its current crescent, wrapped around Knockadoon, rather than the island-pupilled eye it was before drainage, Ted thought it would have generated even more magic – Ted and Barrie's own contribution to the discussion was an urgent warning. They'd just spent several depressing days on Lough Carra, and heard of the looming threat posed to its own fish-rich waters by a new drive towards agricultural drainage. Lowering the water table threatened delicate ecosystems and fish stocks. It might even prove the end of Irish fishing. Driving south, they'd toured the rich network of chalk streams that lay west of Gur. There they'd discovered ongoing dredging carnage: by turning the Maigue, Morningstar, and the Camogue into more efficient drains, diggers were destroying the natural river beds, which, Ted predicted, would take two centuries to recover.

So at the pub Ted and Barrie pleaded that, whatever else was done to develop the area, both the lake and the pike needed protection – from drainage and from Germans respectively. Their depradations were still vivid in their minds from eighteen months before.

All these perspectives combine in the major legacy of these Irish piking trips, and above all their repeated visits to Gur. This is 'The Great Irish Pike', the 37-line poem which, a year later, in the course of a week in April 1982, Ted wrote and Barrie illustrated at a small Devon press. By then, and in fact six months earlier, during another half term visit to Gur, Barrie had presented Michael Quinlan with a watercolour of the lake seen from above, resembling an alveole in its yolk sac: it was inscribed 'For my friends at Lough Gur, who treasure its life and its beauty. Barrie Cooke Oct. 1981.'[74]

'The Great Irish Pike' was Ted and Barrie's only collaboration, or joint enterprise. Each suite of six lithographs, the text handwritten by Ted, alongside Barrie's illustrations, was priced at over £1000; the edition was limited to 25. Its literary value depends on its genesis in a shared passion for a place that both artists involved had agreed for the moment to keep to themselves and the lake's guardians. But while 'The Great Irish Pike' did not name Gur, it wasted no time in identifying it, to anyone already in on the secret, as to anyone has visited, as I did in December 2013, or looked at it fondly on a map or from the air – as Ted was prompted to do by three fellow guests at Mrs O'Neill's on consecutive visits in November and December 1980, plainly had. They were selling aerial photographs of local farms and houses; he didn't care for them or their wares, but their dodgy dealings left their mark, as well as a way of looking at the lough itself. 'This is no precinct for anything fishy / That revives the smile of the Dragon.' Seen from above the lake does indeed resemble a dragon's head, Garrett's island its eye, its lower jaw hanging open to swallow Knockadoon.

The poem makes the most of its setting. It's been claimed recently that 'there is no other spot in Ireland so rich in the evidence of prehistoric habitation and ceremony,' and Ted's Great Irish Pike is as old as this implies. The poem's subject is the leviathan mentioned in the Book of Job, who has awoken to find himself the very type of verminous criminal. 'The pike has been condemned,' the poem begins. Ranged against him are witnesses that we may recognize from the diaries, because they include the baitfish Ted, Nick and Barrie brought from Kilkenny, as well as the lake's native rudd. In the pike's trial a number of witnesses give testimony: 'Nursery trout', 'Shameless hatchery smolts … / And the pretty rudd', who, in a fishy pun, 'Cast themselves as the allotted / Medieval maidens'.

In fact, Ted's diary for December 1980 notes the collapse of Gur's rudd population, with the survivors spotted black; that year, the pike they caught bore rather more dramatic marks of the lack of other food, in the form of jaw marks on their flanks: the hunters hunted, for once. And the poem presents its own take on the conversion

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[74] I am grateful to Michael Quinlan for sending me photographs of the painting and the inscription.

of pike from villain to victim, through a number of vignettes from religious and cultural history. They include Old Testament prophet, Freudian symbol and much more local iconography. Barrie's favoured hot spot on the lake was just off the ruins of the seventeenth-century New Church, on the south-eastern shore. Church-bells resonate through the poem, wringing the pike into the impoverished spirituality of earlier generations of worshippers.

And then, Barrie's own recent gift to Quinlan and their stark memory of the damage of drainage clearly in mind, the poem turns to the present and the future. Used to having his name and fangs feared, a very different fate awaits the great Irish pike. Barrie's watercolour of Gur celebrates its value for these two great fishermen artists, but Ted knows another more sinister kind of project is underway:

> The water-colourist of human progress
> Is painting the ponds afresh,
> The rivers and the loughs, without him.

Gur represents a last refuge for this great prisoner-anchorite, on the verge of extinction and metaphysical murky elusiveness, as the great fish lurks in the deep waters somewhere between wildlife, archaeology and science's attempts to claim and dignify folklore, or, as the poem puts it,

> Between the mud bed sown with bronze daggers and gold fibulae
> And the crannog reeds guarded by ornamental herons.

'Fibulae'? Aine's combs, now safely restored to Gur's enchanted waters.

But not even this sanctuary is guaranteed. The poem ends with a grim vision of the more immediate danger they feared lay in store for their respected quarry. He's safe only till he is beheaded by a mercenary German angler, whom the poem envisages threading his skull in a row of a dozen more 'Along the gunnel of a Shannon cruiser', or on a plaque displayed above, the gates not of heaven but Valhalla, and its version of the afterlife. There, we are left to imagine, the pike will take his place among the other great warrior dead.

What of the poem's own afterlife? It appeared, slightly revised, in December 1982 in *The London Review of Books*, coinciding with their next trip to Gur. Its metropolitan, largely non-fishing readership might just have identified, as many readers might now, this image of a grand doomed predator lurking in Irish waters with the poet himself. Ted Hughes had long been celebrated as a mythic celebrant of wild, mythic nature, but in recent years he had also been savaged, grossly unfairly, in the court of American feminist opinion as the murderer of Sylvia Plath. 'The pike has been condemned'; the hunter hunted.

But none of these London readers could have had any idea of the occasion of 'The Great Irish Pike', or its tenderness, or its ecological as well as piscatorial concern for

the past, fishy present and future of a lough whose secrets this fine poem succeeded in keeping. And none could have known the reasons why this last trip to Gur turned out to be his last. But that's another story.

Reading those last vivid pages of fishing diaries sent me to Gur, on a day's cold pilgrimage, on 17th December 2013, the thirty-first anniversary of Ted and Nick's departure. It was a revelation: cold, if nothing like as bitter as some of the Decembers, but keen on the slopes of Knockadoon, the Dragon's open mouth. I called at the visitor centre, but didn't attempt to fish. An Inland Fisheries Survey of Lough Gur in 2012 seemed to have borne out his fears about 'progress': only five pike were netted, the biggest of them just 2 lbs. Ted's fears had been justified. In March 2014, Michael Quinlan told me of embryonic plans to revive the fishery and its stocks after years of decline. He was too diplomatic to mention the Germans.

Or perhaps Michael was doing his bit to keep the lake's secrets, its capacity, which Gerry Hughes proved just before Christmas, to keep producing surprises of mythical proportions.

Lough Gur

## By a School Yard Wall

By John Carew

In Cavan bogs, with heads bent low
They bury their dead, in peat, black and sodden
On wind swept mountain sides, they dig in stony clay
To lay to rest their loved ones
The wild Atlantic calling souls

In fertile Munster soil
They entomb their dead, six feet under
Yet that does not conceal their grief

Bury me by a school yard wall
In morning sunbeams I'll catch the songbirds tune
By day I'll hear the playful cries of children
On summer evenings as dusk begins to fall
A Desmond Earl I will hear calling to his Fairy Queen

Bury me by a school yard wall
And let my soul dance with the spirts of five thousand years
through the meadows by Lough Gur's magical shore

Bury me by a school yard wall
With my ancestors, where we will rest and chat awhile
of times gone by
And let my descendants be brave and bold
And when their time will come, may they rest here, by a
school yard wall

# A Kilmallock Woman's Experience in Dublin During the 1916 Easter Rising

**(Note: This article was first published in the *Lough Gur and District Historical Society Journal* number 6, 1990. It is a copy of a letter from Mrs. Genevieve Reid, wife of the manager of the Hibernian Bank, Camden Street, Dublin to her sister Kathleen Barry Walsh in London)**

***In the midst of a full-blown revolution Dublin Thursday, April 27th. 1916.***

My dearest Kit,
Some day when things have assumed a wee bit of the normal I hope to post you this. Meantime I am praying that no hint of our extreme plight here has been allowed to appear in the English papers and cause you undue uneasiness.
You mentioned in your very last letter how safe we were in this isle and how much our nerves would be spared in consequence. Well Kit, since that letter I have gone through all the guilt of extreme emotions fear, horror, anxiety, terror of something dreadful pending and my mind absolutely racked with conflicting sympathies. On Easter Monday about one o' clock in the afternoon I heard what seemed to me rifle shots, apparently close at hand. Though having no idea of the seriousness of things I rushed down to the office to Tim to beseech him not to go out. We went on to the road, could see nothing, but the cannonade was deafening. When it subsided a little, Tom went out to glean information and returned with the news that the Sinn Feiners had started a revolution, taken possession of the General Post Office, Four Courts, Westland Row Station, Jacob's factory, Bolands Mills and used as it proved since, almost the entire city. Stephen's Green they installed themselves in, threw up trenches and barricades by commandeering all motors that passed, slashed the tyres and put them across the road to impede the military. They placed guns inside the railings, took possession of Little's house at the corner and thus commanded Harcourt Street. Less than an hour after the shooting I have told you of, a company of soldiers came down this street to attack Jacob's. I could not describe to you Kit, my state of mind, the soldiers brought poor Steph. so much to my mind and the unfortunate misguided boys in the green uniforms numbered amongst them so many that I at least know of, that I could not rejoice at the thought of seeing them shot down. Even as we stood on the roof a civilian was killed before our eyes. The soldiers lost heavily I believe but did not manage to dislodge the malcontents. Up to this moment, they are there, quite young boys sitting at the open windows. Tom and I see them every morning as we pass down to Mass. Only this evening a woman was heard imploring her daughter - a volunteer nurse-to come home. "No mother" she said, "Here I shall die!" This spirit seems to animate them all, they expect to die but so far no one has been able to tell me what they are sacrificing their lives for. Any number of them have been shot. In one house here there are two sons dead and in another a boy whom I know well is wounded. All sorts of wild rumours are afloat, Skeffington is supposed to be shot etc. The Sinn Feiners on Monday night took Mr. Byrne's-my grocer's house, also Delahunt's opposite. They take any house they want, simply walk in and if you are wise you go out-in this way they are located in almost

every house in O' Connell St. and Henry St., including Mr. Lambs. Every minute I am wondering if they will come here - the flat roof sounds attractive.
On yesterday-Wednesday-soldiers came to dislodge the invaders from Byrne's - they succeeded, found one volunteer dead, another alive, the latter, some say was taken out in the street and shot, some say he was only wounded: anyhow I saw the soldiers bring a hand-cart and take both away. Then when the soldiers disappeared the looters began. Up they came, rushing from the lanes and presently returned with hams, sides of bacon etc. I should mention that there are no police about. The military are in authority. With the looting they don't seem inclined to cope, the result being that every shop in Henry St., O' Connell St., Grafton St., and some here have left without even the fittings. Is it not all sad and terrible?
Tonight-Thursday-there are fires all over the city. The glow against the sky is terrifying. All day the most incessant bombardment has been going on in the city. Thomas St., is simply raked with fire and the Four Courts is being fired at from the other side of the river. Martial Law has been proclaimed and no one can stir after seven in the evening. Nor does a prudent person stir even in the daytime.
Our provisions are giving out. To-day we get no bread or milk. I have, however, some flour and eggs, tea and sugar and two or three dinners of ham so we can subsist for a little while longer. The gas is turned off and my small supply of paraffin (was not able to get any more) is nearly out so we may sample sitting in the dark if this state of things continues, which it has every indication of doing.
This morning at 5 a.m. Tom and I were aroused by the sound of a heavy fusillade of gun-fire. He jumped up-(indeed his curiosity or excitement or whatever it may be called, is one of my chief anxieties. Every sound he hears he must rush into the street and as numbers of civilians have been accidently shot my state is not a happy one) and said he was only going on the roof. Right enough he did, but presently I heard a rush of feet down the stairs and making for the window espied Tom in his dressing gown rushing towards Harcourt St. I got up and dressed even to hat and coat, went on the roof and discovered that a fire was the cause of the excitement. After an hour Tom returned and looked so happy having managed to get into the thick of the danger-that I had not the heart to say what I felt I ought to say. The Sinn Feiners might have taken possession of the house during his absence.
Canon Fitspatrick, our P.P. happened to be in Stephen's Green on Monday when the Volunteers took it over. When he got to the gates they were closed but those on guard said of course he could get out only as they would all be dead presently, would he hear their confessions. So there and then in the midst of the daffodils and the sheldrakes, he gave them their last absolution .Many of them have been killed since. The Countess Markiewicz was in command there in man's attire. Yesterday they abandoned the Green and took up their quarters in the Russell Hotel and University building next to the Church. They also occupy the College of Surgeons and their flag - the Irish Republican(?) floating from the flag staff. The military have placed guns on the top of the Shelbourne Hotel and Lord Iveagh's house, and the roll and rattle of them we can hear continually.
Just now Tom has called me to come on the roof. A fresh fire has started comparatively near us-possibly Dame Street. A most tremendous glow and volumes of smoke. Then there is an intense stillness except for the roll of the guns and sharp

crack of rifles. Not a soul in the streets but we could hear the breaking of glass in Redmond's Hill as if the volunteers were getting into the houses. God grant that they don't come any nearer! Tom has come down to tell me that the glow in the sky is so terrific now that he believes a whole district of the city must be on fire. He is an authority on fires which is hardly a consolation. I am going up to have a peep.
The peep nearly finished Tom and myself - A bullet whizzed so close as to petrify me, but he still remains gazing out at the fire leaving me a prey to horrible imaginings. The fire is undoubtedly Grafton Street. It would seem as if it originated at the far end and is creeping up towards us. In all this my consolation has been that Jose is out of it. Her nerves were bad enough without this ordeal. Poor Peg, I ventured a few lines to her on Monday but of course they never went. I am only hoping that no Inkling of the truth reaches her. She might be uneasy and worry is a useless game unfortunately everyone cultivates. Jeci went to Swords - Tom managed to ring up Michael last night to assure him of our well-being. You see at that side things are not so bad and I thought he might be able to communicate with Mamma in case they are anxious. Nell and Michael are safely in Clonsilla, Thank God!

THE IMPRESSIVE DUBLIN BREAD COMPANY BUILDING AND OTHER BUILDINGS ON EAST SIDE OF O'CONNELL STREET AND TWO BUILDINGS ON EDEN QUAY, BEFORE 1916

ONLY THE SHATTERED WALLS OF THE D.B.C. REMAIN STANDING IN THE SAME AREA AFTER THE BRITISH GUNS

*The above photographs and accompanying text are reprinted from the 1966 edition of the Capuchin Annual.*

**Friday, April 28th.**
This morning brought us bad news. O' Connell St., (Clery's side) has been burnt down from Hopkins to Talbot St., including of course our bank.
Tom has just gone out with some other residents to seek the military authorities and try to get some protection for the shops. This morning the rabble looted a shop near Jacob's. McEvoy is the name. This has made everyone very indignant as the owner is a very old resident in the neighbourhood, very hard-working and can ill afford the loss. It was the breaking of his windows we heard last night.
I have now stocked provisions for a month. Milk is my great difficulty. Percy has forsaken us. Possibly been made deliver to the military instead of mere civilians. There will be a famine in the city, if this siege continues, in less than a fortnight. It is only four days on now and if shops are not looted they are sold out of all eatables.
Tom had to escort James up to Delahunts to-day or his goods would be robbed on the way down-such is the state of things.

**Friday Afternoon.**
The scene in the street here has been awful. The rabble came along and looted shop after shop. Their yells and cries were terrifying, and the more they get the more they wanted. In William's and the London and Newcastle Tea Co. they did not leave even the fittings. The bags of sugar they took away on their backs and the rice they played snowball with. At last they commenced to attack a shop belonging to a young man named Dunne. This was a bit too much for the onlookers who arranged a counter-attack. Out rushed Mr. O' Brien, Mr. Corrigan, Peter Corrigan, Mr. O' Reilly, Pat Gorevan, Mr. Nesbith with pitchforks, sticks and all kinds of weapons. You can picture what followed. Mr. Dunne seized a revolver and another man some antique kind of blunderbuss. The women screamed like tigers but when they found the others determined they retired. Subsequently Tom arrived with some refugees in the form of Mrs. Dunne, her nurse and wee baby boy. Mrs. Dunne was terrified at the onslaught, lest the mob would get up into the house. We all spent a wide-awake night. We expected the mob would return in the morning, Saturday, so arrangements were made to protect the house. All the 'special constables' as we call them, were at their posts at 5 o' clock. It was such a beautiful sunny morning it seemed a pity that it could not be more peacefully employed. However, the looters did not return. It seems yesterday two men at least were seriously injured in the mob. One spiked himself on the gate of Mr. Dunne's shop and the other got his head opened with a piece of plate-glass. These casualties seemed to have a salutary effect, besides I expect the combatants of yesterday were too drunk to come out today. Small bands did arrive with sacks for the loot and clubs, jam jars etc., as weapons but were afraid to attack. D. G. Tom got a hint that the Bank was to be 'gone for' to-night so has armed himself with a revolver. I have put all my papers, all poor Steph's and my few trinkets into the bank safe. I have nailed a relic of the Little Flower on the hall door. If the worst happens we must be content, but somehow my blood is up and I feel I will fight. Tom, of course, I am nervous about on account of his heart, and the week's strain on him has been severe. Fire is really the dreadful menace. Accounts to hand tell us that the post Office has been burned down today and judging by all the burnt papers flying about, a paper shop or factory has been involved. Perhaps indeed they are postal orders.

**6 o' clock p.m. Saturday.**
Strange rumours have got about that the volunteers have surrendered. Already a certain change has come over the temper of the crowd. A motor car has come along with the news, no cars of any kind have passed for days. James Connolly the volunteer leader has been shot. I hope the peace rumour is true but I notice that only to-day did the occupants of Jacob's hoist the republican flag. Does not look exactly like surrender. We are dispensed from hearing Mass to-morrow but Tom and I intend venturing to Harrington St. This morning he and James Gorevan got into a hail of bullets coming home. It seems there are any number of volunteer snipers in that locality and the military were trying to get them.

**1.30 p.m. Sunday, April 30th.**
Thank God we got a fair night's rest. We badly needed it. To get to Harrington Street for Mass proved impossible as a regular fusilade were about, we then ventured to Whitefriar St. Passed Jacob's to see the volunteers calmly conversing with their friends who seemed to be handing them in parcels of food. Bags of flour fill up nearly every window. As shooting appeared very lively during Mass, Tom suggested we should return via Aungier St. We had got down by Peter's Row. When we got to the front door we were confronted by a mob. Enquiries elicited the fact that the military had given feed to the friars for distribution to the poor.
I don't envy Fr. McCabe. The deserving poor never get any of such things. Probably the looters who can threaten and bully will get their lion's share. It has since transpired that the holders of Jacob's refuse to surrender. Negotiations are going on and meantime a Sinn Fein sniper keeps banging away from some roof quite near us. So near that I had a peep to see if it was actually ours. Was much relieved to see no sight of him.
A weird incident happened about an hour ago. A young soldier walked down the street alone, his hands in his pockets and a set look on his face. When he got near the danger point some people called out to him, but he only answered "I am alright", walked into the middle of the road-a shot rang out and he fell dead. I wonder had he lost his reason, or perhaps he had some notion of preferring to be shot by the volunteers than to shoot them. The crack of rifles and seeing soldiers and civilians carried off dead has become such an hourly occurrence that I find myself looking on without a tremor. Surely one can become accustomed to anything.

**Sunday evening.**
Mick came in to see us about 3 o'clock. He said things were very bad out his way. He got in with great difficulty not withstanding that he has a pass from the military. They told him not to remain long as Camden Street would not be safe after half an hour. Just as he left the butcher's boy rushed up to tell Tom that the Sinn Feiners holding Jacob's had surrendered. Fr. McCabe, the prior in Whitefriar St., had gone in to try to bring them to reason. He came out battered and covered with flour as if his arguments had been forcible. He evidently succeeded, at least partly. Rumour says some still hold it. As if to confirm this, presently a squad of soldiers and some bluejackets came along. Ordered all windows to be closed. Took up their position at the corner of Montague St., and Camden Row and started the most deafening attack

on Jacob's. They were in a very jumpy state on account of the number of snipers about and as I could hear one potting away from some house near us I was a bit jumpy also. In fact a few hours before I thought I heard a step on the roof and rushed up dreading that I would be confronted with the alternative of reporting his presence or getting suspected myself. Thank God he was not there. Two civilians were killed during this onslaught. One fell just at Montague St., corner and the other we saw borne away to the Meath Hospital on a mattress. The soldiers seemed to escape. When all was quiet again Tom went out and presently returned with a cartridge case which he found outside. A small souvenir of a very terrible time.

**Monday May 1st.**
Things appearing quiet to-day I went to eight o' clock Mass with Tom. Already Jacob's girls could be seen hurrying down in the hopes of getting work. I should fancy it will be some days before they are able to resume.
Passing the factory we could see it was deserted. The bags of flour still filled the windows and biscuit tins lay about in all directions. Coming home we went up to York Street to Stephen's Green.
The havoc in the College of Surgeons is terrible and Strakan's where the volunteers had established themselves is simply riddled. A man spoke to us there, said he had been out on Thursday with a friend, came over to see if his shop was safe, when a volunteer shot his friend dead at his feet. He mentioned that he was still lying in Mercer's Hospital unburied. Coffins cannot be got. He thinks that owing to his great height, his friend was taken for a policeman in plain clothes. Sad is'nt it?

**Monday evening.**
Michael managed to get over to see me to-day. I nearly broke down at seeing him safe and well. Nell and baby are in Clonsilla. So many civilians were shot in trying to get about that it is wonderful none of us were victims.

**Tuesday, May 2nd.**
Jeci managed to get in from Swords. M. J. drove her about twenty miles round and finally deposited her at Portobello Bridge. She thought I should be in bed at least. Possibly I would have fancied so myself a fortnight ago. Now I knew that revolutions agree with me. We took a walk down town in the afternoon that she might see the awful destruction brought by this business. Appalling Kit, to see the ruins.

**Wednesday, May 3rd.**
When we should have hoped all was over this street was put in a tumult. There had been sniping from some of the houses about and towards evening a notice was put up that people who remained in the street did so at their own risk, as without further warning the military would proceed to batter down any house upon which they suspected a sniper was. Soldiers had been guarding all approaches to the street all day and an armoured motor car was in readiness to do the destructive work. Tom insisted that Jeci and Anne and I, should leave for the night. This we did, Jose and I to Frederick St., and Annie to some friends.

THE DOMELESS, GUTTED D.B.C. BUILDING, O'CONNELL STREET, ON SOUTH SIDE OF LOWER ABBEY STREET

THE RUINS OF THE HIBERNIAN BANK, O'CONNELL STREET, AT THE NORTH CORNER OF LOWER ABBEY STREET. THE IRISH PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETY NOW OCCUPIES THE SITE

*The above photographs and accompanying text are reprinted from the 1966 edition of the Capuchin Annual.*

**Thursday, May 4th.**
Woke up at 5 a.m. but did not get up till 7 o' clock when I dressed and started to walk to Camden St. I just met Tom safe and sound D.G. so proceeded to get his breakfast. I am sending you some papers so you will see the sad news of the executions. I suppose they are well deserved sentences, but never the less awful. All day I have been in a state over Willie Corrigan who lives opposite to us. I knew him only slightly but the thought of his young life ruined by this madness worries me. Tom had gone out to Richmond Barracks to see if anything can be done for him. Some of the officers whom he knows, say his case is a very serious one. Poor Tom is very much upset over the whole affair. He was particularly fond of Willie. Two hundred prisoners are waiting trial there.

**Friday, May 5th.**
Sentence has not yet been passed on Willie Corrigan, but all his friends fear the worst. Father Sherwin has just called in. He tells us he met Prince Alexander of Battenberg, who is in General Maxwell's staff. We beseeched him to do what he can for W. Corrigan. The suspense is horrible.

**May 6th.**
Willie Corrigan has been sentenced to six years penal servitude. It is very hard but we are thankful that his life has been spared, where so many have been shot. My heart aches for the loss to our country of those brilliant men whose lives have been sacrificed. Let us hope their blood has not been shed in vain, that the coming months may see some settlement of the long-standing and difficult problem.

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## The O'Rahilly – A Hospital Connection

By Michael O'Sullivan

Probably one of the most well known of the rebels who were killed in action during the Easter Rising was Michael O'Rahilly, known as The O'Rahilly. A Kerryman, he married Irish – American Nancie Brown of Philadelphia on 13 April, 1899 in New York. Nancie Brown's mother's maiden name was O'Kennedy – Hickey and the family were originally from the Hospital area. In the primary valuation of tenements, (Griffith's Valuation carried out in about 1850), the family are listed as lessors of 30 houses on the east side of the Main Street (Barrysfarm).

# Caherconlish Rectory-the Norman Garstin Connection

By Garry Ahern

The ruins of this former glebe-house now provide little hint of its functioning in the mid-nineteenth century, of its connection with a military presence in Caherconlish, or with the artist, Norman Garstin. In the 1840s, Captain William Garstin's regiment, the 83rd Foot, was based in Limerick and Garstin seems to have been part of a detachment deployed at Caherconlish. His service in this area was to bring about a link between two Anglo-Irish land-owner families, the Moores, of Mooresfort, Co. Tipperary, and the Garstins, of Bragganstown, Co. Louth. While in the area, Captain Garstin met and married Mary Moore, eldest daughter of local vicar, Rev. Matthew Moore. Their only child, Norman Garstin, took a different path from that urged upon him by relatives and usually followed by members of the Anglo-Irish landed class. He neither inherited lands nor pursued a military or a church career. Instead, he turned to art, achieving a considerable degree of fame as a landscape and figure painter.

*The Old Parsonage'*, in oil, 1915, by Norman Garstin, (auctioned as *'Artist's Home, Caherconlish'*

## The Church of Ireland Parish

The civil parish of Caherconlish contained 4,777 acres (S.M.) of very productive land, along with over one-hundred acres of valuable bog. Caherconlish, a post- town, had about 120 houses. A mile or so away was the glebe-house of the Rev. Moore, variously referred to over the years as 'the Rectory', the 'Parsonage' or 'the Glebe'. The 'living' of the Church of Ireland incumbent was a vicarage in the diocese of Emly, united in 1791 by act of council to the vicarage of Luddenbeg and the rectory and vicarage of Carrigparson. Together, these formed the Union of Caherconlish, in the patronage of the Archbishop of Cashel. Caherconlish church was then a spacious edifice, *'in the early English style, with a lofty square tower surmounted by an octagonal spire of hewn stone'*, capable of holding 400. (That building was to be replaced in 1871 by a new church on the present Old Barrack Road.) The tithes of the parish amounted to £581-11-1, of which part was payable to the 'Vicars Choral' of Christ

Church Cathedral, Dublin, while £362 1s- 6 1/2d was payable to the incumbent. [75] This was a significant annual sum, at a time when, for example, a teacher in the new National School system might earn £10 or £12 annually. The position was thus desirable and one which provided its holder with a comfortable lifestyle. Having a flock numbering little more than one hundred, the incumbent's pastoral duties were not particularly demanding.

**The Rectory/Glebe House**

The glebe-house was on a commanding site in the townland of Pust North, about one mile from Caherconlish. By the time Matthew Moore was appointed there in 1835, potatoes, corn, and flax were grown on the fourteen acres around the three-storey glebe-house. The construction of this, in one account, was attributed to Rev. William Galway at a date prior to 1789.[76] However, while he was probably involved in bringing about the completion of the house, church records date Rev. Galway's tenure as vicar there only from 1791, five years before the house's completion[77] in 1796, assisted by a gift of £100 from the Board of First Fruits. [78] Pust North was not a particularly small townland (186 acres) but was sparsely-populated in 1841, with just eighteen persons in two houses. Ten years later, however, this had risen to forty-four in six houses.[79]

In 1853, Rev. Moore's house, out-offices, and eight-and-a-half acres of glebe land there, was held from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. He was also the immediate lessor of over sixty-six acres, including 8 and a half acres of orchard, along with a house, (probably that of the adjacent *'Castle Lodge'*), a gate-lodge, and offices, all leased from Richard Maunsell. The second lot of glebe land of four acres was then being let to John O'Keefe.[80]

*Location of glebe-house, Pust North, (OS map, c. 1910.)*

In 1841, census compilers treated Pust as one townland, one where *'Glebe of Pust, No 1'* had one household of five persons, while *'Glebe of Pust No. 2'* had also one household.

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[75] Samuel Lewis', *A History and Topography of Limerick City and County*, (1837, reprinted by Mercier Press, 1980,); OS Name Books

[76] OS Name Books.

[77] Ven. J.D. Seymour, *Diocese of Cashel and Emly*. William Galway was followed as vicar there in succession by Richard Cox (1795), George Studdert, junior, (1802), Richard Mauleverer (1833), Matthew Moore (1835), James Carson (1867), James F. Lynch (1889), William Skuse (1832), William. H. Dobbin (1951), Wynne M.H. Jones (1960), and Edward B. Snow (1977).

[78] Ecclesiastical Register, 1820, Emly Diocese.

[79] Census Reports, 1841 & 1851.

[80] Griffith's Primary Valuation

The latter, however, held seventeen persons on Census night, twelve of them female, and this almost certainly refers to Rev. Moore's family and a number of domestic staff.[81] Ten years later, the 1851 Census Report recorded two adjoining 'Pust' townlands, i.e. 'Pust North' and 'Pust South'. This reflected the new mapping, by then been completed by the Ordinance Survey. The glebe-house, before which stood an ornamental lake or pond, was approached from the Caherconlish to Bohermore road by a gate-lodge and avenue. The latter was lined with copper beech and chestnut trees. A branch of the avenue ran to the left, giving access to the adjacent *'Castle Lodge'*. The fourteen and a half acres (S.M.) of glebe land attached to the rectory itself was *'tastefully planted.* Further portions of glebe land were at Greenane (two acres) and on the Caherconlish to Inch St Lawrence road, opposite the entrance to Caherconlish House, (five acres). [82]

It is not evident what alterations or additions may have occurred in the course of the previous century but by 1901 the glebe-house was a sizeable building. It had twenty windows to the front and seventeen rooms within. Outside there was a stable, coach-house, harness room, dairy, piggery and fowl house.[83] There was an enclosed courtyard, at the centre of which a deep well was located. Norman Garstin's oil painting of the house in 1915 (above) shows many of those windows on the front facade, along with a glazed entrance porch.

Surviving wattle, bereft of daub/plaster, on wall in the ruined glebe-house (2013).

**Reverend Matthew Moore (1790-1867).**

Rev. Matthew Moore

Born in 1790 to a landed gentry family of Mooresfort, in the parish of Lattin, Co. Tipperary. Rev. Moore was vicar at Caherconlish for over thirty years. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and ordained in Limerick in 1824. He served as curate in Kileenteerna and Kilvellane, as vicar in Ballingarry, and then as vicar in Caherconlish from 1835 until his death in 1867. [84] He married Elizabeth, daughter of Hon. Maurice Crosbie, Dean of Limerick and they had two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. At Caherconlish, where members of the Church of Ireland were outnumbered approximately ten-to-one by their Catholic neighbours, Rev. Moore believed in maintaining good relations with local Catholic clergy. He has been described as of a moderate disposition, quite avoiding the extremes of bigotry and aggressive proselytizing

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[81] Census Report, 1841

[82] Griffith's Primary Valuation

[83] Census Return, 1901.

[84] Clergy of Cashel and Emly, ( RCB )

common in many areas in those decades. This moderation must be viewed in the context of the times, including the fact that for some years his bishop was Dr Daly of Cashel & Emly, a leading proponent of a vigorous evangelical and anti-Catholic movement which arose within the Church of Ireland. Moore, however, remained apart from such extremism.[85]

During the Famine, Rev. Moore was a member of the Relief Committee instituted in April, 1846, and he contributed to its Relief Fund. The twenty-man committee, based on Caherconlish, covered also the parishes of Inch St Lawrence, Ballybrood, Caherelly, Dromkeen, Aglishcormick and Rathjordan. Its members included other Protestant clergymen and Catholic priests of those areas, and many prominent landowners. Noble Seward, M.D., Caherconlish, acted as Committee Secretary. Thirteen Committee members, (whose donations ranged from one pound to ten pounds), subscribed a total of fifty-nine pounds to the Relief Fund. Rev Moore's contribution of ten pounds was matched only by landowners Charles Wilson and two members of the Gabbett family.[86] The fact that Catholics were among subscribers to a memorial window in when the Church of Ireland built its new church in Caherconlish in 1871, four years after Moore's death, has been taken as an indication of good relations between the two local clergies in those years.

Moore owned an extensive and valuable collection of books and had time for reading and pursuit of other interests such as fishing and whist. [87] In an age of violence and robberies the secluded rectory was by no means immune to disturbance and one incident gives an insight to life at the rectory then. On a Sunday evening in 1851, 'an *extensive robbery was committed at the dwelling of Rev. Matthew Moore, Caherconlish Parsonage. A large quantity of plate and other valuable property were taken, also the Rev gentleman's clothes, which had been left out for brushing by a domestic.* [88]

(Co-incidentally, on another Sunday afternoon, in 1831, when a curate at Kilvellane, about twelve miles away, Moore's house at Rockvale was all but destroyed by lightning. Remarkably, all, including a party of guests being entertained, escaped injury. [89]) When he died, on 31 May, 1867, Matthew Moore was interred in the old churchyard in Caherconlish. His successor, James Carson, (a kinsman of Unionist leader-to-be, Edward Carson) then took over and Moore's widow, Elizabeth, lived until her death in 1871 with her daughter and son-in-law, John Frend, at Annesgift, Fethard, Co. Tipperary, (a house later owned by Coolmore stud.)

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[85] Richard Pryke, *Norman Garstin, Irishman & Newlyn Artist,* (Spire Books Ltd, Reading, 2005.)

[86] RLFC/3/1/1468; RLFC/3/1/1889; RLFC/3/1/5032; (NAI). (This Relief Committee later merged with that of Ballyneety.)

[87] Pryke

[87] *Freeman's Journal* 9/5/1851.

[88] *Drogheda Journal,* 10/5/1831.[88] Burke's *The Landed Gentry of Ireland*

[89] *Drogheda Journal,* 10/5/1831.

**Captain William Garstin** (1806-1861)

William Garstin was a descendant of Major James Garstin, an officer in Cromwell's army, who in 1654 was granted lands seized from Catholics at Bragganstown and elsewhere in Co. Louth. Those holdings were added to when confiscated lands were granted to Norman Garstin after 1688. William Garstin (1806-1861) was the third son of Rev. Norman Garstin, who was clearly very acceptable in establishment circles. Rev. Garstin's career included chaplaincies to the Duke of Richmond, to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, to the Royal Military School, Phoenix Park, Dublin, an appointment to the Prebendary of Kilpeacon, Co. Limerick, and, finally, Senior Colonial Chaplain to Ceylon, where he died in 1830. [90] He married Elizabeth Boyd and their third son, William, was to eventually find his way to Caherconlish.

Bragganstown House, Co. Louth. (nowadays the property of Larry Goodman.)

Not surprisingly, given his family's history, William Garstin was reared in an environment that was strong on matters ecclesiastical and military. Entering the army in 1824, he was made lieutenant in 1828 and captain in 1842. In that period, he had served in the Ceylon Regiment, from which he procured a transfer in December, 1828. By the time he arrived in Limerick in 1845, aged almost forty, Captain Garstin, was something of a veteran, with over twenty years' service. At Caherconlish, there was a barracks which was probably initially established for military use but by the 1840s, it was seen primarily as a police station (and was so designated on early Ordnance Survey maps). The station or barracks was at Barrack St., later Main St., (on a site where McCormacks' Hall was operated in the twentieth century) was replaced c.1865[91] by the RIC barracks to the south of the village. The immediate reason for the stationing of troops at Caherconlish in the 1840s, their strength, and the duration of their stay, are unclear. Nevertheless, it is clear that, on occasion, numbers there were relatively high. In June, 1814, for example, *'A detachment of fifty privates of the Sligo Militia marched from Limerick on Sunday to do duty at Caherconlish'*.[92]

The early decades of the nineteenth century had been a period of continuing turbulence, including the anti-tithe 'war', the Rockite campaign, and on-going agrarian unrest. Apart from policing needs in its immediate environs, Caherconlish was a centre from which a swathe of surrounding countryside could be reached. When considered necessary, troops were deployed to augment the police force and were withdrawn when quieter conditions prevailed. In May, 1831, for example, twelve men from Caherconlish and Kilmallock were committed to Limerick County Jail for *'turning up ground'*.[93] Nevertheless, just two months later, it was decided to withdraw a detachment under Captain Leighton from Caherconlish because

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[90] Burke's *The Landed Gentry of Ireland.*

[91] National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.

[92] *F.J.* 11/6/1814.

[93] *F.J.* 2/5/1831.

*'The peaceable state of the County of Limerick has enabled the military detachments at Dromcolliher, Caherconlish, and Ballyneety to be withdrawn entirely'.* [94]

Caherconlish may have had a support function for troops in surrounding areas, something suggested in a press report of January, 1853. The hostile reception which such troops might encounter is evident:

*'On Thurs a detachment of the 5th Regiment went from Cappamore to Caherconlish for their new clothing and on their return through Pallasbeg the country people attacked them, struck and beat some of the soldiers severely and one fellow seizing a bayonet stabbed a soldier he had wrested it from in the abdomen of which he died yesterday. The military had only their side-arms when this savage attack was committed. A man has been taken up on suspicion.*[95]

By 1846, Captain William Garstin, of the 83rd Regiment, part of the Dublin Garrison, had met Mary Moore of *'Caherconlish Parsonage'*. They were married by licence, in Caherconlish Church on October 2nd that year. The witnesses to the ceremony were Colonel B. Trydell, also of the 83rd Regiment, and Thomas Wilson, (Caherconlish House) [96]. William and Mary's only child, Norman, was born in 1847.

Soon after, the first of several tragedies in Norman Garstin's life occurred. His mother, Mary, suffered a paralysis which also caused her to lose her power of speech. Her son was to have no recollection of his mother's voice. Probably arising from the combination of his wife's illness and his pending posting to India, William Garstin retired in the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel from regimental service in 1849, going on half-pay and obtaining a position in the administration of army pensions. This appointment led to service at Chester and Sheffield in England, Cavan, Waterford, and, eventually in 1856, at Limerick. His final retirement from service was reported in 1860: *Wm Garstin Retired full-pay -- late Staff Officer of pensions to have the honorary rank of Colonel in the Army.*[97] At this point, he might have been expected to have been available to look after his wife and young son. If this ever came to be, it was not to last long. William Garstin died at Finglas, Dublin, in May, 1861, in circumstances that are unclear, having taken his own life. [98] The death was tersely reported to have occurred

*'near Dublin on 23rd instant' of Lieutenant-Colonel William Garstin, of the 23rd Regiment, late Staff Officer of Pensioners of the Limerick district, 'an officer highly esteemed'.*[99]

William's widow and Norman, lived at her father's spacious rectory, where, for a time at least, they were cared for by Mary's only sister, Elizabeth, (who later married John Frend). In time, however, it was another relative, spinster Anne Fitzgerald, who *'served as a second mother'* to the young Norman, as he later acknowledged. (He also

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[94] *F.J.* 1/7/1831.

[95] *The Derby Mercury*, 2/1/153 (from *Limerick Chronicle*.)

[96] Marriage Licence Bonds, 1846, Dio. Cashel & Emly; GRO, Marriages, 1846.

[97] *Daily News*, 7/11/1860.

[98] Pryke, Calendar of Wills and Administration.

[99] *The Era*, (London), 16-6-1861.

recalled, with similar affection, the role of another maternal relative, Margaret Fulton, of Birr).[100]

**Norman Garstin, Artist, (1847-1926).**

Norman Garstin, aged about twenty-three.

At the time of his father's tragic death in 1861, Norman, an only child, was aged fourteen. Details of his earliest education are not known but it is likely that he benefited from tuition from his well-read grandfather. Then, aged a mere nine years, and with delicate health, he was despatched to Jersey, where he attended St. Aubin's school. He was not totally isolated from family as his uncle and namesake, Rev. Norman Garstin, and his wife were then living in St. Helier and the young Norman is believed to have stayed with them. In 1858, he entered a public school there, Victoria College, which he attended into his mid- or late teens.

**Cork and London**

It has been suggested that Norman's later artist's flair for the picturesque was spurred in his childhood by views of the Silvermines, Slieve Fēlim and Galtee mountain ranges, and by the numerous local historic ruins, such as that of nearby Carrigoreilly Castle. Whatever the case, he resisted relatives' urgings towards church or army and went instead, around 1866, to Queen's College, Cork to study engineering. He did not complete his studies there but his considerable flair for drawing and sketching had emerged and also a determination to become an artist. He was to travel a long and varied path before achieving this. Within a year or so, he had obtained a position with a firm of architects in London, whose principal work was designing churches. While the technical training acquired there was to benefit him later, this was not for him, either, it seems, and, hearing of the diamond-mining boom there, he sailed for South Africa.

**South Africa**

Garstin worked at the mines in Kimberly for several years, becoming quite friendly with fellow-miners, Cecil Rhodes along with Rhodes's brothers, Frank and Herbert. Cecil Rhodes later founded a mining company (De Beers) and a country (Rhodesia). This friendship might possibly be regarded as a major missed opportunity for Garstin. Nevertheless, the evidence suggests that his disposition was one not best suited to all-out commercial enterprise and that he found the reality of mining villages not to his liking. Also, he may have observed at Kimberly some of the inequality and exploitation of which he was later critical. Whatever the case, Garstin gained no fortune in Kimberly and there followed a period working in the public service and in mining administration. Then, in Capetown, he and fellow Limerick man and ex-missionary, Frederick St George, founded the country's first newspaper, *'The Cape Times'*. [101]

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[100] Pryke

[101] (2014). http://www.mpfa.ie/garstin.htm (2014).

## Tipperary and Further Afield

Norman Garstin's *'The Rain It Raineth Every Day '*(1889).

In 1877 Garstin returned to Ireland and lived with the Frend family at Annesgift, near Fethard, (where his mother had spent her final years). He sketched and also wrote a column for *'The Lantern'*, a Cape Town journal. Notwithstanding his own background and the leisurely life he was just then pursuing, his articles expressed critical views of exploitative landlords and of the privileges of property-owners. Then, while fox-hunting, he had an accident which resulted in the loss of all sight in his right eye. Remarkably, it was after this accident that, in 1879, he decided to properly devote himself to a career as an artist. Over the next six years, Garstin studied at the Royal Academy in Antwerp, joined a studio in Paris, where he studied for three years and completed training in tonal painting. He started exhibiting in prominent galleries in Britain, and toured in Europe and North Africa. [102]In 1886, he married Louisa Jones of Bedford, and they settled in Cornwall, where they went on to have three children, one of whom, Alethea, was also to become an artist.

## Cornwall

Garstin was to spend the rest of his life between Penzance and the nearby fishing village of Newlyn. The latter then had a growing group of artists which was gaining prominence as the 'Newlyn School'. Garstin was at that point a striking figure, described as tall, very erect, red-haired, with a bushy red beard, endowed with great physical stamina (and an expert in the unlikely skill of stilt-walking.) He was also a very proficient public speaker and a talented actor. His droll sense of humour was illustrated in a meeting with George Bernard Shaw, with whom he claimed several things in common. To Shaw's enquiry as to what these similarities might be, he replied, that, in addition to being an Irishman, he (Garstin) was, like Shaw himself, an admirer of Bernard Shaw! [103]

In the late nineteenth century, he was on his way to becoming an artist of distinction, perhaps the outstanding painter of the Newlyn School, and one of the most important Realist painters of the age. His work did not, however, receive major exhibition until the 1970s, long after his death, by which time his daughter, Alethea, had herself become established as an artist.

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[102] Julian Campbell, 'Norman Garstin, A Limerick Artist in Paris, 1882-1886, in *The Old Limerick Journal*, Winter, 1988.

[103] Pryke,

An elderly Norman Garstin

Garstin supplemented his income by writing articles and teaching and opened his school, the Penzance and District Art Students' School. [104] In 1892 he visited Canada, there painting the opening of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The First World War greatly restricted Garstin's scope and earnings, especially so in regard to his working trips to France and his conduct there of painting schools. At this time, Garstin's attitude became increasingly radical towards British militarism, imperialism and unrestricted capitalism. After the outbreak of WWI, his pacifist feelings led him to join the Independent Labour Party, which had an anti-war stance. His views also caused a rift with one of his two sons, writer Crosbie Garstin, who was a trenchant militarist, served with the British Army in WWI and, after 1916, for a time in Ireland. Garstin's other son, Denis, also served in that army and was killed in Russia in 1918. At odds with his own family's military tradition, Garstin's views were to lose him the favour and friendships of establishment figures and possibly the outright hostility of some. His references to *'those poor fellows'* (concerning the 1916 leaders executed in Dublin) and his view that a *'policy of coercion and force was always the plan in Ireland'*, give an insight to his independent thinking.[105]

While he was never to reap the financial rewards which his achievements might be considered to have deserved, nevertheless, between 1882 and his death in 1926, Garstin produced an impressive total of over 800 works. Of these, approximately half were oils, and half watercolours. An indication of more recent appreciation of his works can be got from prices paid for some of these. In late 2003, they were selling in London at up to £120,000 (Stg.), while some auction sales in Dublin realised up to £43,000 (Stg.) [106] In 1978, a major exhibition of the works of Norman and Alethea was staged in St. Ives. Sadly, Alethea had died shortly before it opened. [107]Later that year, that exhibition was put on in the National Gallery of Ireland. Around that time also, the Gallery acquired Garstin's *'Portrait of the Artist's Wife'*, one of his foremost paintings. [108] Possibly, his most acclaimed work, *'The Rain it Raineth Every Day'*[109] was completed in 1889 and is now part of the Penlee House Collection in Penzance. In print form, it is said to hang on more walls worldwide than any other reproduction, Monet included.[110] Norman Garstin, born in Caherconlish, 1847, died at his home in Wellington Terrace, Penzance on June 22, 1926, aged 79.

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[104] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*

[105] Pryke

[106] Pryke,

[107] *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*

[108] Bruce Arnold in *'Magill'*, Dublin, September, 1978.

[109] The title is based on a quotation from Shakespeare.

[110] *http://thehoylegallery.com/gallery/artist/norman-garstin-1847-1926*

# Remembering Ned Daly

By Liam Irwin

Neither Limerick city nor county took part in the 1916 Rising [or Insurrection or Rebellion, depending on how the event is regarded or interpreted] - the countermanding order from Eoin Mac Neill, the fiasco of the attempt to land arms in Kerry, the capture of Roger Casement, the death by drowning at Ballykissane pier of three Volunteers and the general lack of communication and resultant confusion ensured that no military activity took place and indeed shortly afterwards the city men voluntarily surrendered their arms. While Limerick men were involved elsewhere in Ireland, the two main Limerick heroes, martyrs or casualties [again terminology often depends on perspective] were West-Limerick born Con Colbert and city man, Edward John [Ned] Daly. Of the two, Colbert is the better known and remembered - indicated for example by the re-naming of Limerick Railway Station in 1966 in his honour, though it is rarely if ever so referred to in ordinary parlance. Daly was given the poor consolation prize of Bray, now officially, if somewhat bizarrely, named Bray Daly station. A bronze effigy of Daly sits on top of the 1916 memorial on Sarsfield Bridge, where accompanied by Colbert he is represented as freeing a female figure [Mother Ireland and not Kathleen Clarke as has sometimes absurdly been asserted] and a minor street in the Janesboro area bears the title 'Daly Avenue'. Dying for Ireland, it can be fairly stated, has not led to any great fame or recognition for Ned Daly in his native city and none whatever in the county.

Ned Daly was born 25 February 1891, just four days later than his fellow-rebel Seán Heuston, and was therefore the youngest of those executed. He was the long-desired son, after the birth of eight daughters, for Catherine Daly but the joy of his arrival was overshadowed by the fact that his father, also Edward, had died the previous September at the age of forty-two. He was understandably doted on, and inevitably spoiled, by his mother and sisters. The financial pressures on his mother were eased by a public fund collected for them due to the popularity in the city of Edward Daly and his brother John, both of whom had taken part in the Fenian uprising of 1867 and especially of the latter who had been imprisoned in England and on whose behalf a major campaign for release had been conducted for many years. The fund provided money for the purchase of a pub and when that proved to be beyond her ability to operate successfully, she returned to her original occupation of a dressmaker. The return from Australia of another brother-in-law, James Daly, brought financial security and a new home, a large three-storey house on the outskirts of the city. This comfortable existence was further underpinned when John Daly was released in 1896. Using money collected on a speaking tour in the USA he established a successful bakery business in William Street and brought the family to live with him there and supported them thereafter.

As was often the custom at the time young Ned Daly initially went to a convent school, the Presentation Primary School in Sexton Street, until the age of seven when he transferred up the road to the Christian Brothers. His teachers considered him intelligent but lazy and he left there at age 15 having completed the Intermediate Certificate with passes in Maths, Science, French and English. He was then enrolled in the secular Leamy's School in Hartstonge Street where he completed a commercial course and was again considered clever but without any aptitude for study. It was then decided that he should train as a baker so that he could take over the business established by his uncle. In 1907 he went to Glasgow Royal Technical College but only completed the first year of the three-year course. It would appear that his health did not suit the conditions in which baking took place but in any case his ambition, or at least that of his uncle, to be a baker were definitively thwarted on his return when the Limerick Bakers' Society refused to admit him as a member, a requirement in the closed-shop situation in that trade at this period. He then obtained a post as a clerk in Spaight's Timber Yard and subsequently went to work in the same capacity in the bakery but left there after a row with his uncle, with whom he had a poor relationship.

In 1913 he made the fateful decision to move to Dublin, obtaining a position as a clerk with a building contractor and then in a wholesale chemists where he was to remain until shortly before the Easter Rising. It is clear that he was unfulfilled in his work, harbouring ideas of becoming a professional singer or else a soldier. The latter ambition was satisfied when on the formation of the Irish Volunteers in November 1913 he immediately joined as a private and was, at the subsequent elections, chosen as a Captain of a Company. As he was very young and totally without experience, this was probably due to the influence of his brother-in-law, Tom Clarke, who had married his sister, Kathleen, with whom he lodged in Dublin. He soon justified the confidence placed in him and it is clear he was a talented commander who inspired loyalty and affection while imposing discipline and order on his men. He played a key role as Captain of his company in the gun runnings at Howth and Kilcoole in July and August 1914 and helped in the organisation for the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa in August 1915. By that time he had been promoted to Commandant, in charge of the First Battalion containing about 400 men, and had been sworn into membership of the IRB.

In May 1915 he had suffered the indignity of seeing the Volunteers, including his own Battalion, attacked and abused in his native city. A large body of the Volunteers, around 1,200 in all, from Dublin, Cork, Tipperary and Limerick had arranged a march through the city as a recruiting and fund-raising event. Missiles were thrown and insults were traded especially by women whose husbands were fighting in World War I and a serious riot situation was narrowly avoided. The fact that Pádraig Pearse, Seán Mac Diarmada, Terence McSwiney and Tomás Mac Curtain were among those attacked added to the humiliation.

Around the beginning of 1916, Daly resigned from his job. The circumstances of this are unclear: one version suggests it was due to his being asked by his employers to

enlist in the British army but it seems more likely that he had grown increasingly unhappy with the low pay and boredom - his ambition to have a singing career had also remained - while it may also have been a strategic decision by IRB commandants to concentrate on preparations for the Rising, which had now been decided upon. While he played a significant role in the training and planning for the rebellion, Daly was not made aware that it would start on Easter Sunday until the Tuesday of Holy Week and according to his sister, Kathleen, was shocked at how soon it was to occur and presumably at the failure to inform him of this earlier.

On Easter Saturday, he checked into the Clarence Hotel for the night and on the following morning on his way to Mass discovered that Eoin Mac Neill, Chief of Staff of the Volunteers, had issued his order to cancel the Rising. He went to Liberty Hall where the leaders were deciding what to do and seems to have accepted without argument the decision to postpone the action until the following day. Rather strangely he spent the evening at a dinner party given by some friends before returning to the Clarke home where he slept.

When his battalion mobilised in Blackhall Place at around midday on Easter Monday only about 120 out of the nearly 400 Volunteers were present - either due to confusion regarding the countermanding order or because they had no wish to join the rebellion. Daly gave those present the option of leaving if they wished and some, particularly those who had not realised what was planned, did so. It was thus with a significantly depleted force that Daly put his military plan into action, occupying the Four Courts and the nearby Father Mathew Hall [his main headquarters during the week] and erecting barricades in the surrounding narrow streets as an outer line of defence - a task made more difficult by the actions of local women, wives of those fighting in France, who obstructed the work and heaped abuse on the rebels. The first shot was fired by Daly himself who killed one of a group of mounted Lancers escorting ammunition wagons. This seems to have been a deliberate action either to impress the men under his command or perhaps to prove to himself that 'he was made of the real stuff' which his uncle John Daly had asserted that he lacked.

Two British army barracks, the Bridewell and Linen Hall were captured but as the latter could not be held it was set on fire, causing damage and mayhem in the surrounding narrow streets. By Wednesday, several of the outposts had to be abandoned and the surrender of Seán Heuston's small group in the Mendicity Institute, south of the river, left Daly's scattered section north of the Liffey exposed to enemy firepower. On Friday with the Four Courts garrison under heavy fire from two battalions of Sherwood Foresters on the south quays, several battalions of the Staffordshire Regiment surrounded Daly's headquarters in Church Street and several of his outposts in the North King Street area. The ensuing pitched battles fought around the narrow streets of Smithfield and the Market area, were among the most determined and vicious of all the engagements of Easter Week. Although vastly outnumbered, Daly and his comrades were still in control of the Four Courts, the Fr Mathew Hall and a number of outposts in the area when Pearse's order to surrender arrived on Easter Saturday evening.

It is generally agreed that throughout the week Daly proved to be a superb commander and not surprisingly he was shocked and upset when obliged to follow the order to surrender when both he and his men felt they had successfully resisted all attacks on their position in the Four Courts and were even planning a counter attack from there on Wellington Barracks. He saw it as his duty as a soldier to obey orders, however, and insisted on leading his men to surrender, marching in formation up Abbey Street to O'Connell Street where they formally surrendered before being taken as prisoners to the Rotunda gardens where they spent the night, many of them including Tom Clarke and Daly being subjected to humiliating treatment by an officer, Captain Lea Wilson. Next morning they were marched to Richmond Barracks and Daly was remembered as keeping their spirits up that night by singing Gilbert and Sullivan songs.

Daly's court-martial was held in Richmond Barracks, where he pleaded not guilty to the charge of waging war against the King. Two of the officers who had been held prisoner by him in the Four Courts gave evidence and each was cross examined by him: in general their comments were fair and non-accusatory. Daly did not call any witnesses and made a brief statement in which he said that his not guilty plea was because he had 'no dealings with outside forces'. This seems to refer to 'the gallant allies in Europe' mentioned in the Proclamation and to the charge of aiding an enemy in the time of war. Interestingly, he also added that he had no knowledge of the insurrection until the morning it occurred and decided 'the whole thing was foolish' but felt he had to obey orders. Both comments are intriguing – but if they were uttered in the hope of mitigation, it was in vain and he was immediately found guilty by the three judges and sentenced to death. He was then taken to Kilmainham jail where at dawn on 4 May, along with Joseph Plunkett, Michael O'Hanrahan and Willie Pearse, he was executed by firing squad in the stone breakers' yard.

Unlike many of the other 1916 leaders, who left manifestos, letters, poems and other writings, which provide insights into their character and motivation, Daly wrote nothing on his political or personal beliefs and only a handful of his brief letters has survived. These provide little information about his inner life. One letter is of interest in that it mentions his plans to marry, something that otherwise is not alone undocumented, but apparently was only revealed to one of his sisters. The marriage did not take place and it is clear from the letter that he was fearful of his mother's reaction to his plans.

Madge Daly later wrote an account of her, and her two sisters', last meeting with their brother in Kilmainham jail on the night before his execution. She concentrates on the pride he expressed in his actions during the Rising and the sisters' emotional farewell to him. He did not write any final letters, merely asking his sisters to convey messages to his mother and other family members. His last recorded words were to say goodbye to the prisoner in the adjoining cell as he walked to face the firing squad. On learning of his death, his mother's reaction reportedly, was to offer thanks to God for giving her such a brave son. However, she was devastated by his death and Kathleen Clarke noted that she was rarely seen to ever smile again during the

twenty-one years before her own death. John Daly, already in decline, died at the end of June 1916. There is no evidence that the rift between him and Ned was ever healed: Madge Daly claimed that in his final meeting with his sisters, Ned said 'tell Uncle John, I did my best' but this was privately denied by Laura Daly. Either way, it is clear that he was strongly influenced by his family's political views and actions but in the end it was his desire to be a soldier and the opportunity that the circumstances of 1916 provided for him to prove his ability, commitment and courage that proved decisive and gave him his permanent place in the pantheon of Irish heroes. He did, indeed, do his best.

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## At Lough Gur on an Autumn Evening.

By Dáithí Ó h-Ógáin.

Those reeds over there are like dashes in writing,
marking out the ends of the lake's strong lines,
deep in water's mirror lie their hidden verbal roots…
while their heads shake in fake shyness
and arch coyly in the wind.

When one dashing spirit
like a nervous stranger rushes through them,
they jump and stand with open mouth
in pretended shock at this irrepressible stirring
as life comes to them in sudden shapes and grooves
which cause a skirted leg to twitch and a slanting eye to move.

I see the white steed racing through the reeds,
with the cold of the evening its nostrils are filled,
the knight versed in secrets
and all the paths unseen
is spurring it on
in one crazed gallop…

# An Antiquarian Ramble: A Day Trip to Lough Gur in 1865

**By Richard Rolt Brash**

**(from *The Dublin Builder*, October 15th 1865)**

*(Note:*
**This is an abridged version of an article written by Richard Rolt Brash (1817 – 1876) of Sunday's Well, Cork. He was an antiquarian, architect and author of *Ogham Monuments of the Gaedhil* and expert on Ogham in Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The original article was provided and edited by Michael Quinlan.)**

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Fully impressed by the practical wisdom of this ancient "law," I have made it a rule to steal a day from the cares and worries of business, and to go forth into the green fields and over the breezy hills in search of health.

Now on these occasions it is well for men to have some special object in view and being determined to visit a locality remarkable in the history of our island, namely, Lough Gur, Co. Limerick, I put my determination into practice on Tuesday last, Sept. 26th. Being of a social temperament, I was anxious to make up a party for the excursion, and we started per the eight o'clock train from the Cork terminus for our first station, Kilmallock. Having arrived there we found the cars we had engaged waiting for us, and started at once for Lough Gur, having first called to the hotel and engaged dinner for four o'clock. We made no delay at Kilmallock, as we had upon several occasions previously examined the antiquities of this venerable town.

To the lovers of such I would say, that within one and a half hour's drive from Cork is an ancient city, retaining a large proportion of its fortifications, two castles, the magnificent ruins of two abbeys, a round tower and several medieval dwelling houses. In addition there is not a spot in Ireland of more historic interest. I must, however, leave Kilmallock, for the present object of our journey; our road was the old mail coach highway from Cork to Limerick. Our route lay through a beautiful, well-planted and richly cultivated country, full of the seats of the gentry and homesteads of Co. Limerick farmers. About three miles from Kilmallock we turn off to the right, opposite the entrance to the Uregare demesne, by a shady, quiet road to the Castle of Ballygrennan. It stands a few perches to the right of the road, and is an extensive pile of buildings consisting of a massive keep of great height, and an outer and inner court, with several other buildings, the whole surmounted by a massive wall 18 feet high, having flankers at the angles, and enclosing an area of about 200 by 150 feet. A large gate at the western side gives entrance to the outer court; over the gate was the guard-room. To the right-hand side of the outer court was a long building, the lower storey which appeared to have been used for storage- the upper storey seems to have been a great hall; there were three ample fireplaces in it.

Another range of buildings appeared to have been used as lodgings for the garrison. A high wall separated the outer from the inner court, with a large gate in the centre, exactly opposite the external gateway. In the interior court stood the keep and several minor buildings, among which could be traced the kitchen, with its immense fireplace, the buttery etc., houses for storage, and what seems to be a superior suite of apartments, apparently for the lord's family. We attempted to ascend the keep, but found that the stone staircase had been entirely removed by some Goth. On looking upwards we saw the various entrances to the castle apartments. All the doorways had cut stone dressings, which, with the quoins and window-cases, were executed in an admirable manner, looking quite sharp and fresh. Little is known of the early history of this stronghold. It surrendered to Cromwell's forces in 1651, when it appears to have come into the possession of Captain George Evans by the Act of Settlement. He was a son of Mr. John Evans, an English gentleman who settled in Limerick in 1628. George Evans served in Cromwell's army, and appears to have profited thereby. His grandson was subsequently created Lord Carbery.

Leaving Ballygrennan, ten minutes' drive brought us to Bruff. At the entrance of the town, on the banks of the Morning Star, are the ruins of the ancient Castle of Bruach (the brink), an Irish word which designates the position it occupies on the bank of the stream, of which the present name Bruff is a slight corruption. Bruff is a smart, clean, country town of one street, with some good shops, and two very respectable places of worship, Protestant and Roman Catholic. In the parish church is a monument in black marble to the memory of "Sir Thomas Standish of Bruff, Knight." It formerly stood in the old church, which was taken down and rebuilt, as is stated in the inscription, in 1676, which, in its turn, has given place to the present structure. The ancestors of Field Marshal Lacy, who occupied so distinguished a position in the Austrian service, in the early part of the last century (18th), had their family mansion close to Bruff.

About two miles from Bruff, we came within sight of Lough Gur, lying lone and solitary, embosomed in highly rocky hills; it is indeed a wild and weird-looking spot and, though divested of its ancient forests, it is still a place where a college of Druids might select for their mysterious rites. Our first object was to examine the stone circles of Grange, at the right-hand side of the road, opposite the eighth mile stone from Bruff. The first is only a few yards from the road fence, and consists of a circle of stones standing on end, rough and unhewn as they came from the quarry. The internal diameter is 150 feet. An earthen bank, with a considerable slope, surrounds the circle of stones; this bank has an elevation of about 9 feet above the level of the field, while the surface of the ground inside the circle rises about 5 feet above the level of the external ground; a field fence has cut off a portion of this bank to the north. The stones are 65 in number, varying in height from 2 feet to 11 feet high, 7 feet wide and 4 feet thick, and we were assured by a respectable farmer of the locality, who had tested it, that it was 6 feet below the surface, which would make its entire height 17 feet. It appeared quite evident that several of the stones had been broken, as was observable by their fractured upper surfaces. I have no doubt that all the stones of this circle were of considerable size originally.

In the adjoining field are the remains of another circle of even greater diameter than the above; there are only 11 stones remaining, the remainder having been removed some 27 years since by Edwd. Croker Esq., and the surrounding bank levelled. We could, however, trace the remains of the mound, which showed the circle to have been of greater dimensions than the last. Partly in the same field, and partly in the adjoining one is another stone circle of much smaller diameter, but the stones of which are of considerable size, one of them particularly, which lies prostrate, measures 8 feet 6 inches long, 8 feet wide, and 3 feet thick, containing nearly 205 cubic feet, or about 16 tons. The stones in this circle are 15 in number, at nearly equal distances; one is wanting to complete the circle.

Mr. Fitzgerald, the local seanacuidhe, informed us that the stones of which these circles are composed are not found in the neighbourhood, nor within a considerable distance; certainly the stone of the locality is limestone, mixed in some places with basalt, while the material of the circles is pudding-stone, or conglomerate. About 30 perches north-west of the last named circle we found a very fine pillar stone standing on the ascent of the hill; it measures above ground 11 feet in height, 7 and a half in breadth, and 3 feet in thickness; and allowing it to be 3 feet in the ground, it would weigh about 23 tons. How these huge masses of stone were transported, as they must have been, from a distance, and set up on end, by a people supposed to be rude and uncivilised, must forever remain a mystery. Some of your readers may naturally inquire what were the uses of these monuments, and in what age were they erected? The questions are easier asked than answered. It is believed that pillar stones and circles are the oldest monuments of primeval man remaining to us. The custom seems to have been universal in all the countries of the old world. They are found in Tartary, in India, in the countries bordering on the Caspian Sea, in Northern Africa, in the islands of the Mediterranean, in the Crimea, Southern Russia, Germany, France, Denmark, Norway and all the British Islands. Antiquaries have been divided as to their uses. Some have contended that the stone circle was a temple dedicated to religious worship. Others have maintained that they were the tombs of mighty warriors or kings and chieftains. Both may be right, and both may be wrong in their theories. My own opinion is, that they were both tombs and temples. There is, nothing strange in supposing that the remains of the noble, the heroic, or the revered were laid under the rude altar where their followers worshipped. These monuments or remnants of them, are numerous in Ireland, and we may safely class them as, perhaps, the oldest works of the primitive inhabitants of our island.

Having satisfied our curiosity in examination of the stone circles at Grange, we doubled back on the road to Bruff, and taking the first turn to the left, we got upon a by-road which skirts the southern margin of the lake. In a field at the right hand side, a short distance from the cross, we saw the overthrown remains of one of these curious megalithic monuments, called "Darby and Granny's bed," or more correctly, in the Irish language, Leabbha Diarmidh is Grainne. These Leabbhas, or beds, are found scattered all over Ireland; they are long, low, narrow chambers, erected on the

surface with large flat stones, set on edge, forming the sides and ends, with large slabs resting horizontally on them, and forming the roof. They vary in length, from 12 to 30 feet; in width from 3 to 6 feet; and in height, from 4 to 9 feet. A universal tradition is preserved all over Ireland regarding these monuments, and which we find also given in Keating, and in several of our ancient MSS.

At the south side of the lake, close to the road, are the roofless walls of the "new church," a chapel of ease erected by a countess of Bath in the early part of the 17th century, who presented it a handsome communion service which is now in the church in Knockany. On the plate is the following inscription:-

**"The gift of the Right Hon. Rachel, Countess Dowager of Bath, to her Chapel in the Kingdom of Ireland. Ann. Dom., 1679."**

It is a rectangular edifice without a chancel, having a belfry on the west gable. The entrance door was at the north side, having a flat Tudor arch; the side windows are square-headed mullioned lights; the east was a two-light pointed window, the centre mullion and tracery of which are gone.

Lough Gur was originally about five miles in circumference; originally, I say, as a portion of it has been drained by making a cut through the townland of Grange, which was successively deepened until the lake had been lowered nearly 16 feet below its original level. It is surrounded in the north and west by high precipitous hills; nearly in the centre was a large island containing about 60 acres called Knockadoon, or the hill of the fort, as the island is a lofty hill rising steeply from the lake, and having the summit divided into two peaks by a chasm or small glen running between them. This was the celebrated fortress of the Earls of Desmond, and which before the lowering of the lake and the invention of artillery, must indeed have been a formidable stronghold in the hands of a native chief. The only entrance to this island was a causeway at the south side, built of large blocks of regular masonry; at the end of this causeway, on the island, are the remains of a tower, under which is the entrance gateway, still perfect, showing in the jambs the massive stone rings and sockets in which the pivots of the gate swung. From this gate tower westward runs the remains of a massive wall of regular masonry in large blocks. This wall is about eight feet thick, and is finished the same on both sides; at the extreme end of this rampart is another castle, called the Black Castle, having walls eight feet thick. On the north side of the hill is a massive square castle of great height, which was erected by Sir George Bouchier, son to the second Earl of Bath, in the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth, to whom, on Desmond's forfeiture, it was granted. We ascended to the summit of the hill, from which we had a magnificent view of the principal parts of the county of Limerick, and part of the counties of Cork and Tipperary. Nothing can equal the sense of enjoyment which one feels standing on such an eminence of a beautiful clear day, inhaling the sweet fresh breeze only found on the hill tops, and gazing on this glorious landscape.

This island must have been a remarkable locality before the ancestor of the Desmonds planted his Norman foot on Irish soil. I have no doubt it was a sacred island devoted as almost all lake islands in this country to Pagan worship. We found two large circles of stones on the peak, at the east side of the hill; they were about 40 yards in diameter, and had each two concentric circles. The stones composing them were small and rough, as they were taken from the quarry, or picked up on the surface. At the same side, but closer to the margin of the lake is a smaller circle.

At the western side of Knockadoon, a short distance from the shore, is a small islet called Garret Island, from the unfortunate Earl of Desmond; on it are the remains of an octagon building, the ruined wall enclosing it is 8 feet thick, and built of heavy masonry; when the lake was lowered, a small stone circle, and a cistvaen were found on the shore, which had been under water previously. This curious discovery would make it appear that at a very remote period there was no lake in existence; this is further corroborated by the fact that, in the eastern part which had been drained, and is now a fine turbary, oak trees have been found at a considerable depth below the surface. On the last lowering of the lake, *a crounogue,* or artificial island was discovered, in which were, as usual, found a large quantity of the bones of domestic animals, with several ornaments of bone; and ornaments and weapons of bronze.
The first person who attempted to drain the lake was Mr. Stackpole Baylee, of Lough Gur, but it was not completed, owing to the death of that gentleman by a fall from his horse. Three other persons, who successively continued the operations, met either with serious accidents or misfortunes; all of which the country people firmly believe to be the result of the vengeance of the good people, for so outrageous a violation of their territorial rights. They firmly believe that Gerald the Great, Earl of Desmond, is not dead, but detained by enchantment in a fairy place, beneath the lake, and that he is to be seen at night once every seven years, accompanied by a numerous cavalcade of knights and ladies, careering over the lake; and that when his horse's shoes, which are of silver, are worn out, he will again return to life, and recover his own from the Sassanach. The hills about Lough Gur are an interesting study to the geologist; here he will find the trap inter-stratified with the carboniferous limestone of the country, and sometimes cutting across the beds of the latter. The Lough Gur basalt is in colour a dark greenish or purplish grey, compact in texture, though sometimes vesicular and amygdaloidal, with disseminated crystals of feldspar, when the rock becomes a porphyry. One variety of this porphyritic trap exhibits large crystals of feldspar of a reddish tinge. The intrusive variety of trap, or that which is known or seen to cut through the bedding of the limestone, is in its structure quite columnar, though not so ponderous as that forming the Giant's Causeway, or the mass of the basalts of the county of Antrim. To the north of Lough Gur is the hill of Knockfennell. On the western peak of the hill are the remains of an immense Caher or stone fort about 120 feet in diameter; it is built of uncemented masonry, the stones being heavy and the wall 10 feet thick.

Lough Gur was anciently called Lough Gair; it is thus mentioned in "The Annals of the Four Masters". In that year Dowhnell, the son of MacLochlainn, King of Ireland, and Roderick O'Connor, King of Connaught, made a raid into Munster, and

plundered Emley, Lough Gair, and Bruree. In A.D. 1516 James Fitzmaurice, with a large army laid siege to it, but the O'Briens of Thomond raised the siege and compelled the Geraldines to retreat. In 1579, the whole country being in a state of rebellion, the Lord Deputy of Munster determined to place wardens in the castles of Rathmore, Loch Gair, Adare, and Kilmallock. A.D. 1599, Lough Gur was besieged by the Earl of Desmond and forced to surrender.

It did not long, however, remain in his possession, as we find from the following passage in the "Pacata Hibernia," book 1 c. vi.:- *"The foure and twentieth (May 1600) the army encamped at the Brough, where the President left a word partly to offend the rebells of Loughguire, three miles distant from whence; and partly to open the way betwixt Killmallocke and Limerick, which for two years space was impassable by any subject. The five and twentieth, the army passing near Loughguire, which was as yet held by the rebels, the President attended by a troope of horse, rode to take a particular view of the strength, and situation thereof, as also by what way he might most conveniently bring the cannon to annoy the same. He found it to be a place of exceeding strength, by reason that it was an iland encompassed with a deep lough, the breadth thereof being in the narrowest part a caliver's shot over, upon one side thereof standeth a strong castle, which at this time was manned by a good garrison, for there was within the iland John Fitzthomas with 200 men at least, which showed themselves prepared to defend the place."*

The Lord President having passed on to Limerick to provide cannon for the reduction of the fortress, John Fitzthomas committed the charge of the castle to one Owen Grome or Graeme, a mercenary from the north. When the queen's troops returned to besiege the place, and drew their cannon towards the gate of the causeway, Grome signified his desire to surrender, which he accordingly did, for his pardon and a sum of £60.

We were accompanied in our ramble by a respectable and intelligent farmer of the locality, named Fitzgerald; he led us directly to all the objects of interest in the neighbourhood, and seemed to be well versed in Irish archaeology. He showed us his farm offices, which were planned by himself; all the carpenter's work and stone-cutting were executed by his own hands and I never saw better finished work. He is a yearly tenant paying £2-15-0 per acre, and his landlord allowed him one-third of the value of his improvements. Having concluded our investigations at Lough Gur, we returned to Kilmallock in time for dinner. Antiquaries somehow generally contrive to wind up their day's labour with a good dinner, and a good one was provided for us by our worthy host O'Sullivan, to which we did ample justice, with appetites keenly edged by air and exercise. Ten minutes past six o'clock found us at Kilmallock station, and eight o'clock saw us at Cork terminus, having spent a healthy, pleasant and instructive day. I trust I have shown how much can be seen in twelve hours from Cork, without spending a night out, and at a trifling cost. There are numbers of other localities within the same range, where objects of perhaps equal interest invite the tourist, the artist, and the antiquary.

# The Carmelite Monastery at Milltown in the Ancient Parish of Aglishcormack.

By Edmond O'Dea

Figure 1 Image based on sketch made in 1680 by antiquarian Thomas Dinley

The Carmelite order had its origins in the Holy Land on the mountain near Haifa which still bears the name Mount Carmel. At the end of the religious crusades it was clear that if the order was to survive it would have to seek foundations elsewhere. The name "Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel" finds its way into Papal documents as early as 1252. It was not until 1327 that they had received all the rights and privileges of the other mendicant orders. The mendicant friars were bound by a vow of absolute poverty and dedication to an ascetic way of life. They lived as Christ did, renouncing property and travelling the world to preach. Their survival was dependent upon the goodwill of their listeners. It was this way of life that gave them their name, "mendicant", derived from the Latin *mendicare*, meaning "to beg". Unlike monks of the Cistercian or Benedictine orders, mendicants spread God's word in the cities. They were active in community life, teaching, healing, and helping the sick, poor and destitute. Their personal maxim was: *sibi soli vivere sed et aliis proficere* ("not to live for themselves only but to serve others". The first mention of Carmelites in Ireland comes in 1271 when the order received royal protection for five years.[111]

Carmelite foundations normally had twelve to fifteen members. Sources such as the lists that remain in the archives of the order in Rome[112] confirm that between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries there were two foundations established in Co. Limerick. In the fourteenth century a foundation at Ballinagoul, near Kilmallock was established and in the fifteenth century one at Ballywilliam, now known as Milltown in the Parish of Aglishcormack, Co. Limerick existed.

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[111] Public Records Office, patent Rolls C.66/89

[112] Elias Magennis, O. CARM., *Hiberniac Provincia*, In *Analacta Ordins Carmelitarum*, 1 (1909)

Aglishcormack (1,316 acres) is one of four ancient parishes in the current parish of Kilteely and Dromkeen. The other ancient parishes which make up this current parish are; the parish of Kilteely (3,184 acres), the parish of Dromkeen (859 acres), and the parish of Ballinlough (2,340 acres). The townlands of Caherconreafy, Cloverfield, Cool na Shamroge, Ballyphilip, Garry na Goord, Feloree, Boheroe (part of), Milltown and Ballynagally make up the ancient parish of Aglishcormack. Peter O'Dwyer, in his publication about the Carmelite Order in pre-reformation Ireland in 1969[113] documents the foundation of the Carmelite Abbey in 1460 at Milltown Co. Limerick through the O'Molloy family. However, the ascribing of the foundation to O'Molloy is incorrect as he had no connection with the barony of Coonagh. Instead, he was connected with the foundation of the monastery of Kilcormac, Co. Offaly. Papal documents dated 1459-1460 A.D. provide some details of the origin of Milltown Abbey. A papal mandate [114] sent in 1460 to John Cantwell [115], Archbishop of Cashel, is summarized below and provides some detail about the origins of the abbey.

*Kennedy and Turlogh O'Brien of Ballytrasna Castle together with James Deles significant Landowners and Gentlemen of Norman descent in the diocese of Limerick had recently granted in perpetual Frankmoign[116] to Donald O'Gormally and William de Burgo, Carmilite Friars, a place called Villa Molendini [117] in the parish of Aglishcormack, dioceses of Emly. This land was granted for the purpose of erecting a house of their order to be dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary for the welfare of their souls and the souls of their parents and forefathers. The Friars had accepted the lands in good faith and set up a monastery, lived there and celebrated masses without license from the apostolic see (Rome). However they were excommunicated by the Richard O'Hedian[118], Bishop of Cashel and had to leave the area and appeal to the pope.*

*The appeal was presented by Thomas Walsh provincial for the Carmelite Order of Ireland and by the two Friars involved. The pope requested John Cantwell II, Archbishop of Cashel to examine the case and, if he found fit, to issue license for the building of a proper monastery. The Archbishop thereupon granted a license to the Carmelite Friars Donal and William and other Friars of the order to build at Milltown, a Church with bell tower, Cemetery, Dormitory, Refectory, Gardens and other necessary offices; and to transfer themselves hither, taking into account the right of the parish church.*

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[113] The Carmelite Order In pre-Reformation Ireland – Peter O'Dwyer, O. Carm, Carmelus, Volume XVI, 1969

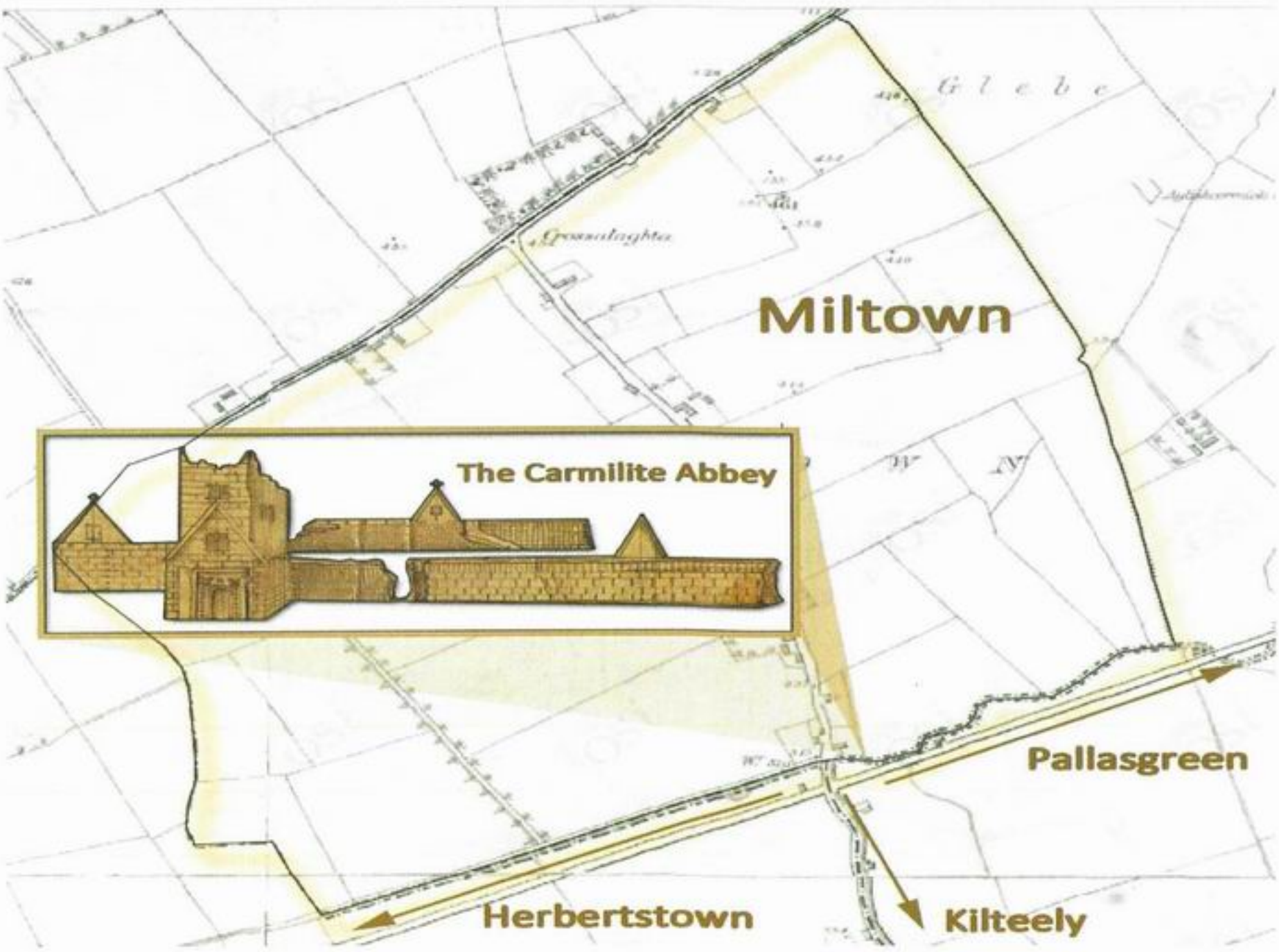
[114] Vol. X111 page 62 Papal mandate dated at Siena, 17 February, 1460

[115] John Cantwell II was archbishop of Cashel between 1452 and 1484, he had previously been dean of Cashel and was appointed on 2 May, 1462, he died in office before May, 1484

[116] A form of land tenure in which no obligations were enforced except religious ones such as prayer, free alms etc.

[117] Latin for Mill-House

[118] Richard O'Hedian- previously archdeacon of Cashel. Appointed before 6 April, 1406 and died in office on 21 July, 1440




The Ordnance Survey map of 1840[119] identifies the site as being on the right side of the road from Kilteely to Dromkeen one hundred yards up from the New Line Cross. Where the abbey is marked on the map is now a small paddock and part of the O'Dea farm in Milltown. As the road was constructed as a famine relief road around 1848 there is no doubt that the abbey crossed the road and some of the buildings may have been on the left hand side of the road. It would also appear likely that the whole townland of Milltown (149 Acres) and perhaps part of the adjoining townlands of Ballynagally, Ballyphilip and Ballyvouden may have been abbey lands. The stream flowing nearby would, as the name indicates, have been harnessed to drive a watermill. In a field by the bank of the stream a banked up hollow may have been an old time mill pond. The fertility of the lands all around this area points to it being farmed well for centuries. So here in Milltown may be seen the essentials usually found at all abbey sites, namely a good water supply and fertile lands.

There is little known of this abbey during its existence. However, we do know that under the dissolution of all religious houses by Henry VIII in 1544 the site of sixteen Irish acres and the buildings were granted to Robert Browne of Baltinglass for a payment of £19 and at an annual rent of twelve pennies. The Brownes retained possession until the time of Cromwell when a descendant, also Robert Browne,

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[119] Ordnance Survey Ireland, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8

being an Irish Papist was disposed and he and his wife Amey and his children, Nell, Kate, Patrick and Margaret, all under the age of twelve were transported to Connacht[120]. At that time Robert was the owner of a moiety of Milltown, roughly ninety eight acres and it was mortgaged for £50 to Teige O'Brien of Tuogh, Cappamore, brother of Terence Albert O'Brien, Bishop of Emly who was executed by the order of Lord Ireton after the fall of Limerick in 1651. Milltown was granted to the Cromwellian Edmond Harrison of London, a member of the *Committee of Adventures*[121] and he was confirmed in possession after the restoration of Charles II by the Act of Settlement of 1666. About 1681 the antiquarian Thomas Dinley[122] of Southampton visited Milltown and made a sketch of the abbey ruins then standing (Figure 1) and recorded the following account of the abbey:

"From Pallas to Milltown is two miles. The Abbey was in Ancient times a Monastery of Carmel. Now in Ruins the remains of monument against the wall said to belong to the Morines" (most likely meaning the MacBriens – E O'D).

His description is very brief but his sketch is clear enough to show the buildings and is evidence of the existence of the abbey on this site. Seymour in his *Diocese of Emly* commenting on the drawing says "Dinley's view of 1680 seems to be taken from the west. It was then badly ruined. It had a low central tower and the west door was elaborately carved. To the North ran a transept wing and on the south were the remains of the Cloister-Garth". O'Donovan (1840) in his ordnance survey letters states that the abbey fell about the year 1800 and the stones were used in building the wall that separates the site from the road and in the erection of several houses. He also reported that the parents of some local people living in the area in 1840 were interred on the site of the abbey but burials on the site had ceased before the time of the survey. It was said that human remains were occasionally found throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

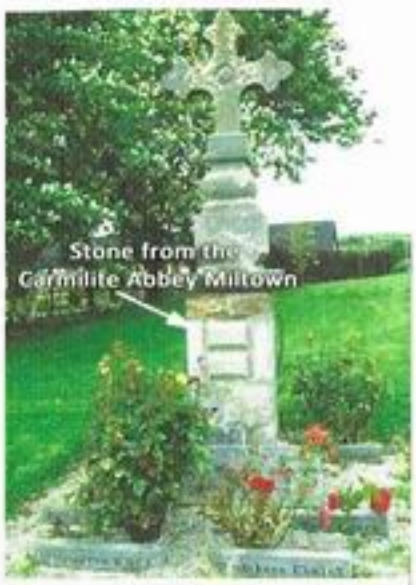

Figure 2 Millennium Cross Kilteelv

Further evidence of the abbey's existence can be found in fragments of well carved stone moldings which were found on the site. One of these carved stones has been used in the construction of the Millennium Cross erected on the grounds of St. Patrick's and St. Brigid's church in Kilteely. It appears that the abbey closed down around 1540 suggesting that it had a short life of about ninety years. It may be that it was only closed down temporarily and allowed to open again when the religious troubles became quieter. We also know that the closing down of the abbey did not mean the last of the Carmelite order in the area. In 1752 friar Cornelius Maher, a Carmelite priest ordained in Thurles in 1751 by Archbishop James Butler, was ministering in the area, and as late as 1800 another Carmelite friar, Fr. O'Brien

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[120] Lundon, Thomas; A History of Kilteely – Dromkeen page 22

[121] The English Individuals who financed Cromwell's army

[122] Dinley, T. 1870, *A voyage through the Kingdom of Ireland in the year 1681*. Dublin

laboured in the Kilteely area. It was said that he vainly hoped to see the day when Milltown abbey would be restored to the brethren of his order. Local tradition reports that when the abbey closed down the monks did not go away but disguised themselves as beggars and lived under cover from the civil authorities and used to go to Ballytrasna castle and to the mass rock on Knockgrean Hill and secretly celebrate mass there.

In common with all abbeys, Milltown during its century or so of prosperity, must have benefitted the district in many ways, as a centre of learning and progressive farming. The monks were almost certainly more advanced with regard to such matters than the largely illiterate and uneducated population which surrounded them. It is most regrettable that since the 1800s practically every vestige of this venerable site has been cultivated and like many ancient burial grounds in East Limerick has been forgotten. An archaeological excavation of this site, if it ever was to take place, would be the only way to find out more on this vanished monastery of Milltown.

**Note:**
I would like to remember Michael Dwyer (1912-2002), The Cross, Pallasgrean who most kindly collected and passed on much of the information contained in this article to the O'Dea Family, Milltown, Kilteely, Co. Limerick

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## Grange Stone Circle (B) – New Thoughts on an Old Monument

By Frank Prendergast

Ireland is richly endowed with a built heritage that dates from the Early Neolithic. This provides us with an incredible window of visibility on our prehistoric past. We know that from about 3,800 BC, humans on the island had largely abandoned the nomadic hunter-gather lifestyle characteristic of the preceding Mesolithic (which spanned about 4,000 years). The Mesolithic is thought to have begun around 8,000 BC, although any future discovery of relevant dateable evidence is likely to push that bounding date backwards. What mostly differentiates these two periods of prehistory is the near absence of any surviving built structures from the Mesolithic. Massive stone monuments were not erected in the landscape at that time. Discoveries of microliths (flint tools) and shell middens are common though, and indicative of greater mobility by its people. Survival depended on hunting, fishing and fruit gathering in heavily forested landscapes, and along rivers, lakes and coastlines. The Neolithic, however, sees a gradual shift to vegetation clearances, settlement, cereal cultivation, animal domestication, and monument building. The material culture of this period is additionally notable for its artefacts such as polished stone axes and decorated pottery. These objects were not only practical but likely had additional prestige value because of their decorative and other qualities.

The pottery style shown in Figure 1 is generally known as a Limerick regional style - the Class 1 style referred to by the archaeologist Seán P. Ó Ríordáin who excavated sites in the Lough Gur area in the 1940s. Note the simple incised decoration which was often applied to the out-turned rim and shoulder of this type of vessel. Such fragments have survived in the ground for over five millennia because of their durability and can be indicative of a farming economy at that time.

Photo: F Prendergast

Fig. 1 Pottery sherd from Grange Circle (B) now in the National Museum of Ireland

Archaeologists use the term 'material culture' to collectively describe all fabricated objects, including those already described. But there is another term in use – 'non-material culture'. This refers to aspects of a society's behaviour and their traditions –

qualities which cannot be grasped or measured in a tangible or physical sense. Examples include the nature of rituals, ceremonies, myths, belief systems, and how people engaged with each other and their environment *i.e.* the land, sea and sky. These will be touched upon later in this article.

Artefacts and monuments which constitute the material culture of the Neolithic (and the later Bronze Age and Iron Age) are well known and described. These include timber houses, domestic ware, tools, weaponry, monuments made of stone and timber, and the vast body of inscribed art (megalithic art and rock art). A modern reconstruction of a Neolithic timber house can be found at the Irish National Heritage Park, Co. Wexford (Figure 2). So far, traces of just 90 examples of these have been found at 50 excavations sites. Such dwellings were typically arranged in clusters, were mostly located close to water and had a rectangular shape. On average, the living space measured 6–10 m long by 4–7 m wide with a central hearth and a smoke-hole in the roof[123].

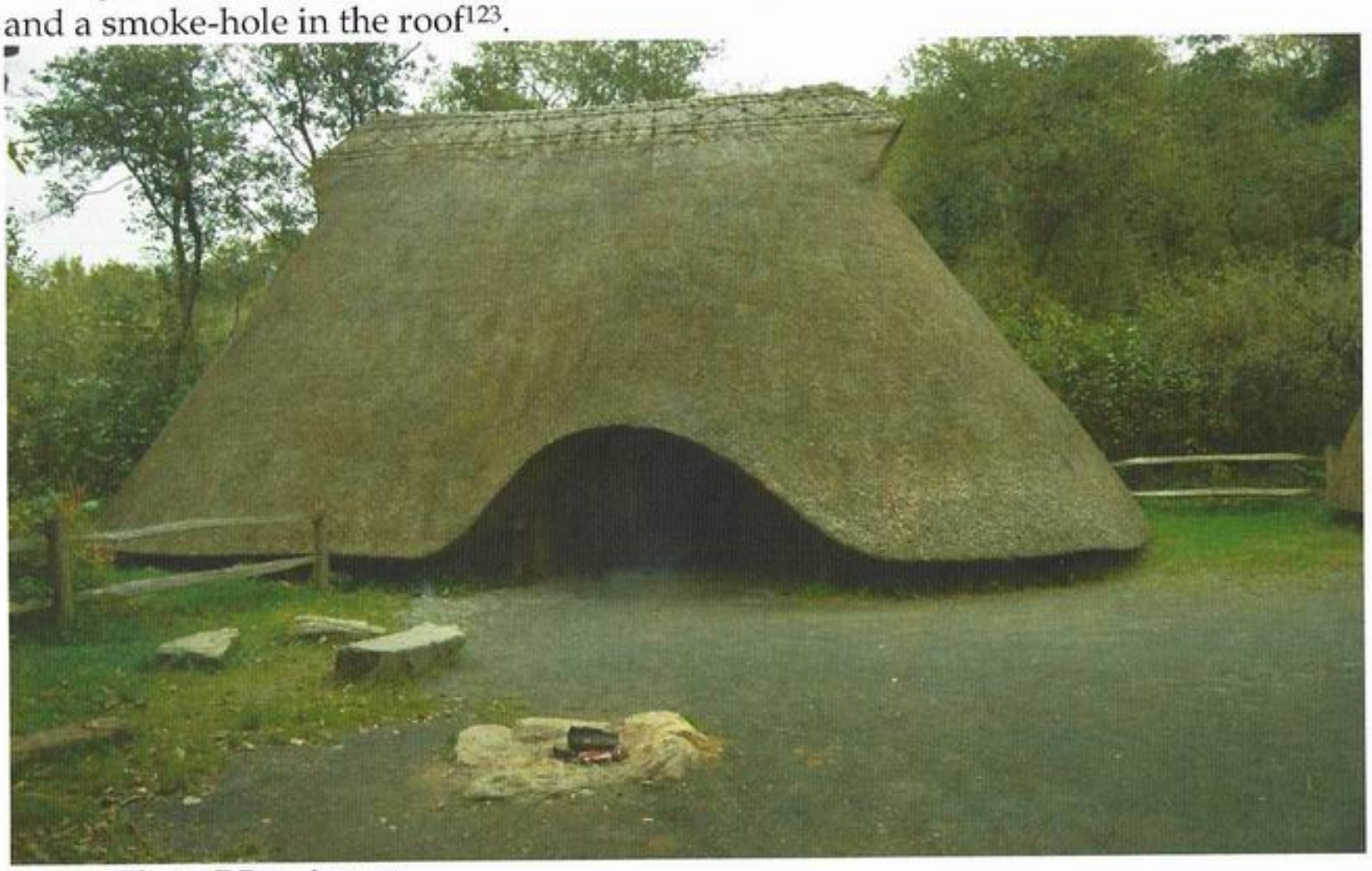

Photo: F Prendergast

Fig. 2 Neolithic house at the Irish National Heritage Park, Co. Wexford

The reconstruction shown is based on discoveries at Knockadoon/Lough Gur, Co. Limerick during site excavations undertaken by Ó Ríordáin in the late 1940s. The builders of Grange Circle (B) likely lived in a similar type of structure. A fire is now kept permanently lit in a hearth located within the house. This is to mimic living conditions in the Neolithic and to monitor the long-term effect of smoke on the roof. The expected lifespan of the building is estimated to be about 30 years.

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[123] Smyth, J. and O'Flaherty, R. (2015) 'From the Ground Up: Engineering Irish Early Neolithic Houses', *Archaeology Ireland*, 29(1), 12–15.

Architectural variations in the style of prehistoric stone-built monuments are well catalogued, and a clear typology for their classification has been developed, especially since the latter half of the last century. Broadly, the majority fall into one of three categories - megalithic tomb, stone row or stone circle. 'Megalithic tomb' is a general term used to describe any structure built from small to massive blocks of stone, partly for the purpose of containing the remains of the dead. The design features include an entrance passage leading to a burial chamber with the whole usually covered with a round or long cairn constructed from smaller stones, earth and turves. Many have been denuded of their covering cairns. Inside, cremated (and sometimes un-cremated) remains of the dead, and grave goods (items of personal adornment belonging to those interred), were deposited.

Cultural differences between the different societal groups who lived during the prehistoric past are reflected in four clearly different tomb building traditions. Court, portal and passage tomb types date to the Neolithic and 1014 of these have survived the ravages of time. Extant Bronze Age wedge tombs are the most numerous by type (566), while the remains of 377 megalithic structures cannot be classified because of their poor condition or lack of excavation. The Irish landscape is also dotted with innumerable cairns that are frequently located on hilltops and mountain peaks. The majority of these have neither been excavated nor dated. Another type of monument - stone circles - do not have any primary funerary function (in Ireland) and are the focus of the next part of this paper.

## The Lough Gur landscape and its monuments

The Great Stone Circle (B) in the townland of Grange, Co. Limerick is set amongst 49 listed prehistoric monuments nearby. All are within a two kilometre radius of the centre of Lough Gur Lake. Figure 3 illustrates their location as well as showing the dramatic topography of the surrounding hills that rise abruptly above the lake, especially to the north.

The lake is now comparatively shallow (< 3 m) but in prehistory, the surface level is thought to have been about 1.5 m higher, giving it a greater area than at present. The known diversity of aquatic and terrestrial habitats would also have made the area most suitable for settlement and farming in the Neolithic. The availability of a variety of suitable stone in the locality additionally provided the raw material for the monument building – of which Circle (B) is the premier surviving example.

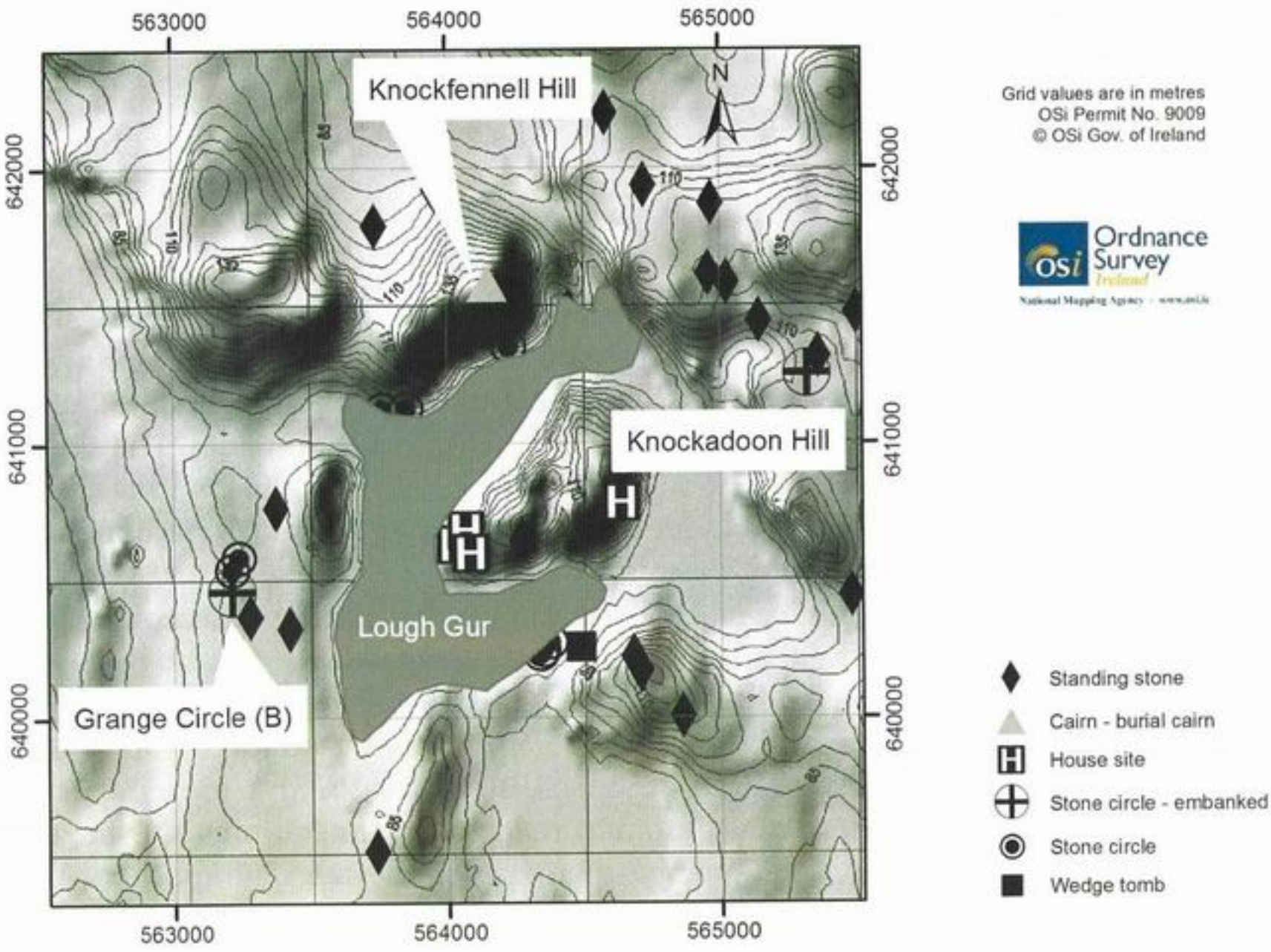



Fig. 3 Lough Gur Lake, Grange Circle (B) and other monuments

This map was compiled by the author from OSi digital elevation and other data.

The Bronze Age wedge tomb (LI032-029----) shown in Figure 3 lies close to the south shore of the lake. A burial cairn (LI032-014009-) crowns the summit of Knockfennell Hill (Elev. 158.6 m AMSL). Numerous standing stones were also erected locally but these can be difficult to date or explain. Broadly, these can have a height of up to 6 m and the longer flank can show a preference for orientation in a northeast-southwest direction. They may have functioned as prehistoric burial markers, commemorative monuments, way-marks along routes or to define territorial boundaries. They mostly date from the Bronze and Iron Ages. Some are also thought to have had an early medieval ecclesiastical or burial context for the period immediately after the Iron Age *i.e.* the 5th–12th centuries AD.

### *Stone circles*

A stone circle is a setting of upright stones of varying size forming a ring whose shape can vary from exactly circular to elliptical. Where excavated, some indicate they are evolved from an earlier timber circle. Their distribution is noticeably concentrated in the western part of Britain, and most of Ireland. Stone circles are largely absent from central mainland Europe. In Ireland, a few were erected in the Late Neolithic (3,300–2,400 BC) but the majority belong to the Bronze Age (2,400–700 BC) and were probably built as ritual monuments. Grange Circle (B) is classified as

an embanked type and uniquely identified by a national inventory number (LI032-004001). An embanked stone circle has its stones set around the inner edge of a circular bank composed of earth and small stones. Seven examples of this type are known here in comparison to more than 350 of the five-stone type and multiple-stone type.

Grange Circle (B) is shown in plan in Figure 4. Recent radiocarbon dating by the archaeologist Dr Rose Cleary indicates that it was built sometime in the century between 2,950–2,850 BC (an early date for a stone circle in Ireland). There are 113 upright stones in the ring, mostly set end-to-end (contiguous) and against the inner face of a 1 m high circular flat-topped bank (up to 10 m wide). The structural stones have an average height of 1.6 m. Their geology is varied, being limestone (86 stones), volcanic breccia (24 stones), sandstone (2 stones) or basalt (1 one stone).

The internal floor of the circle is level and was artificially raised by its builders using clay. This imported fill material has an average depth of about 0.4 m above the original ground level and would have required considerable effort to haul. The bank, and the ring of stones, is breached in its northeast sector by an entrance avenue formed by two parallel lines of stones, 10 m long and 1 m wide. This is slightly skewed in direction to the south and relative to a line joining the entrance with the centre of the circle. The average diameter of the internal space measures 45.5 m making it the largest extant true stone circle in Ireland. Comparisons are often drawn with the stone circle in the townland of Tops, Co. Donegal, also known as the Beltany Stone Circle (DG070-026001-). That has an average internal diameter of 43 m and is thus smaller in plan. The size and shape of the 'Great Stone Circle' at Newgrange should also be given consideration when making such comparisons. It has an average diameter of 103.0 m but deviations from a best-fit circle have a range of up to 4.9 m. When this fact is combined with the knowledge that it was erected during the Bronze Age, and thus long after the passage tomb was built, its purpose was more likely intended to ritually enclose the gigantic cairn and passage tomb.

Interestingly, there is no evidence of any rock art (such as cup marks) at the site. Stone (1) in the northeast sector is also known by the legendary name of *Rannach Cruim Duibh,* and is by far the most impressive and distinctive, having a mass of about 40 tonnes. Visitors are, in a sense, magnetically drawn to it because of its sheer size and worked appearance. They often meditate in a trance-like state while in physical contact with its southerly-facing smooth flank, appearing to connect with, and draw on, its alleged mystical and magical qualities.

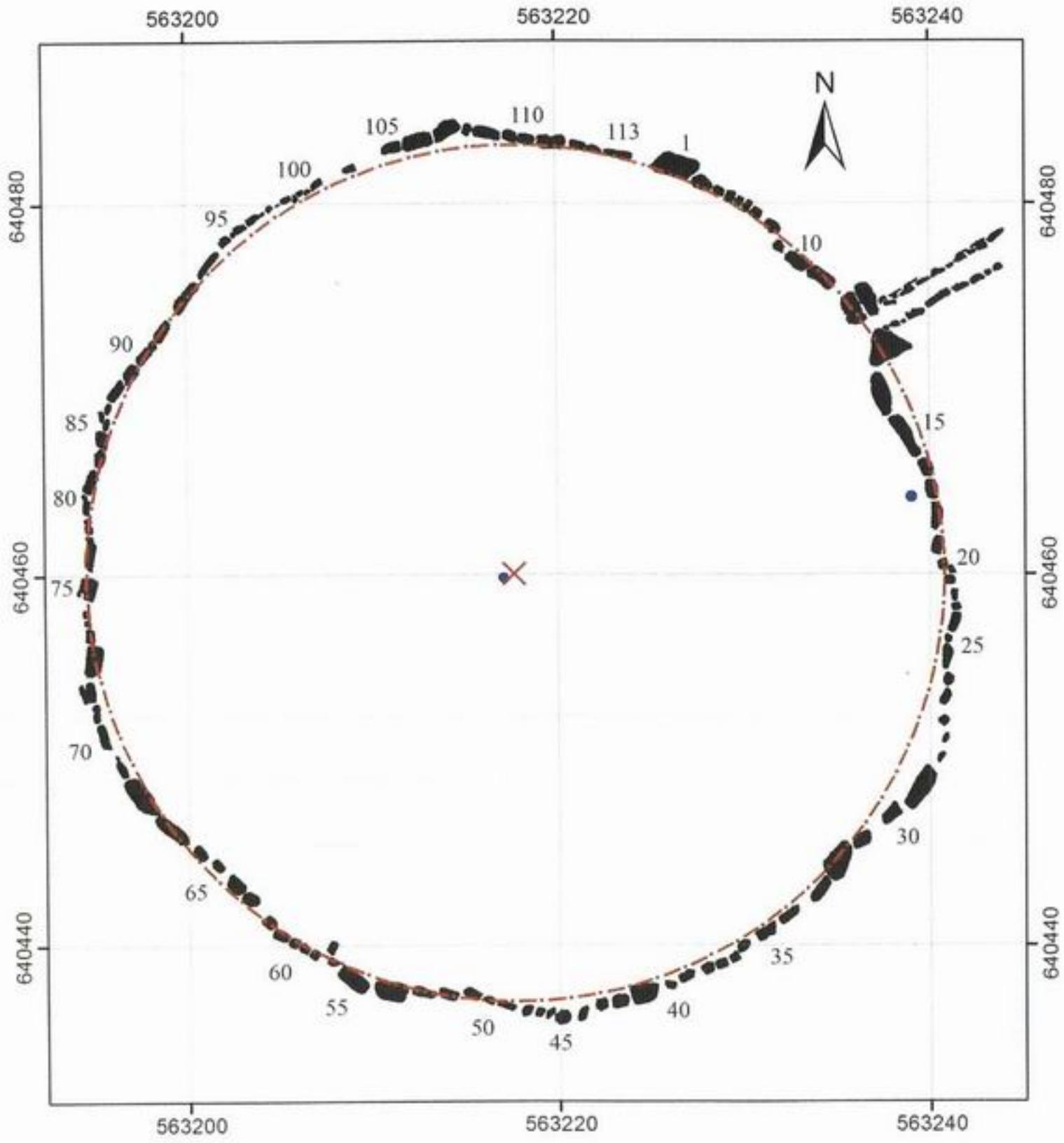



Fig. 4 Plan of Grange Circle 'B'

In the plan, the grid interval is 20 m and the indicated north point is National Grid North (after Ó Ríordáin, 1951 with additions). Each stone is numbered according to a convention first published by the archaeologist Bertram Windle in 1913. The 'X' in the centre of the plan shows the mathematical centre of the circle derived by the author. The '●' at the centre of the plan shows the location of a post hole discovered during site excavations in the 1940s by Ó Ríordáin. Taken together, these data support the argument that the circle was simply set out and constructed using a rope anchored at the centre point of the monument.

Setting out the shape of the circle in a surveying sense would have been a simple task requiring no more than a length of rope and a point of origin. From this location, the perimeter arc of the circle would have been easily scribed into the ground using a pointed stick. The physical effort of shaping and moving the stones into their final position was undoubtedly considerable. Deviations between the stones and the path of the best-fit circle are shown in Figure 4 by the red dotted line but these are generally small in size. Where large, this could reflect either a difficulty in excavating the foundation sockets for the stones in some cases or, simply,

casualness on the part of some of the builders. Regardless, an elegant space which was open to the sky was created. It could accommodate a very large number of people assembled within the ring or when standing on the surrounding flat-topped bank (which could have functioned as a viewing platform).

Past archaeological excavations of the floor area within the bank by Ó Ríordáin show that for 73% of it, there is no evidence of human burial or habitation present. Combined with more recent excavations undertaken by Cleary, it is now known that the whole complex was built in a single act of construction and was likely used primarily as a space for gathering and ceremonies.

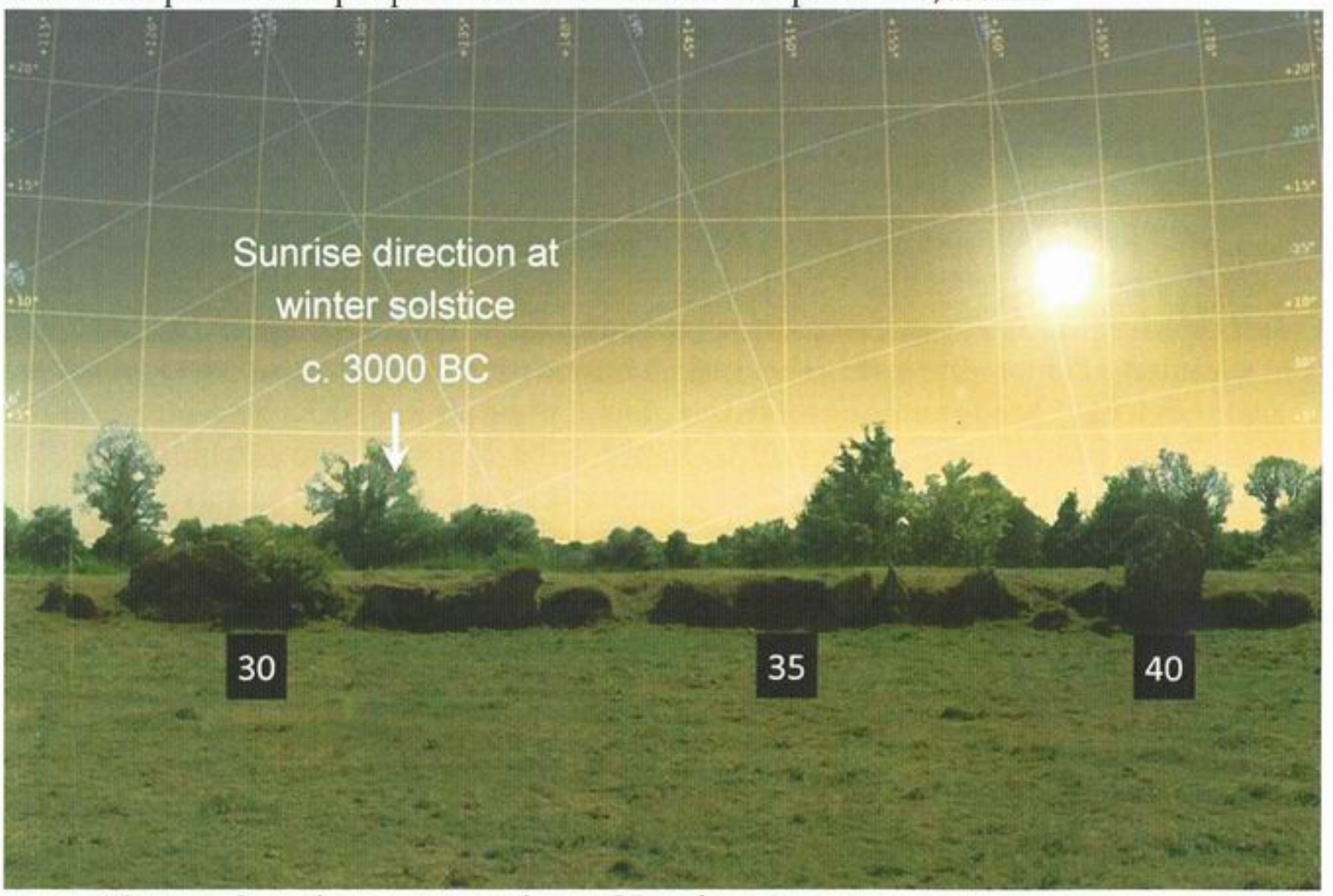
### *Astronomical questions*

Grange Circle (B) has been, and will continue to be, the subject of considerable speculation and conjecture as to the exact nature of any ceremonies and rituals that may have taken place there in the prehistoric past. In that regard, it is no different to any other ancient monument. Fundamentally, its history of use is lost to us. Clues regarding the manner in which it may have used can be obtained in a number of ways: from the study of the material culture obtained through excavation; from myths and legends contained in ancient historical sources or oral history; or through the techniques of cultural astronomy. Cultural astronomy is now a well-established field of scientific study incorporating archaeoastronomy, ethnoastronomy and ancient cosmology. Ethnoastronomy is the study of awareness and interest in the sky by contemporary non-literate societies. As such, it is not relevant to this discussion. Archaeoastronomy is the study of the belief systems and ritual practices of prehistoric societies and especially how these related to the sky. Ancient cosmology considers how humans first sought to develop a conceptual framework of their place in the universe, and of their 'world view'. Taken together, these fields of study add depth and understanding to our knowledge of the distant past. Similar questions were no doubt forefront in the mind of the Bertram Windle when he investigated the monument in the early 1900s.

During fieldwork conducted in the Lough Gur area (see reference at end of paper), Windle produced the first detailed description of the Grange (B) stone circle. His survey included a measurement of the true orientation (azimuth) of what he interpreted to be the axis of the monument - the line joining the entrance in the northeast (flanked by stones 12 and 13 shown in Figure 4) with two prominent stones diametrically opposite (stones 67 and 68). His suspicion was that this direction was astronomically significant in terms of how the circle may have been used. To undertake this work, he used the expertise of the Cork-born hydrographic surveyor Henry Boyle Townshend Somerville. Somerville was skilled is such measuring techniques and provided Windle with the necessary data and answers. This enabled Windle to conclude that if an observer stood at the entrance and directed their gaze across the circle towards stones 67 and 68, they would observe the sun set on the horizon on 8th November and again on the 4th February. He interpreted this as evidence of deliberate astronomical alignment of the monument's

axis coinciding with the date of *Samhain* – one of the divisions of the ancient Celtic year.

Figure 5 illustrates one visualisation of the sky from the centre of the circle looking eastwards. Site-based digital photography and astronomical simulation are blended together to give realistic depictions of what phenomena may have captured the interest of prehistoric people in the Neolithic at that place in 3,000 BC.




Photography and computer simulation: F Prendergast

Fig. 5 Visualisation from the centre of Grange Circle (B) at winter solstice sunrise in 3,000 BC

The stones are identified and shown numbered according to the convention used by Windle (see Figure 4). The extent and height of the vegetation on the horizon when the circle was in use during the Neolithic is unknown. This limitation imposes a degree of uncertainty regarding the altitude of the horizon visible from the circle at that time. The scene in Figure 5 was created using astro-orientated panoramic photography and modelling of the ancient sky with planetarium software (Stellarium). In such a model, the clock can be adjusted to give realistic views of the sky at Lough Gur from within the stone circle – at any time of day or year, now, in the prehistoric past, or in the future. Importantly, these approaches and techniques link archaeological and astronomical detail and are a valuable tool for visualisation and educational purposes.

Windle and Somerville's measurement of azimuth was correct, as were the other elements of their calculations, except for one – the angular altitude of the local horizon. Because of the blocking effect of nearby trees, this could not be measured at that time. Instead, they had to estimate it. Recent investigations by the author have

re-evaluated this, and determined that the axial alignment does not coincide with sunset on the dates previously proposed by Windle[124]. Such a finding raises important questions relating the astronomical properties of Grange Circle (B) and all other megalithic monuments.

In Figure 5, the sun would have risen behind stone (31) at the winter solstice if viewed from the centre of the space. At this time of the year, the sun appears to the naked eye to rise in approximately the same position on the skyline for almost one week each year. 'Solstice' means 'standing sun' and the arrival of this phenomenon marks the end of one solar year and the beginning of the next. Expressed differently, the event marks the point of reversal or turning of the apparent direction of sunrise (and sunset in the west) on the horizon.

At the winter solstice (now falling on December 21/22 in the Gregorian calendar), shortening days are turned into lengthening days. The opposite is the case at the summer solstice in June. We also know from broader statistical studies of monuments throughout Europe that these periods in particular were doubtless ritually and culturally important in the prehistoric past. Hence, there is significant evidence in the alignment of some monuments being orientated towards the extreme positions of the sun (and the moon), at sunrise and sunset.

Archaeoastronomers cannot reliably draw meaningful conclusions from an astronomical alignment occurring at a single monument. Instead, it is considered best practice to analyse regional groupings of similar types of monuments for indicative evidence of patterns or trends in orientation and targets. Moreover, there are numerous other explanations, including a random one, which should be considered (see reference at end of paper). There must also be clear evidence of an architectural axis such as a passage leading towards a burial chamber. That helps to reduce the uncertainty in deciding which directed view may have been important in the mind of the builder. Recumbent stone circles (RSCs), stone rows, and the majority of megalithic tombs readily lend themselves to such investigations and analysis. For example, the Cork-Kerry group of RSCs show moderately convincing evidence of an interest in the infrequent southern extreme limits of the setting moon. Their nearest equivalent (by type) is in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. Those show convincing evidence of axial alignment towards the same aspect of the moon's position. For Grange Circle (B) however, the evidence of any similarly obvious architectural axis is weak. Moreover, the temptation to selectively choose a line of sight from pairings of stones so as to fit a particular alignment theory in the mind of the modern investigator, while tempting, can never be a valid approach, either archaeologically or astronomically.

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[124] Prendergast, F. (2015) 'The Great Stone Circle (B) at Grange, Co. Limerick: A Ceremonial Space for All Seasons?', Journal of Skyscape Archaeology, 1(1), 65–92.

Overall, there is little doubt that the area enclosed by the circular bank at Grange was used as a gathering place by the local community and, probably, by those from further afield. It likely functioned as a centre of exchange (knowledge, stories, myths etc.) or as a trading hub for goods. Its sheer scale also reflects a probable communal desire to create an impressive sacred or ritual space used for festivities, ceremonies and enclosure. Whether astronomical alignments were ever part of such practices, we shall never know and can only speculate. This uncertainty is compounded by the fact that if the position of an observer is moved by even a few metres within the circle, the relationship between any individual stone and the position of a rising or setting celestial body on the horizon is radically changed. This effect is known as parallax.

There is no recumbent stone or axial stone opposite the impressive entrance feature into Grange Circle (B). That is not to negate the idea that the axial alignment first proposed by Windle (or any other direction) was significant, or that the sky, and skyscape, were an important part of the meaning of the monument to its users. If anything, the lack of a definitive axis line, in the opinion of the author, allows for the argument that the monument was important at all times of the year and not just at the solstices. Such a prospect elevates rather than detracts from the astronomical potential and significance of the space.

### *Cosmology and Grange Stone Circle (B)*

In prehistory, the dome of the night-time sky (the Celestial Sphere) would have seemed to gazers as a solid dark surface studded with distant and mysterious bright lights which appeared to rise in the east and set in the west. As the year progressed, their visibility would also have seemed to diminish as the timing of their rising, setting and passage changed with the seasons. Stars which are prominent in the winter sky gradually become invisible as the year advances until their predictable return the following autumn. During the hours of daylight, the brightest of them, our sun, would have appeared to follow a similar track as for the stars and the moon.

Beyond the limits reached by the rising/setting sun and moon on the horizon, a particular group of stars in the northern sector of the sky will never rise or set. These always remain above the skyline and are known as circumpolar stars. This is linked to latitude on the earth. In many northern (and southern) cultures, these would have been noticed as being different and mysterious and have had a special mythology and cosmology.

Figure 6 illustrates the world as it may have been perceived by the people of Lough Gur in ancient times. It is shown divided into three parts - the underworld, the lived-in landscape and the dome of the sky. This is known as a tripartite model of the universe and a basic concept of cosmology. In this model, celestial bodies (sun, planets and stars) appear to rise in the east and from a hidden realm below the skyline (horizon). This is the so-called underworld, a place where the sun and other

heavenly bodies were believed to have journeyed after setting (dying) in the west until their predictable rebirth and rise each morning in the east.

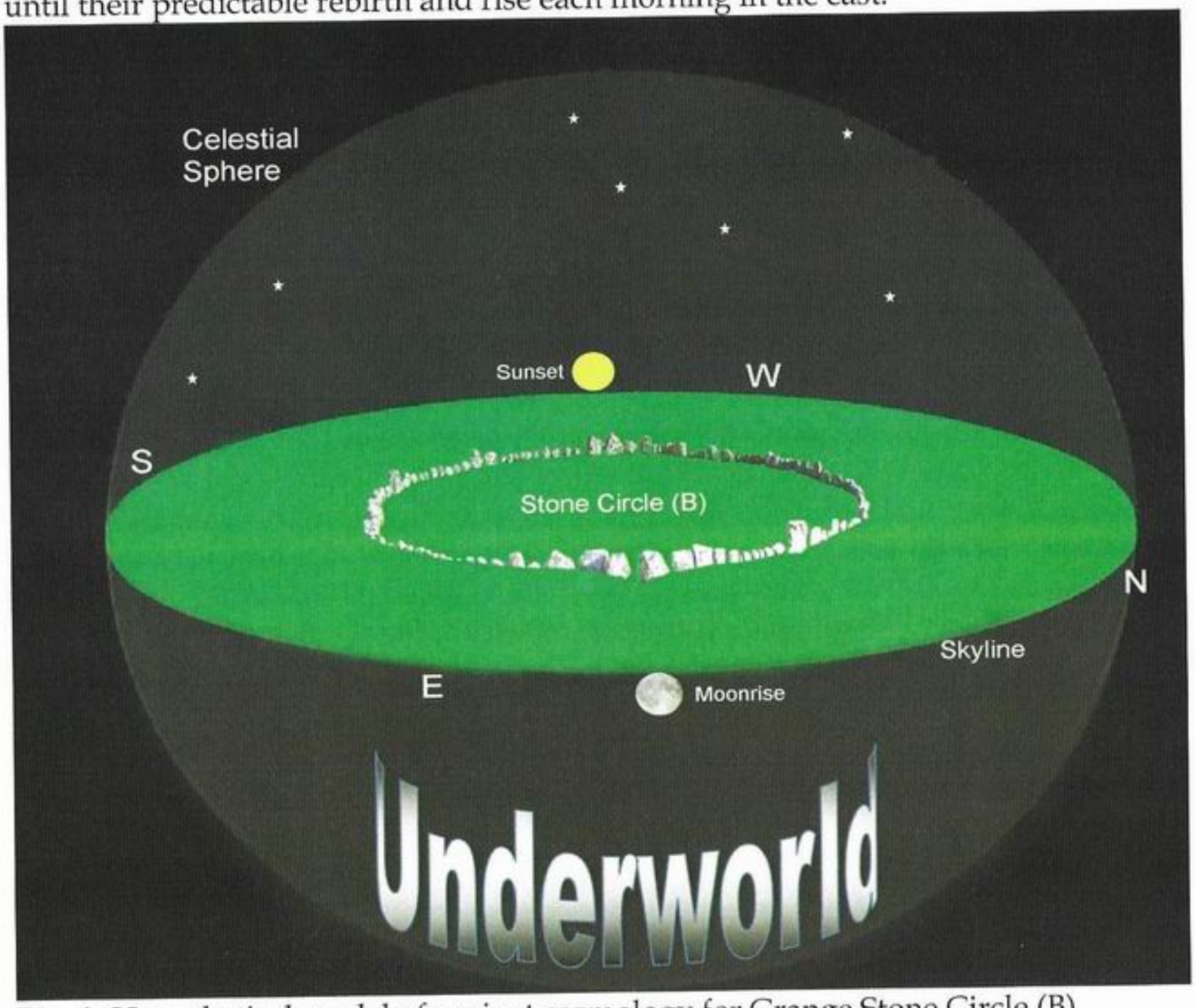


Fig. 6 Hypothetical model of ancient cosmology for Grange Stone Circle (B)

Archaeological awareness and interest in these ideas are now very much part of the modern research agenda. Through such approaches, we can deepen our understanding of what was earlier termed the 'non-material culture of our distant ancestors.

*A new era dawns for Lough Gur*

The landscape surrounding Lough Gur Lake is an area of outstanding archaeological importance. It is recognised as one of the most important prehistoric settlement sites not only in Ireland but also in northwest Europe. As a result, it has the potential to become a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Contingent with such heritage importance and status on a national and international scale, the newly-formed Lough Gur Science Group is now engaged in the process of making an application to the International Dark Sky Association (IDA, http://darksky.org) to conserve and protect the character of the night sky at this location. This is consistent with the broader aims of the IDA and its Dark Sky Places

Program which seeks to 'encourage communities around the world to preserve and protect dark sites through responsible lighting polices and public education.'

The sky at places of prehistoric archaeological importance is a cultural resource to be preserved through conservation and planning measures. There is also the recognition that the relationship between mankind and the sky is embedded in cultural and natural landscapes and such entities require safeguarding. Thus, the sky and, by inference, skyscapes have become an integral part of UNESCO's Thematic Initiative 'Astronomy and World Heritage'. It exists to raise awareness of, and protect, designated cultural properties and entities worldwide for present and future generations.

If unchecked, light pollution (a component of sky glow) in the Lough Gur area will increase over time and thereby diminish the dark sky character of the region. The value of monitoring this, and the worthiness of the planned actions by the Lough Gur Science Group are timely and important. If successful, we can look forward to a very dark future for Limerick's own very special 'landscape of monuments'.

**Further reading**


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## David Bourke of Emly and the Raising of the Tricolour on the GPO 1916.

Research in the Department of Defence's military archives shows that David J Bourke of "Imly, Knocklong" claimed a pension for his part with the Irish Volunteers during the Easter Rising and War of Independence. In his application it states that he, with George Plunkett (brother of executed leader Joseph), raised the tricolour on the GPO on Easter Monday. Following the Rising he was interned until August, 1916. He re-joined the Volunteers when they were re-organised in 1917.

In Bourke's military service pension application there is a letter from a Patrick Hughes who states that he and Bourke were based in buildings opposite the GPO on O'Connell Street during the Rising. Following the surrender both men managed to slip through the British military cordon. However, they were later arrested and detained in Arbour Hill prison. In his pension application form Bourke himself mentioned being stationed "at the other side of O'Connell Street".

In his statement to the Bureau of Military History Fergus O'Kelly states that David Bourke was a wireless operator who was at the Plunketts home on the night before the Rising started. O'Kelly said that Bourke was sent to Kerry to commandeer the wireless college in Cahirciveen in order to make contact with the Aud. Following his return to Dublin he was involved with O'Kelly and others in fixing and working the wireless in the GPO. They broadcasted a message telling the world about the rebellion. O'Kelly did not state where Bourke was from and neither did Bourke refer to this activity in his pension application. An article by Tony Breathnach in the Easter Rising Souvenir Edition (2016) of *Ireland's Own*, states that Joseph Mary Plunkett set up a special wireless unit which included his two brothers, Jack and George, Fergus O'Kelly, Con Keating and David Bourke. Con Keating was one of three volunteers who crashed into Ballykissane Pier near Killorglin and drowned, while on their way to Cahirciveen to establish a wireless link between the disused wireless college there and the rebel headquarters in Dublin. Because of this tragedy the intended wireless connection between Dublin and Cahirciveen could not go ahead. Breathnach's article goes on to say that after the GPO was occupied on Easter Monday, Bourke was put in charge of re-connecting the wireless apparatus in a similar disused college at the corner of Sackville Street (O'Connell Street) and Lower Abbey Street, not knowing that the Cahirciveen station had not been activated or that his three comrades had drowned, making his efforts to establish a point-to-point two way wireless link in vain. Like O'Kelly's statement, Breathnach's article does not say where Bourke was from.

With regard to David Bourke's activities in the War of Independence there are references from veterans confirming that he served in counties Tipperary, Cork and elsewhere. In his witness statement to the Bureau of Military History Edmond (Ned) O'Brien of Galbally said that a David Bourke of Emly escorted Sean Treacy, Dan Breen and others to a safe house in Lackelly while they were on the run after the incident in Soloheadbeg. Timothy Buckley in his statement to the Bureau of Military

History said that "David Bourke of Emly, Co. Tipperary" was a member of the Clondrohid Company, Macroom Battalion of the IRA in Cork and served in a flying column and participated in the Poulnabro ambush in 1920.

In Dan Breen's *My Fight for Irish Freedom* the author makes reference to "Davy Bourke of Emly" as being one of a small number of IRA activists who were prepared to support and help Breen and the others who carried out the Soloheadbeg ambush. In his book on the War of Independence in Limerick Tom Toomey makes mention of David Bourke in the context of Soloheadbeg and the rescue of Sean Hogan in Knocklong in May, 1919. He is also mentioned in the same context in Limerick's Fighting Story. While none of these publications refer to David Bourke's involvement in the Rising it would seem that he probably was the man who raised the tricolour on the GPO on Easter Monday 1916.

**(Note: Apart from the publications referred to above the information included in this brief item was provided by both Joe Moloney and Gerard Noonan)**

# Peadar Ó Dubhda (1881-1971)

By Betty Leahy

Peadar Ó Dubhda was born in Barronstown, Co. Louth. He was a novelist, playwright, teacher and musician who spent twelve years of his life translating the Douay Bible into the Irish language, as a gift to the Irish nation.

Peadar did not marry. He spent his life trying to preserve the Irish language. He was awarded a certificate to teach Irish by the 1916 leader Padraig Pearse. He was once one of the travelling teachers, men who used to spread the aims of 'Connradh na Gaeilge' throughout the country travelling on their bicycles. It was a hard life for very little reward. He spent ten years at it – winter and summer, six and a half days each week, fourteen hours a day, for £1 a week. These were wonderful men and Peadar was not the least of them in the 'Gap of the North'. It is hard to believe that they stood up to such hardships, but they did and gave a new soul to the Irish public. Only for their dedication very little would be heard of Irish today. He gave great support to strengthening every aspect of our culture – games, dances, music as well as the language. He composed the music for Úrchnoc Céin Mhic Cáinte (composed by Peadar Ó Doirnín).

Peadar Ó Dubhda never lost hope in the revival of the Irish language. If he didn't see the results he wished in his lifetime it wasn't his fault. He put the blame on the Catholic Church, on the government and on the Gaelic League. He often attacked the Church for not ordaining priests that would be able to conduct the Mass in Irish, and for not having Irish speaking priests for Gaeltacht areas. He has given an account of this issue in two of his books. Timid, weak-minded people must take the blame. The Ulster branch of Connradh na Gaeilge did not support him and that was hurtful.

He had not much contact with political parties, but he tended to favour Fianna Fáil. He was appointed to the Dundalk Cumann in 1942. He was eight years on the committee and five years as chairman before leaving it.

He wrote about 20 books and ran a radio programme "Cogar a leanaí", otherwise 'Children's Hour' on Radio Éireann in the 30s and continued weekly for over 25 years. He wrote and presented each programme, and composed the airs for the rhymes attached. He was paid £2 a week for the presentation and 'no recognition or presentation given on completion'. He was on television once for thirty minutes in 'A Man and his Story', an interview he gave to Proinsias Mac Aonghusa.

Peadar has very little of the goods of this world, but had he not spent all his time working for the good of Irish, he could have been very comfortable. He never had more than £2 a week from 'Cogar a Leanaí'. He used to correct exam papers at 1s /3d each. In one year he corrected 800 papers. In 1953 he was taken by surprise when Oireachtas na Gaeilge chose him as president of the Féile for that year.

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He translated the Douay Version of the bible without help. He began work in November 1943 and completed it in 1954. He had spent eleven years working in a room of Áras na Gaeilge in Dundalk. He used inks and paints to illustrate with elaborate capitals and images from the Life of Christ. He used his own handwriting. He intended to give it as a gift to the Nation, in a rich cover, "in gratitude to God who gave us a faith and a language of which we are so proud." The book is now in the National Library, almost three thousand pages and five stone in weight.
On July 13th 1955 Peadar presented it to the Nation. He was then 84 years of age. Dáil Deputies and the Ceann Comhairle were present. General Richard Mulcahy accepted it on behalf of the State. Peadar then had lunch with Taoiseach John A. Costello.

In 1950 he was presented with the Papal medal, Pro Ecclessia el Pontifice by Pope Pius XII, to mark his 50th year as a member of St. Maslchy's Choir, Dundalk and one of his most prized possessions was a personal letter fro Pope John XXIII praising him for his work for the Church. The years of conflict had long passed.

Peadar died in May 1971, only weeks short of his 90th birthday. His contribution to Ireland and its language was recognised by the attendance at his funeral of President Eamon De Valera.

**Note: Betty Leahy's father, Seán Quigley, came from Co. Louth to Limerick to work on the Shannon Scheme. He and Peadar were first cousins, so Betty is Peadar's first cousin once removed. She is similarly related to the late Ted Bonner, journalist and T.V. personality.**

## Magpies at the Stone Circle

By Niamh Hehir

Driving to meet you in Lough Gur,
Sky lightens, rain waits -
Lake, hills, fields
sunning in an ancient light

There is something about this place.
Echoes of lost voices
the hum of past gatherings
resonate still.

We walk around the stone circle
with a straggle of students,
acned, awkward adolescents
learning about ley lines,

about shards of broken pottery
stained with beer –
dug out in excavations.
Did ancient discos happen here?

Where stars are brighter,
Where the sky is darkest -
Blacker than Burren night,
like roof beams opened out.

White witches say
the tallest stone channels
energies from deep beds below
some lean to feel the beat

of pulse light
briefly, blushing at the spectacle
Of looking for life
in a cold stone slab.

I'm here because of you,
Sky-watcher.
Our lives dovetail again
In words and space rimmed by ancient stones.

Two magpies on branches
dip down to sharpen
beaks against the tallest stone,
tapping something deep below.

# Michael O'Callaghan's One Man War -A Lesser Known Episode of Easter, 1916.

By Tom Toomey

The 1916 Rising was almost entirely confined to Dublin, although a few other engagements took place in other parts of the country. Possibly the least well known of these incidents, which saw the killing of two members of the RIC, took place in Moanour, which is in Co Tipperary, although it is in the parish of Galbally.

On Tuesday evening, 25th April 1916, an assistant creamery manager, named Michael O'Callaghan (pictured below) was making his way home to his father's house at William O'Brien Street in Tipperary. O'Callaghan was one of two sons born to Denis and Bridget O'Callaghan who had a drapery shop at 34 William O'Brien Street. Michael O'Callaghan was an active member of the Irish Volunteers and the days just past had been ones of great frustration because of the stop - go nature of a rising that was planned for Easter Sunday. On his way home to his father's house he ran into a number of separation women and their offspring. There is no record of what transpired between them but as O'Callaghan was not known to be a shrinking violet doubtless he gave as good as he got. As he neared his father's house the mob had grown significantly and was every moment getting bolder and more aggressive.

An RIC patrol hovering in the background seemed to be taking pleasure from O'Callaghan's discomfort. Matters came to a head fairly dramatically as O'Callaghan reached his father's door when one of the mob, a young man named Ryan, went to strike O'Callaghan with a stick. O'Callaghan suddenly pulled a revolver from his coat and shot Ryan in the leg. Immediately the mob scattered in all directions and the RIC patrol that had been enjoying itself at O'Callaghan's expense immediately became active and they rushed towards the source of the shooting. They immediately surrounded the house and sent for reinforcements. When reinforcements arrived they did not attempt to force entry but decided to wait until dawn.

In the meantime O'Callaghan had managed to slip out the back and make his way to his cousin's house at Moanour. Peter Hennessey was an extensive farmer at Moanour and both he and O'Callaghan were on good terms. It is not known if O'Callaghan stated the reason for his visit but he spent the night at Hennessey's. In the meantime the police had realized that their 'bird' had flown and communication was sent out to all RIC

stations to be on the lookout for the fugitive. The RIC prided themselves on the fact that they knew 'the seed and breed' of everyone and the first port of call was nearly always the houses of close relations.

Sergeant Thomas O'Rourke, a forty two year old native of Cork City, was in charge of the RIC station at Lisvernane and when he received the request he decided to visit O'Callaghan's cousin at Moanour. On his visit to Moanour O'Rourke took with him a fellow Cork man 24 year old Castletownbere native John Hurley. To travel by road from Lisvernane to Moanour takes a distance of six miles but going by a mass path the journey can be covered in approximately thirty minutes.

When the two policemen arrived at Moanour they inquired for O'Callaghan and when they were told he was inside sitting at the fire O'Rourke then entered the house and as he went to arrest O'Callaghan, O'Callaghan pulled out his revolver and opened fire mortally wounding the sergeant in the stomach. Meanwhile, Hurley, it appears had panicked and ran out into the yard where O'Callaghan followed him and shot him twice. Hurley died instantly.

O'Rourke was later removed by ambulance to the military hospital in Tipperary Town where he died in the early hours of Saturday April 29th. Elsewhere in the townland of Moanour Paul Merrigan, who was staying with his cousin Michael Merrigan, heard the shots fired by O'Callaghan. Merrigan rushed to Hennessey's house and he was the first person on the scene. When he arrived at Hennessey's he first saw Sergeant O'Rourke propped up in the kitchen, moaning with pain, and out near a hay shed lay the remains of Constable Hurley.[125] A large force of policemen soon arrived from Tipperary and Merrigan along with Peter Hennessey, Hennessey's wife and workman were very extensively questioned but eventually they were released.

O'Callaghan fled from the scene immediately and he spent that night with friends of his, the O'Dea family at Annagh near Galbally. From Annagh he moved on to Lackelly where he was taken in by the O'Callaghan family, his paternal cousins.[126] While he was staying at Lackelly he was guarded by the Lackelly Company of the Irish Volunteers. Among those that mounted guard were Michael and Gerry O'Callaghan, Bill Fitzpatrick, the company O/C, and various members of the Taylor and Kincaid families along with Danny Moloney. It seems that the fugitive was held for sometime at Lackelly because there is only one bohereen into. It is effectively a cul-de-sac and therefore much easier to monitor.

After a number of weeks in the Lackelly area O'Callaghan was moved to the Glenbrohane district. Here he stayed mainly at Shanahan's of Glenlara while arrangements were being put in train for his escape to America. With the help of Tadhg Crowley, whose father was the postmaster in Ballylanders, telegrams to the

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[125] Witness Statement W/S 1667 By Paul Merrigan (Bureau of Military History)

[126] Personal papers of Bill Fitzpatrick Company Captain of Lackelly Company IRA.

local RIC were well vetted before they were handed on to the intended recipients. These messages were relayed to Shanahan's with the aid of two teachers, Michael Hannafin in Ballylanders and Paddy Shine in Glenbrohane.[127] By this means O'Callaghan was able to stay one step ahead of any police raids.

Eventually Michael O'Callaghan was able to escape to America disguised as a priest. After some time in America the British authorities became aware of his whereabouts but efforts to effect an extradition proved fruitless, it being an election year in America and there was a lot of bad publicity to be garnered by extraditing someone back to Ireland to face the hangman. Michael O'Callaghan remained in America until after the Treaty when he returned to Ireland. He eventually became the Court Clerk in Tipperary. He married and settled down and reared a family. He died in 1962 when he was seventy five years of age and he is buried in St Michael's Graveyard in Tipperary.

[127] Witness Statement W/S 435 By Tadhg Crowley (Bureau of Military History)