her organisations

silence was his ugly defence

He took messages in scraps

came from and see the

and have you be the laughing

him a secret vindictiveness that wanted so badly to break out.

Odds and Ends

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A great scholar

An Mangaire Sugach

One of the great names of Clare, and of Ireland, is that of Eugene O Curry, or Eoghan Ó Comhraí, who was born in Dunaha, about three miles south of Kilkee, on the 11th November, 1794. His father, Eoghan Mór Ó Comhraí, had an immense wealth of traditional lore, very much of which was inbibed by his famous son.

We are told that the Clare countryside between the Shannon Mouth and the sea in which Eugene O Curry grew up teemed with ancient lore of every kind. "The Irish language and traditions and music were there in unabated strength. The seanchaí at the winter fireside with his tales of Cúchulainn and Finn was still an institution . . . above all there still survived the old traditional love of learning and the practice of it. Irish manuscripts were freely copied and studied and Irish poetry composed."

The place that the lays of Finn and Oisín held in that South-West Clare community has been testified to by O Curry himself, who wrote:

"I have heard my father sing the Ossiantic poems, and remember distinctly the air and the manner of singing."

A teacher named O'Brien, he said, "spent much of his time in my father's house, and was the best singer of Oisín's poems that his contemporaries had ever heard. He had a rich and powerful voice, and often on a calm summer's day he would go out with a party into a boat on the lower Shannon, at my native place, where the river is eight miles wide; and having rowed to the middle of the river, they used to lie on the oars, on which occasions O Brien was always prepared to sing his choicest pieces, among which were no greater favourites than Oisín's poems. So powerful was the singer's voice that it often reached the shores at either side of the boat in Clare and Kerry and often called the labouring men and women from the neighbouring fields at both sides to the water's edge to enjoy the strains of the music."

When he was about 16 Eugene O Curry commenced to learn English, and frequently used walk into Kilkee to hear English spoken by the visitors. At home he worked hard on the small family farm for some years, and then set up a hedgeschool which, however, was not a great success. In 1824 he went to Limerick and worked for a time as a labourer on the construction of Sarsfield Bridge, before being promoted overseer. Later he got a post as warder in the Asylum (Mental Hospital).

Gradually people who were interested in such matters became aware of his scholarly knowledge of the Irish language and of Irish manuscripts, and of the old culture of his people, and in 1834 he obtained a post in the Ordnance Survey. Here he came to the notice of such Gaelic scholars as John O Donovan and James Todd, and through them he secured employment in cataloguing Irish manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy, TCD and the British Museum. Soon he was editing and translating Irish texts.

In 1854 Cardinal Newman appointed him Professor of Irish History and Archaeology in the newly-founded Catholic University of Ireland. O Curry was one of the great scholars of his time, and his industry was quite extraordinary. His lectures were published in two volumes, which are still much sought after. His love of the language and traditions of his people never deserted him. He died in 1862. The Irish College in Carrigaholt, near his birthplace, is called after him – Coláiste Eoghain Uí Chomhraí.

Thomas Darcy Magee wrote the following lines about him:

Who are his mourners? By the hearth
His presence kindled sad they sit;
They dwell throughout the living earth
In homes his presence never lit;
Where'er a Gaelic brother dwells,
There heaven has heard for him a prayer;
Where'er an Irish maiden tells
Her votive beads his soul has share;
Where far or near, be it east or west,
Glistens the sagart's sacred stole,
There from the true unprompted priest
Shall rise a requiem for his soul.

And now Eugene O Curry is to be honoured in his native district during the week-end 8th-9th November, 1986. At 2 p.m. on Saturday, 8th November, at Dunaha, President Hillery will unveil a bronze plaque depicting O Curry at work. The plaque is the work of the Kilbaha sculptor, Jim Connolly. At 4.30 p.m. on the same day Professor Breandán Ó Madagáin, UCG, will deliver a lecture in Doonaha Hall on "Eugene O Curry and Irish Song"; and at 7.30 p.m. there will be an Oíche Cheoil.

On Sunday, 9th November, at 11.30 a.m., Mass in Irish will be celebrated in Dunaha Church by Father Pádraig Ó Fiannachta, Professor of Irish in Maynooth; and at 2.30 p.m. Father Ó Fiannachta will deliver a lecture on O Curry in Teach an Cheoil, Carrigaholt. There will also be a concert in Carrigaholt Parochial Hall, to be followed that evening by a céilí.

A forge in Dunaha, that was in use in O Curry's time, is being restored as a museum. As the committee of Comóradh Uí Chomhraí point out, all these undertakings to honour West Clare's great scholar will cost money, and so they would welcome contributions, no matter how modest, to help defray expenses. The treasurer of the Comóradh Uí Chomhraí committee is Pádraig de Barra, Cill Chaoi, Co. an Chláir.

responsibility of parents, particularly fo
teenage sons and daughters, and vice v
And he repeatedly brought it home
parents were the heads of any household
was a man who used his wide powers wi
harshness and with great compassion.
many the man walked with relief fro
courthouse with a reprimand and Ju
Maguire's oft used: "Off with you now
don't let me see you again."

Justice Maguire always enjoyed some
lighter moments which occur in a di
court. Often he was unable to restrai
laughter when dealing with some of the
"characters."

His beautiful home outside Foynes w
he lived with his wife, Mary, enabled h
work on his skills as a gardener
craftsman. Rarely did he miss a day fro
work as a district justice because of ill
and his untimely death at the age of 62
as a great shock to all who knew him.

Louis Smith, Dominic Street, Drogheda, and Ruth Shorten, Glendora Ave., Glenmore, Caherdavin, who were recently married at Christ the King Church, Caherdavin.

Miss Elizabeth O'Donnell, Abbey Farm, Kilmallock, and Mr. Tommy D
Oak View Grove, Hartstown, Clonsilla, Dublin, who were married in SS. P
Paul's Church, Kilmallock, recently.

L. Leader 1/11/1986