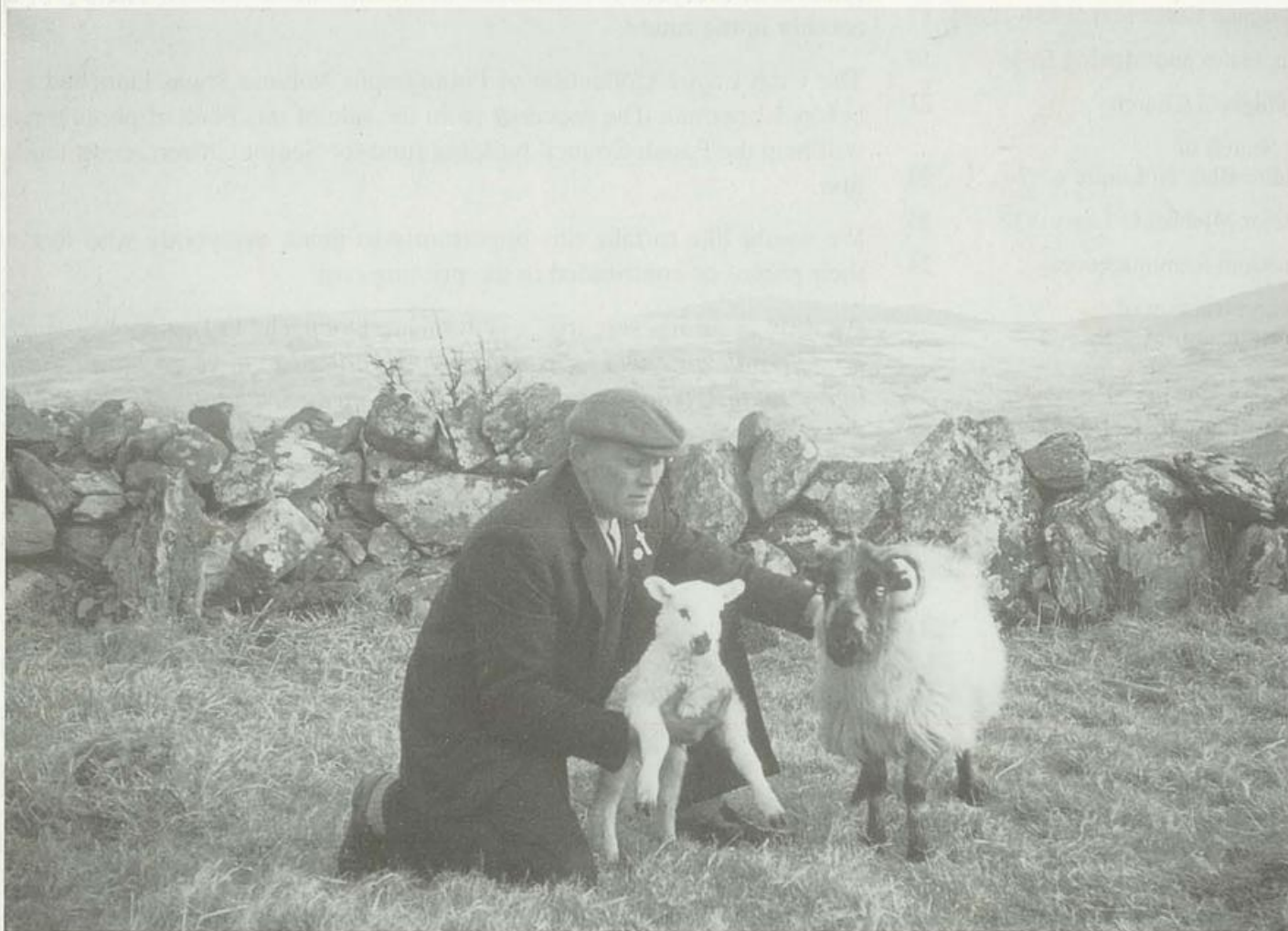


béal átha'n ghaorthaíth

An Cumann Staire

Ballingeary Historical Society

JOURNAL 1999



Paddy Cronin of Derreenlunnig and Kilgarvan in 1964

Photo by An t-Athair Liam Ó Riagáin

Ceard Scoil 1939
Scoil Mhuire 1959 - 1999
A Century of Uibh Laoire

O'Leary Clan Gathering
Spanish Civil War – Michael Lehane

luach £4

uimhir 7

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Chairman's Address

Le himeacht na bliana tá Cumann Staire ag dul í dtréise. Seo é an 7ú eagrán agus an ceann is mó go dtí seo. Leirionn sé suim an phobal i stair a náit dhúachais. Le linn na bliana bhí An Chumann an ghnóach le cúpla tionscnamh.

Ba mhaith linn ár mbuiochas a ghabháil le gach einne a chabhraigh linn le linn 1999 go háirithe einne a bhí pairteach i nochtheadh An Famine Pot sa tsráid agus na leaca thuas i gCéim an Fhia.

Bantry Historical Society and our Cumann Staire finally saw the unveiling by Bishop John Buckley of the memorial plaque in Céim An Fhia. The Famine Pot in Ballingearry village was dedicated the same day.

We launched our first CD and Tape — "Ar Bruach Na Laoi/ On The Banks Of The Lee" which is accompanied by a booklet of lyrics. We are very grateful to everybody who helped in making this a success. There will be another in the future.

The Uibh Laoire Collection of Photographs Volume 3 was launched just before Christmas. The proceeds from the sale of this book of photographs will help the Parish Council building fund for Senior Citizen accommodation.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who lent us their photos or contributed to the printing cost.

Ag diriú ar an Iris seo, mar a scriobhán Donnacha Ó Laoire, "*ag teacht go deireadh an chéid agus deireadh na mílaoise, tá sé go maith dúinn agus suimúil, féachaint siar ar 60 bliain na Ceárd Scoile (1939), 40 bliain Mheán Scoil Mhuire (1959) agus 25 bliain Scoil Mhuire (1974).*"

Is mór an abhar bhróid é do sráid bhaile reasúnta beag go bhfuil scoil an dara leibheal againn le trí scór bliain. Tá altanna againn faoi bunú na Céard Scoile; faoi Fionbarra Ó Murchú agus bunú na Méan Scoile agus alt faoi teacht le chéile an dá scoil, Scoil Mhuire, i 1974.

We have articles from Canada and the USA. We remember war heroes; Michael O'Leary, Kilbarry, Victoria Cross winner. We also have the story of Michael Lehané from Morleys Bridge near Kilgarvan. He fought alongside Michael O'Riordan (who's parents were from Ballingearry) against Fascism and Franco in the Spanish Civil and died in the mid-Atlantic in World War Two as a member of the Norwegian Merchant Navy.

We have a beautiful set of poems which will ring true for many, as well as recollections of working in the 1940s. The personal papers of the Grehan Family of Banteer (who owned land in Ballingearry and Inchigeela) and Daniel Corkery, the writer, are described by Carol Quinn of UCC.

Whether you're in search of Maire Bhuí, looking for a brief history of the Pipe Band or want to know where your town land ranks in size in Uibh Laoire Parish, we hope you enjoy this years Journal.

Míle buiochas do gach einne a scriobh alt duinn. Buiochas chomh maith le Nora Levis, Eithne Concannon agus Con Ó Murchú agus VEC Co. Chorcaí.

Le gach dea ghuí don mílaoisé nua,

Seán Ó Súilleabháin

Fourth Annual O'Leary Clan Gathering September 1999

As in previous years, the Fourth O'Leary Clan Gathering was held in Inchigeelagh, with its centre at Creedon's Hotel. A few old and many new friends came from all over the world for the weekend of 10th. to 12th. September 1999, and a good time was had by all.

This year's theme was Major Michael O'Leary VC who was born in Cooleen, Inchigeelagh in 1888, and won his VC for conspicuous bravery during the Great World War in France in 1915. Michael married a local girl, Greta Hegarty from Ballyvourney, and they had six sons and a daughter. After the War, the family moved to Canada, and later to England. Michael himself died in 1961 at the age of 73, so special efforts were

made to find his family so as to invite them to our Gathering as our guests. We were successful in having the remaining four sons, one wife and one daughter, who attended and took a lively part in the proceedings.

On the Friday evening there was a Reception and welcoming speeches from the Committee. Refreshments and entertainment, with traditional music and airs and songs led by our resident pianist, John Bennett, followed this. As usual this evening gave all the attendees a good opportunity to meet and get to know each other and

On Saturday our first Talk was given by a guest speaker, Mr. Frank

Robinson, from Dublin, and Secretary of the Irish Guards Association. Poor Frank had to get up at five o'clock to get to Inchigeelagh by 9.30 but this did not seem to affect the quality of his Talk, the text of which is included in this Journal. We like to provide something contentious and this was no exception. It is always wise to let time pass before considering the Historical importance of such recent events. Perhaps the 85 years, which have elapsed, allow us to do so in this instance. The discussion, which followed Frank's talk, was lively but no blood was spilt. We considered whether Michael was a brave man fighting in the wrong Army. Should his bravery have been used as a weapon to whip up enthusiasm for



O'Leary Clan Gathering 1999

the War, and for Recruitment? Was it successful in so doing? And so on. It was a fascinating debate and was contributed to by Frank of course, but also by a Panel consisting of the four sons of the VC. A further valuable contribution came from John O'Connor, who comes from Fermoy, and who has been researching Michael O'Leary for a Historical thesis, and who joined us and led this discussion.

On Saturday afternoon we went on a bus trip to see some of the local places associated with Michael O'Leary. The first and main stop was at the house in Cooleen where he was born. This is now the property of Mr.Tadhg Carney who has been working for some time on it's reconstruction. Tadhg kindly allowed a small party, including the VC's sons, to inspect the interior of the house while the rest of us stood around watching with pleasure and amazement the skill of our driver turning his bus around in the narrow boren. This latter event took some time, and curtailed our tour, which we had intended to include a visit to the remains of the house where the VC's family lived, close to Kilbarry Post Office. Instead, we went on to Carrignacurra to allow the members to see the work which has been done on the Castle by Mr.Maxim Gormanov. This is also covered in a later article.

Finally the bus party had a tour of the South Lake road, including the Mass Rock and a view of the Crannog, then returned to Creedons for a leisurely change for Dinner.

Before Dinner we had our usual Group Photograph which annually manages to produce apparent harmony and peace out of a chaotic

and undisciplined refusal of our membership to line up, face the same way, and smile all at the same time.

The Annual Dinner took a new form this year. First we sampled a starter, then we had a musical interlude performed by "The Canovee Orchestra" which turned out to be the musicians and singers led by Anne Dunne. This was a great success, and quite apart from some lovely singing from Anne and Brendan O'Brien, was much enlivened by the antics of our own members, especially William O'Leary from Canada, the VC's son.

This auspicious start was followed by one of Creedon's usual high class Dinners, a raffle for a bottle of whiskey, and further merrymaking which seemed to go on until the small hours of Sunday.

Sunday morning started as usual by a tour of Inchigeelagh, on foot, led by Joe Creedon. This has become an annual event much looked forward to by young and not so young.

Then followed a meeting to discuss the possibilities of creating an O'Leary Website. Much thought has been given to this possibility, and no doubt our discussions will eventually lead to one being formed. We now have plenty of experts available to tell us how, and the opinions of many members, not all so expert, to goad us on.

The second meeting of the morning was to discuss the new situation arising from the purchase of the Castle by Mr.Gormanov, and the reconstruction work that he is doing. The events leading up to the

purchase, and since our last meeting, were explained. Members were in particular relieved to hear that it is Mr.Gormanov's intention to reconstruct with sympathy and exactly as originally built, but of course making allowance for new features required to meet modern conditions. They were also pleased to learn that they, and other interested members of the local community, will be given access at certain times to view the work, in progress and when finished. There were many questions and opinions expressed, but the general overall view was that they were pleased with progress to date, but would want to watch further work to ensure that the present quality was kept up.

The usual final Mass followed lunch but on this occasion, because the weather was threatening, we had to hold this in the Parish Church instead of outside. Fr. Crowley from Boston was our chief concelebrant.

Following Mass the meeting was concluded and all went on their various ways. The general conclusion seemed to be that this had been a very happy and successful Clan Gathering. It was agreed that we will meet again next September 15th - 17th, 2000, and this time with a Millennium theme.

Contact Peter O'Leary, Derryvane, Inchigeela, Co. Cork, Ireland.

e-mail [HYPERLINK mail to: peteroleary@eircom.net](mailto:peteroleary@eircom.net).

Cotter Clan Gathering is also planned for around the 19th Aug. 2000.

Contact Joe Creedon, Inchigeela, Co. Cork. Phone (026) 49012

What's in a Name 6. The Castle or Tower House

Castle Features.

This article covers the features often seen in our Tower Houses, and exactly the same terms occur in Castle construction as well.

1. Battlements. Crenellations.

At the top of a castle. A thin wall going round the top, to shelter the defenders, with openings (crenellations) and the parapet or wall in between (merlons).

2. Alure or wall-walk.

The walkway around the top, protected by the battlements. Usually timber or stone slabs.

3. Machicoulis.

A short length of the battlements which projected outwards, and gave shelter to allow the defenders to shoot or drop missiles on the attackers from above.

4. Bartizan.

A special form of machicolation which is often built half way up the castle at a corner. It serves the same purpose as a Machicoulis, but is easily reached from a passageway within the building.

5. Garderobe.

Another projecting feature which served a more domestic purpose. It was a chute which ejected waste matter from the lavatory.

6. Fireplaces.

These need no description but are an important internal feature of a castle, and provide many variations depending on the wealth of the builder of the castle. Three of the rooms in Carrignacurra are heated by fireplaces.

7. Redan.

A further defensive feature which only appears on later, say 16th. and 17th.c. castles. It is built on one of the corners defending the front door. It is slender and hollow, to allow two or three defenders to stand in it and fire guns across the front door. Carrignacurra has one on the SE corner. Mashanaglass had two, one at each corner adjacent to the front door.

8. Bawn.

An area around the castle surrounded by a wall. Virtually all castles were provided with a Bawn of some sort, but few remain today. The Bawn would usually be battlemented, and would have a gateway protected by a machicolation. There were often a number of towers along the wall to give it support.

9. Loft.

Often seen on later castles. An additional roofed room added to the top of the castle, not defensible, but to provide additional living quarters to the owner and his family.

10. Loops.

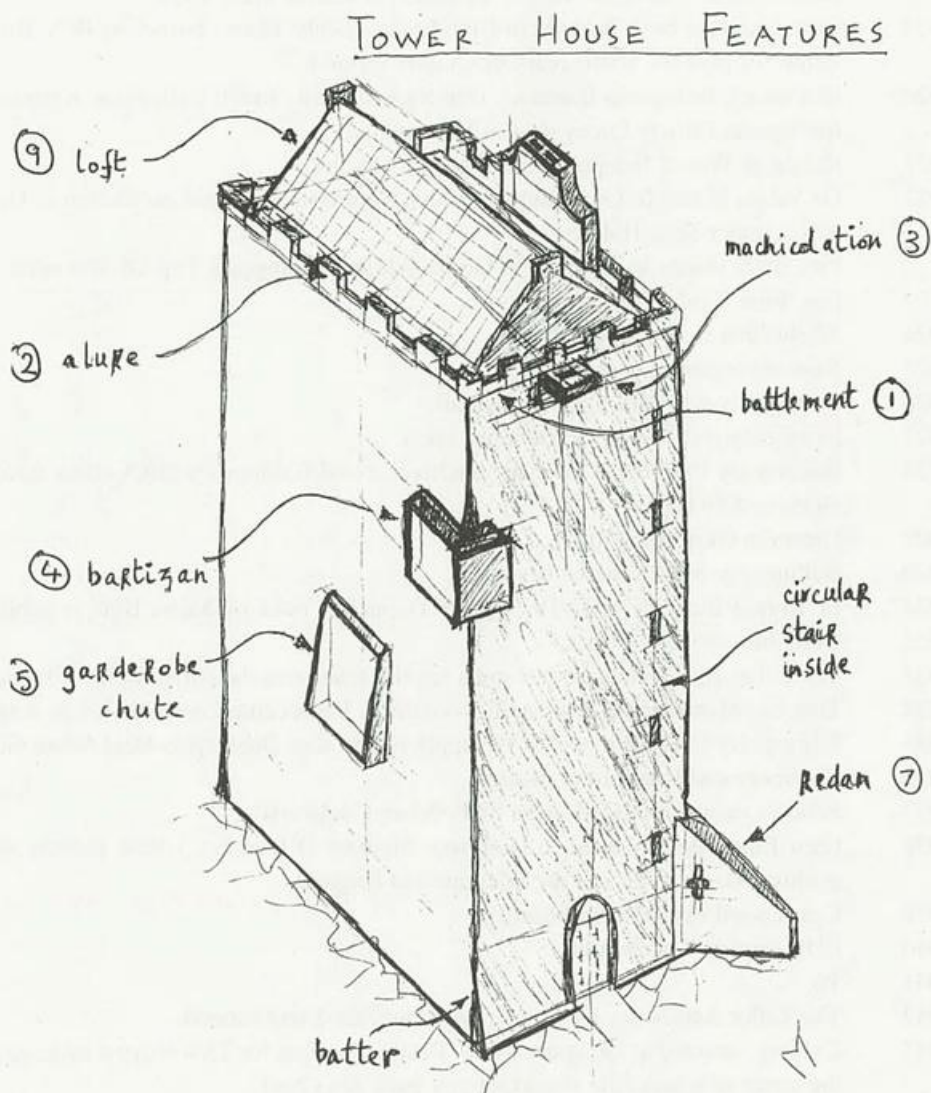
Loops are narrow windows built to fire weapons out of, not for light. The earlier loops are cross shaped for bows and cross bows. Later loops are smaller and made

for muskets and hand guns.

11. Vault.

The most important constructional feature of a Castle. The Vault is an arch which forms the ceiling to one floor, and which in effect holds the outer walls together. The fact that so many Tower Houses built in the 15th. to 17th.c. are still standing to this day is largely due to the use of vaulting, plus of course the massive stone structure and the remarkable mortar which was used. In some Towers, there were two vaults one above the other.

All these features were originally included in the construction of Carrignacurra Castle. They can still be seen, except for the Bawn of which there is now no trace.



A Century in Ballingeary and Inchigeela.

The following is just a sample of the events which have shaped Ballingeary and Inchigeela in the 20th Century. Donal Cronin, with help from many people compiled up to 1968 and Anna-Marie O'Sullivan gives us a selection from the 1970s on.

- 1900 Population of the parish = 4370.
- 1901 Gougane Church completed.
- 1902 Charles Walsh returns from the Boer War on a pension of 11 pence a week. Irish Classes held in Inchigeela.
- 1903 Irish summer School held in Gougane.
- 1904 Coláiste Na Mumhan opens. 62 students attend.
- 1905 Boys school built in Inchigeela.
- 1906 Attempted eviction of Jerry Mahoney in Dromanallig, Ballingeary fails. First telephone in Ballingeary.
- 1907 M
- 1908 Farmers in the Parish continue the process of purchasing their farms from the landlords under The Land Acts.
- 1909 Early attenders at Coláiste Na Mumhan include Tomás Mac Donncadha (1916 leader); Tom-s McCurtain; Traolach MacSuibhne and Risteárd Mulcahy who succeeded Michael Collins as commander-in-chief of the Free State Army in 1922.
- 1910 200 students attend Coláiste Na Mumhan; Phone Service in Inchigeela
- 1911 John Shorten, Ballingeary wins senior All-Ireland football medal with Cork.
- 1912 Emigration continues. Population falls by 1127 in past 20 years.
- 1913 Fr. James O'Leary is parish priest.
- 1914 Rev. Toames, last Church of Ireland resident curate is moved out of the Parish. Irish Volunteer Companys formed. New Keimaneigh School built on Dick Phadie Cronins land.
- 1915 Michael O'Leary, Kilbarry wins a Victoria Cross in France.
- 1916 Local Volunteers march to Kealkil as part of Easter Rising.
- 1917 Fr. O Callaghan leaves the Parish. He is shot in Douglas in 1921 by the Black and Tans. Fr Ó Donnogh collects local history.
- 1918 Butler and Bennett, RIC, attacked at the Mouth Of The Glen in the first armed engagement of the War Of Independence. 80 British soldiers in Glebe House. Spanish Flu claims many lives.
- 1919 Jack Sean Rua buys first car in Uibh Laoire. Glebe House burnet by IRA. Butler and Bennett get £800 and £500 compensation for injuries. Ballingeary GAA club formed.
- 1920 IRA attack Inchigeela Barracks. Dan Sullivan and Tadgh Callaghan, Keimaneigh, imprisoned. Sergeant Maunsell shot in Inchigeela. Christy Lucey shot in Keimaneigh
- 1921 Height of War of Independence. Flying Columns
- 1922 De Valera hiding in Gortafluddig. Slieve Na mBan armoured car hidden in Doireanlunnig. 1923 Free State troops arrive in parish under Sean Hales.
- Free State troops leave camp in Gurteenakilla. Ballingeary Tug-Of-War team win Kilmurry Cup (Munster title) for 3-in-a-row. First Gardaí in Ballingeary,
- 1924 37 children in Toreennalour.
- 1925 New graveyard in Inchigeela.
- 1926 Ballingeary win Mid-Cork in football.
- 1927 Inchigeela and Teergay Creameries open.
- 1928 Ballingeary Pipe Band Formed. Inchigeela and Ballingeary GAA clubs amalgamate. They win Mid Cork in 1929, 1932, 1935, and 1941.
- 1929 Grotto in Gurteennakilla
- 1930 Ballingeary water scheme begins.
- 1931 Fr. Robert Burts PP 1921-1939. Fr O' Donnch's bokk on Maire Bhuí is published.
- 1932 Daily bus service to Cork.
- 1933 Travelling shows and circuses are a regular feature in the parish in the 20s and 30s.
- 1934 Timothy Manning of Dromanallig, ordained. He became Cardinal Of Los Angles in 1973.
- 1935 Ballingeary Creamery opens. 19 suppliers first day. Bealoideas Beal Athan Ghaorthaidh published.
- 1936 Creamery end local butter making.
- 1937 Schools manuscript Collection by Folklore Commission.
- 1938 Cum Rua Forest planted in Gougane. Michael O'Riordan, whose parents were from Ballingeary goes to Spain to fight against Franco as part of the International Brigade.
- 1939 Ceard Scoil opens in Ballingeary.
- 1940 LDF formed. Locals join.
- 1941 W
- 1942 The Tailor And Ansty by Eric Cross is published and banned.
- 1943 Calvary erected at Gougane Cross. Potatoes selling for 13/= (65p) a sack; eggs, 2/6 (12½p) a doz; ducks 1/4 (7p) a lb. And the cover of a bastabile would set you back 4/= (20p).
- 1944 Grotto in Rossmore. Water scheme in Inchigeela.

- 1945 Paddy Cronin, Keimaneigh wins senior All-Ireland medal with Cork. He played club football with Fermoy.
- 1946 Lovely is the Lee, by Robert Gibbings is published.
- 1947 Very heavy and prolonged snow.
- 1948 Population Of Parish 2291.
- 1949 The Patterns, open air danced on concrete platforms had died out.
- 1950 Holy Year Crosses erected.
- 1951 Ostán purchased by Col-iste Na Mumhan.
- 1952 Jim Galvin, Inchigeela, wins national league medal with Cork.
- 1953 Ballingearry-Inchigeela road tarred. Farmer avail of Marshall Aid to improve land.
- 1954 50th year of Colaiste na Mumhan. 10000 pupils had attended in that time. 50 childre confirmed by Bishop Lucey.
- 1955 Holiday Centre in Inchigeela.
- 1956 Ballingearry GAA Club re-established
- 1957 Ballingearry Pitch purchased.
- 1958 Inchigeela Mid Cork Champions.
- 1959 Méan Scoil Mhuire founded. 19 pupils.
- 1960 Local farmers reclaim shooting rights from former landlords.
- 1961 First Ballingearry Show. Browns Bridge Harrier Club founded.
- 1962 New sewage scheme in Inchigeela.. Mary Twomey , Dooneens ,All-Ireland shearing win.
- 1963 Holiday Island and slipway in Inchigeela.
- 1964 All-Ireland Shearing in Ballingearry. Street lights.
- 1965 Ballingearry Mid Cork Champions.
- 1966 Denis Moynihan Quintet formed.
- 1967 Inchigeela Mid Cork B Cmpns. Coolmountain School closes.
- 1968 Inchigeela Races revived after 5 years
- 1971 Population of the parish is 1982 people.
- 1973 Paddy Quill wins All Ireland fiddle contest. Minor parish team win Mid Cork.
- 1976 Tooreenalour School Closed. It had been opened in 1919, and Master Lyons was the first teacher in the New School. Tim Dineen was the last registered Pupil in the School in '76.
- Garda Gerard Lovett, Dromanallig, wins Scott Medal for bravery. Scoil Mhuire established.
- 1976 Inchigeela Pitch bought and developed.
- 1977 Dan Horgan of Lyrenagaoithe reached his 100th Birthday on 3-2-77.
- 1978 Under the title of *Seanchas an Tailliúra*, stories from Tim Buckley (The Tailor) were published. The information had been collected in 1947 by Sean O Cronin of Macroom . Stories from the tailor in this book included stories from his own home in Kilgarvan, and the teachers and pupils of Keimaneigh School.
- Denis Walsh, Keimaneigh wins a Minor All Ireland hurling medal. He adds another minor, a junior and a Senior (1984) in later years.
- 1985 Jeremiah Twomey wins All Ireland Shearing title. Inchigeela Mid Cork Champions.
- 1986 Mrs Juila Quill reached her 100th birthday .
- was also the year that John O'Driscoll had a very successful tour of Australia with Ireland. He had an outstanding record in football while playing for Cork .He won three All Ireland Medals (2 senior and 1 under 21) in those years.
- 1989 Cardinal Manning of Los Angeles and Ballingearry passed away. He was born in Ballingearry 15th of Nov. 1909. He was ordained in 1934, became Bishop in 1946 and finally a Cardinal in 1973
- 1989 was also the year that Scoil Mhuire won the Under 14 *IC* Vocational Championship Final. It was the first county success for the school but what made the win histortic is that 6 girls played with the boys with 2 other girls the only subs.
- 1990/91 John Cronin of Gouganne Barra won All-Ireland titles in the Apprentice Carpenter of the year awards. Gene O'Callaghan Derryvane achieved the same in mid-1980s.. Ballingearry Soccer Club formed. Leaside Soccer Club in Inchigeela, was formed a number of years before.
- 1992 Ballingearry win Mid Cork and repeat the feat in 1994.
- 1995 Sean O Crodáin , Inchanossig retired in this year . He was runai at Colaiste Na Mumhan for over 50 years and taught in Rathpeacon near Blarney. He sadly passed away in 1998. Deirdre Harrington, Keimaneigh wins a Junior All Ireland Medal to add to her U-16 and Minor medals.
- 1996 Neilius Leary reached his 100th Birthday. Ballingearry win Mid Cork Junior B Championship.
- 1998 Aux. Bishop John Buckley of Gruaige, Inchigeela, becomes Roman Catholic Bishop of Cork and Ross. Bishop Buckley was born in 1939 and was ordained a priest in 1965. He was also President of Farran Ferris College in 1976, went on the be parish priest in Turners Cross in 1984 and then was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Cork in 1984
- 1998 The first World title came to Ballingearry when Paudie Cronin of Gougane Barra won the World Intermediate Sheep Shearing title. He was the first Irish person the win this competition. He was also All Ireland Lamb Shearing Champion in 97/98.
- 1999 Population of Uibh Laoire estimated at 1800.

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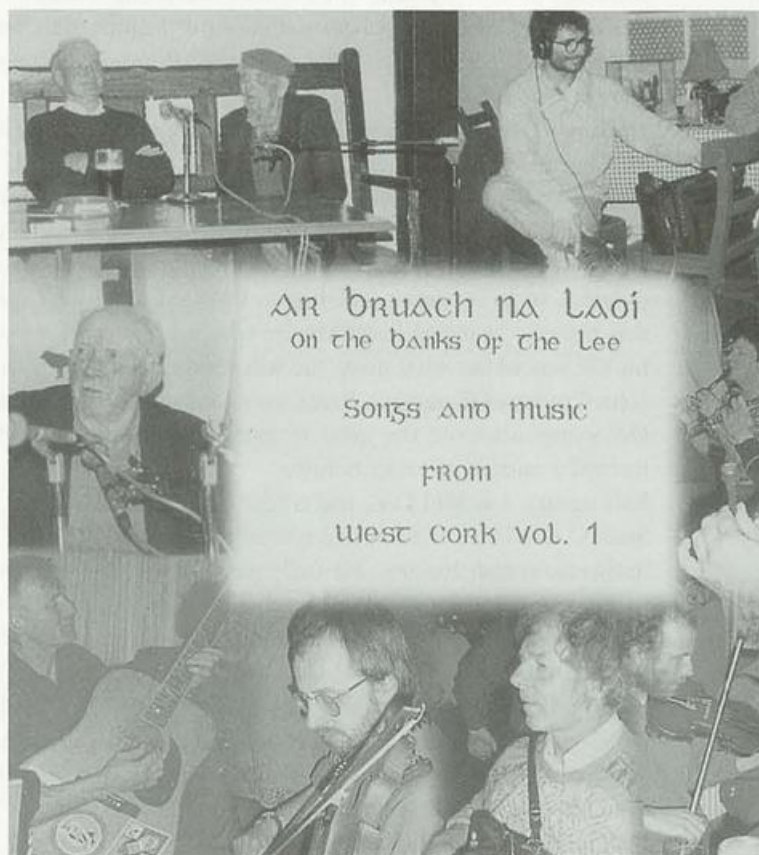
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Ar Bruach Na Laoi/On the Banks Of The Lee
Songs and Music from West Cork Vol. 1

Track Listing

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Single Again | (Noreen Ring) |
| 2. Clondrohid Parish | (Ger Wolfe) |
| 3. 3.Reels | (Various) |
| 4. A Mháire Ní Laoire | (Michael Ó Muineachain) |
| 5. Maidin Cois Leasa | (Michael Ó Muineachain) |
| 6. Peaceman For the State | (Connie Jamsie O'Leary) |
| 7. Is your wife gone away | (Josie Lucey) |
| 8. Polkas | (Various) |
| 9. Beantraí Siar Ó Theas | (C. Bn An Bhreathnaigh) |
| 10. Iveleary Hills | (Patrick Dineen) |
| 11. Cappabuí Murder | (Eibhlís Uí Thuama) |
| 12. Reels | (Various) |
| 13. Cá Rabhais | (Sile Uí Chroinin) |
| 14. Gortaveer | (John Kelleher) |
| 15. Wed To Another | (Connie Jamsie O'Leary) |
| 16. The Lark in the Morning | (Various) |
| 17. Ar Bruach Na Laoi | (Eibhlís Uí Thuama) |
| 18. Nineteen Years Old | (Josie Lucey) |
| 19. The Trees Are Growing Tall | (Ger Wolfe) |
| 20. The Rakes Of Mallow Set | (Various) |



A Farm Workers Story

by John Manning, originally of Tirnaspideoga.

In the 1930s, the late Seán Ó Críodáin, beannacht De lena hanam, who was a schoolmate of mine, sat and passed an examination and was awarded a scholarship to Carysfort Preparatory Training College in Dublin. His first appointment was to a three-teacher school in Rathpeacon, the most easterly townland in the parish of Blarney, in the Diocese of Cloyne. In a few years the principal retired and Sean was upgraded. The school was comparatively new, built in 1932, on a site purchased from a local farmer named Dick Walsh, near the Mallow road.

Mr. Walsh had a daughter married to a Mullane man at Rathduff, halfway between Cork and Mallow. When a little girl of theirs got to schoolgoing age it was a goodly distance to Grenagh on one hand, or Burnfort on the other. It is now 1945 and though the war is over, there is still no petrol for private cars. It was decided, or agreed, that the child, Mary, came down to the grandparents, uncles and aunts and attend Rathpeacon School. Sean became friendly with the Walsh's and they with him.

Walsh senior had retired. The son had a Milk Contract with a milkman named Bill Flynn at Dillon's Cross on the North side of the City, four miles away. In the 40's, we had long warm summers and milk wouldn't hold or 'keep' for 24 hours. There was as yet no electricity and the fridge was not invented. Consequently milk had to be delivered twice a day, 8.30 in the morning and 4.30 in the afternoon. These deliveries occupied much of the farmer's time. Sean Ó Críodáin was asked if he knew any young fellow west along who would be willing to come along and do the needful. Sean contacted his brother Danny and mentioned that perhaps one of the Mannings of Tirnaspideoga would be interested. Danny gave me the letter to read. A good character was given of the Walsh's, and I have no doubt but the same was given of me to them. There was no mention of their being extensive farmers. Of course I jumped at the job. It would be cushy, or so I thought. Little did I know what I was letting myself in for.



John Manning and his neighbour Catherine O'Connor in 1989.

In a few days a letter arrived telling me to come along, and directions on how to get there, and to bring my ration book. Tea, sugar, butter and flour were still rationed. I bought a bicycle from the late Jack Sweeney of Tooreenlahard - he lived near me at the time. I tied up my few belongings and headed on for Coachford, Dripsey, Canon's Cross, Cloghroe, Tower, Blarney, Monard Shovel Mills, which was in it's heyday at the time, up the Boreendarg, on to the Mallow Road and there was the School, and Walsh's a few hundred yards further on. It was the month of September. They had threshed the week before. I arrived around mid-day. Jim, my boss, introduced himself and Mary, a stur-

dy lively girl who was to call me in the morning at 7 o'clock.

After a meal the afternoon was spent tidying up the stallyard and washing and greasing the milk-butt (as it was called) and the runners. It was shaped much the same as the old farmer's manure butt, but was a lighter structure and mounted on springs. A nine inch-wide length of board stretched across served as a seat. In a few hours a brother Sean arrived home from Dunlops. Later, another brother Dermot arrived from the O.K. Garages, and yet again another brother Dick arrived home from University, where he was doing medicine. He qualified in 1948 and took up duty or practice in Wakefield Hospital in

Leeds. That wasn't all - the next to appear was a posh lady off a bus. Her name was Nellie, a Milliner in Mannix & Culhane's in Washington Street.

Boy, was I embarrassed and felt very much out of place. All were strong hefty men and I discovered later that they were on the local tug-of-war team. The old man used boast that he had four sons to shoulder his coffin to Grenagh Cemetery. Strangely enough, three of them have long since gone to their eternal reward.

With such a large number in the household there was no way I could be accommodated therein. I was given a bed in a loft over a storehouse of various farm equipment - a harrow, a scuffer, a seed machine, as well as two-prong pikes, four prong pikes and shovels, but no foodstuff. My room was approached by a step ladder. I say 'step', not rungs. As yet there was no toilet facilities in either building. A two-inch-square wooden chute, out through the wall at the back, served as a urinal. It was stuffed with some material to keep out the draught. Rural Electrification had not come this way just yet, but households were being canvassed before I left. A candle and matches got me to bed, and write a note home. I felt extremely down-hearted and disappointed. However, the bed was comfortable and I slept well.

Morning came, Mary called, cows driven in, milking by hand, pony rounded up and harnessed, a hurried breakfast and off we went, Jim accompanying. Rathpeacon is a high townland - well, at least it's not level like the adjoining townlands - down Sweeney's Hill, on to the Commons Road, over Blackpool Bridge, into the Watercourse Road, Leitrim Street, Coburg Street, McCurtain Street, up Summer Hill to St. Luke's, where I was to collect the Examiner each morning, and woe betide me if I should forget, up Ballyhooley Road to Dillon's Cross and there was O'Flynn's at No. 152 Sun Row. At this stage now the delivery would be down to the one run per day. I was introduced to O'Flynn, his wife, two sons and two daughters, each having their own areas, delivering milk in pints and quarts from door to door. The Contract was for 16 gallons per day, or as near as. If the supply showed slackening off, an extra milking cow was purchased. We emptied our churns, and on the way home Jim took me to another O'Flynn's in Oliver

Plunkett St., butchers, where I was to collect rashers and sausages every Saturday. Eugene Sullivan, Lios, worked here. Next on to Rice's Cash Stores in Grand Parade where I was to collect the week's groceries - this was a standing order. Next, to Kingston's in Shandon Street where I was to call occasionally for sheep's heads for greyhounds, and lastly to McLernon's at Blackpool Bridge for three pr. bread each day. There were no cars or lorries or trucks on the streets, only all horses and ponies. My pony would stay 'put' at my stops provided I secured one wheel with a short length of chain and a hook.

From the highest point of the land on a clear day I could see Shehy, like an upturned eggcup, some forty miles away in the distance. The highland of Mashanaglish outside Macroom hid the view of Douce and Doughill. A view of the three peaks could be seen, again, on a clear day from a point a few hundred yards past the Fox and Hounds Pub on the road to Templemichael from Dillon's Cross. Come Saturday night and my pay was beside my tea-plate 1.5/-, 25 shillings, and my card stamped. After a year the pay increased to 1.8/-, and I had 1.11/- when I left in 1947. There was no half-day or day-off, or holiday. It would be many a long day before a body would be a millionaire on that kind of money of 25 shillings per week of seven days.

Stretches of the Mallow Road and the Cork to Dublin Railway could be seen from every part of the land. When three buses went out in the evening it was time to stop,

one bus for Newmarket, one for Limerick and one for Newcastlewest, and when a mail train arrived from Dublin it would be 6 o'clock. Should it occur that we wouldn't see the buses, we would hear the Angelus Bells or the hooters from the Sunbeam and Gouldings factories.

One morning, a year later in 1946, I had delivered my milk and was returning to the farm. I had traveled twenty yards, when, lo and behold, a link in the ridge-band gave way and the shafts dropped down, not to the ground, but as far as the chains of the britchen allowed. The pony, which was normally an easy going animal, dashed off at an alarming rate, and no amount of pulling or tugging would get her to slow down. Off down Ballyhooley

Road and Summerhill to the Coliseum, three quarters of a mile, when I got on the level I thought I could get her in check, but no! Passersby stared at me, taking me to be a ferocious driver. I can tell you it was no laughing matter. "An té ná bhfuil láider, ní foláir do beit glic". What did I do, but guide her on to a tubular bus sign and got one shaft inside it. That held her, but with the force of the impact, I was pitched forward over the pony's head on to the street. Luckily I wasn't hurt but was in shock. It was my good fortune that the harness had no spikes sticking up. Several people came to my assistance with twine and straps. The sign was bent over from the vertical to the horizontal. I cannot remember if there was a Garda on the scene. A week later Walsh got a bill for 10/-. He wasn't very pleased. I could have been killed.

Come 1947 and rationing was discontinued and petrol was beginning to flow once more. A method of farming that Walsh and his neighbour had was to club together on a Saturday when the brothers were off, and hire a lorry to draw four, five or six loads from the Corporation Dungyard. Refuse at that time was mostly horse dung and household ashes. It was filled and emptied with four prong pikes. This was brought along and emptied near the heap of farmyard manure, which was a feature on every farm at the time. This heap was mostly straw and was cut in berches with a hay knife. The occasional bits of glass and broken bottles were to be found in the Corporation manure. On a day when Jim and self were forking over the manure, we put the glass to one side on the ground, to be collected later. Teatime came up, off with the boots and in. When we had sat at the table the old man went out and when he saw where we had left the glass he came in in a fury and banged our two heads together. It hurt me pretty well, and I can tell you, as well as hurting physically, it hurt my dignity. I had a good mind to smash my cup into his face, but I held my peace. He never apologised or said he was sorry. He was the type of man who would do the same on the morrow, if the occasion warranted. I could never care one whit for him after that, and I left soon after.

Books About the Lee Valley

Máire Uí Shuibhne

Since it is one of the most historical and scenic parts of the country, it is little surprise that the Lee Valley boasts a huge number of books recording its beauty and its past. These come in all shapes, sizes and prices and are of interest to local history addicts, emigrants, anthropologists and the wider public.

A favourite for those with an interest in Uíbh Laoghaire is **Beatha Bharra : St. Finbarr of Cork** by Pádraig Ó Riain and don't forget the booklet **Ar Bhruach na Laoi**, a collection of songs from the area which comes accompanied by a tape or CD. Ballingearry Historical Society has recorded the history of Uíbh Laoghaire in word and pictures. They have published two volumes of the **Uíbh Laoire Collection** and each year produce a historical journal.

Macroon, at the heart of the Lee Valley, is well documented. Barry O'Brien, C.E.O. of Cork County V.E.C., and himself a county footballer of the 1970s, has produced four publications about his native town.

Macroon G.A.A. Club History 1886 – 1987 is available and his series, **Macroon – a chronicle**, comes in three parts, each priced at £2.50. They contain essays on a variety of subjects and characters pertaining to the town and its surrounding parishes.

Unfortunately, **Macroon through the mists of time**, an historical geography of the area by Denis Paul Ring, is out of print. Containing a plethora of photographs, maps and references, it is eagerly sought on the secondhand market.

Memories of Macroon by James Kelleher, tells of Mount Massey, Baldwins, Art O'Leary, the Civil War and events such as Fair Day, the coming of the circus, the pictures etc. This 100-page illustrated book sells at £5. History books dealing with Macroon and its surrounds are many. **Rebel Cork in Insurrection – 1798** by

Tomás Mac Cormaic, tells of the execution of Robert Hutchinson at Codrum House, Macroon and the subsequent betrayal of his comrades by the infamous Malachy Duggan. **O'Sullivan Burke – Fenian** is a recent publication from Mary C. Lynch and Seamus O'Donoghue.

Michael Galvin, a most prolific author, has written of Famine times in Kilmichael, Kilmurry, Newcestown and Enniskeane. **Black Blight**, like all of Galvin's books, sells at £10. His story of Land Reform, Labour and Home Rule in mid-Cork, comes in two parts, *The Slow Sunrise* and his recent publication **Morning Star**.

Another local book dealing with the **Great Hunger is Famine in Muskerry – An Drochshaol**. It is a profile of the sixteen parishes which comprised Macroon Poor Law Union in the mid-nineteenth century. With the aid of maps and Many schools have celebrated anniversaries with publications recording their history. The oldest school in Ireland is in Kilmichael, where **Memories of Dromleigh** looks back to its roots in 1840. **Ballyvongane N.S. 1845 - 1995** recalls 150 years of education in Aghinagh. **Tales of the Launey Valley** is the most recent school publication, commemorating a hundred years of education in Ballinagree.

General books which refer to the Lee Valley include **West Cork – a sort of history like and theirs not to do or die** by Tony Brehony. **The Cork Anthology** by the late Seán Dunne includes excerpts relating to Gougane Barra, Cuil Aodha, Carraig a' Staighre, Macroon and beyond. **Lovely is the Lee** by Robert Gibbings, is a must for everyone interested in the region, but is now difficult to access. **Family names of County Cork** is another favourite. **Songs and Poems of the Launey Valley** is selling very well.

Social development is charted in many volumes. Michael Galvin's **To Make a**

Railway tells of the effect the Cork-Macroon train system had on the district and why it was closed down. Seamus O'Donoghue's **Flooding of the Lee Valley** studies the impact of the Lee hydro-electric scheme on a community. **Hold your Horses** is a history of Ballinagree, as reflected in the lives of the Horgan Brothers, masters of the horse plough. **Harvest** by Majella Flynn tells of grain growing, harvesting and milling in Ireland. **Cumann Peile Gael na mBan** is a Ladies Gaelic Football Association publication.

Cill na Martra has a lovely book simply entitled **Cill na Martra, Muscraí Co Chorcaí**. A collection of music by Connie O'Connell, entitled **Ceol Chill na Martra**, is now available.

Albert Keating of Coolnidane, Macroon, has **Selected Poems** to his credit. DÚnal Healy, C'il Aodha, has compiled an exhaustive history of the Healy clan, entitled **The Healy Story**. Kevin Corcoran, an inveterate walker, has written many books for people with like interests and **West Cork Walks** is particularly attractive for the active environmentalist in the Lee Valley.

Books on **Michael Collins** are many and varied. They include biographies by Tim Pat Coogan, Justin Nelson, James Mackay, Margaret Forester, Francis Costelloe, Meda Ryan, Vincent McDowell and León Ó Broin. Recent religious publications are **Footprints of my Journey** by Fr. Flor Lynch and **From the Heart** by Mary Casey.

Cape Clear Island – Its people and landscape by Eamon Lankford and **Mackerel and the making of Baltimore** will also have general appeal.

Most of the above books are available from local sources and from Macroon Bookshop, 026/41888.

We received the following letter via e-mail recently from Ron Cronin in Boston USA concerning the efforts under taken by people while researching their family history.

Cronin & O'Leary's in Boston

Dear Ballingeary and Inchigeela Historical Society,

After searching for almost twenty years for my roots in Ireland recently I found a positive piece of proof of my grandmother's (Ellen O'Leary) birth in Inchigeela, County Cork. I'm of 100% Irish descent, my mother being born in Glenamaddy, Galway and my d to research my family tree. While in the Archive office in the basement of the Massachusetts State House in Boston I looked through the original old archives and found that my Grandfather was buried in Boston. I visited my Graewed. This to prevent my duplicating my research in the future. Soon after my start the State House archive office was shut down to photocopy all the documents and move them and the office to a new State Archives office building being built next toaureen and her husband Ed, got interested and involved with the family search. Maureen got some enjoyment years later as she kept coming across my early record keeping procedure, the "RC" initial while she was researching and viewing micro-film documents.

During the 80's we pieced together much information about my mother's family but little of my father's Cork famioking up family lore. I visited Cork City Hall and as quickly as possible tried tall's record went as far back to include Richard's birth in 1872. Without a Street address or exact birth location the clerk told me I would be there all day. I left and went to the main Library. I planned on sending a letter to

each Cronin listed in the telephone book until I saw the number of listings. I started to photocopy the Cronin pages and decided it would be easier toNo less than half the crowd for twenty feet turn to look at me, I quickly replied "The pretty one from Boston." My wife was embarrassed, but one women came up to me whose sister lives on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. She was on her way t

talked to her sister about how the letter came to her.

The first time I came across the name Inchigeela was while I was at the Boston Catholic Archdiocese office near Boston College in Chestnut Hill. I was looking up my Father's and Aunts' baptism rec focus. I looked up Inchigeela in books, the Internet, Casey's Black River study of 1952, wrote Father Twomey at the Parochial House and asked everyone I knew about it. I got lucky one day when a Mr. Peter O'Leary of Inchigeele, a Nationalist, (Patrick "Pagan" O'Leary abt.1823) and her Grandfather Cornelius (abt.1799). Peter even mailed me a copy of a Lee Valley News article from January 1996 about Patrick. The article provided information about Patrick joining the UGrand Uncle Patrick now, the O'Leary and Cronin homesteads in Inchigeela. In closing and due to Peter O'Leary, my brothers and sisters and I are planning a trip to Inchigeela next summer/fall to attend the Cronin Family Reunion pages and decided it would be easier to just buy a telephone directory. After leaving the library to meet my wife outside I spotted her about a half block away walking toward me. While getting her attention I decided to do my own Cronin census of Cork and hollered "Mrs. Cronin" to her and the sidewalk crowd. No less than half the crowd for twenty feet turn to look at me, I quickly replied "The pretty one from Boston." My wife was embarrassed, but one women came up to me whose sister lives on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. She was on her way to the Post Office to mail her sister a letter. After speaking for 10 minutes I wound up bring the letter home with me and leaving it in her sister's mailbox with "HAND DELIVERED" written across the envelope. I'm sure she was puzzled and amused after she talked to her sister about how the letter came to her.

The first time I came across the name Inchigeela was while I was at the

Boston Catholic Archdiocese office near Boston College in Chestnut Hill. I was looking up my Father's and Aunts' baptism records from St. James The Great Church in Boston. My Aunt Helen's record included a marriage record with a tiny notation off to the side stating "Married 1912-William Riley; born Inchigeela, Ireland." A lead, I was off and running. I felt it in my bones and made Inchigeela my main focus. I looked up Inchigeela in books, the Internet, Casey's Black River study of 1952, wrote Father Twomey at the Parochial House and asked everyone I knew about it. I got lucky one day when a Mr. Peter O'Leary of Inchigeela read a note I posted on the Internet. Peter O'Leary is involved with the annual O'Leary Reunion held in Inchigeela at Creedon's Hotel. Peter not only confirmed my Grandmothers birth in Inchigeela, but that of her Father (Jeremiah O'Leary abt.1825), her Uncle, a Nationalist, (Patrick "Pagan" O'Leary abt.1823) and her Grandfather Cornelius (abt.1799). Peter even mailed me a copy of a Lee Valley News article from January 1996 about Patrick. The article provided information about Patrick joining the U.S. army at 17 in California (then a part of Mexico) and becoming a wounded veteran of the Mexican American War (1844), a carpenter, traveler, New Yorker, an original Fenian recruiter, and unfortunately also a Mountjoy prisoner. I am actively searching for information about him, my Grand Uncle Patrick now, the O'Leary and Cronin homesteads in Inchigeela. In closing and due to Peter O'Leary, my brothers and sisters and I are planning a trip to Inchigeela next summer/fall to attend the O'Leary Family Reunion being held at the Creedon Hotel. Needless to say, I look forward to the day I'm back on Irish soil in Inchigeela to complete one of life's circles, the one my Grandmother started 120 years ago.

Ron Cronin.

The Papers of Daniel Corkery (Donal Ó Corcora) held in the Boole Library, University College Cork.

Carol C. Quinn. B.A., D.A.A.
Archivist,
Boole Library



Daniel Corkery

To many Irish people the name Daniel Corkery (1878-1964) is synonymous with the title of his most well known book *The Hidden Ireland*, a seminal work in which Corkery put forward the case for the wealth and depth of the native Irish literary tradition. In it he argued that modern Irish writers should try to emulate their forbears, rather than take on the genres of English authors. It is as a cultural nationalist that Corkery is widely remembered today a sometimes stern opponent of those writers (Frank O'Connor and Sean O'Faolain to name two prominent examples) who strayed as he saw it from the true path of Irish literary tradition. However there were many facets to this remarkable man who in his youth studied French and German so he might read influential authors without translation. He was also a master of the art of the short story, and his collections *The Hounds of Banba* and *The Stormy Hills* contain many wonderful vignettes of contemporary rural and urban life in Cork city and county. He was an accomplished watercolourist, a dramatist and co-founder in 1908 of the Cork Dramatic Society. He was an inspiring teacher for many years and of course he was an avid supporter and member of the Gaelic League and worked for many years as one of their roving teachers giving Irish classes throughout Cork county. This part of his life is commemorated each year in Inchigeela

where the Daniel Corkery Summer School is run every year and in Ballingeary (where he came early in the century to Colaiste Na Mumhan). A friend of both Tomas MacCurtain and more especially Terence MacSwiney, Corkery was a Nationalist who saw his role post Independence as promoting the native Irish language and its literary tradition.

Preserved in the Boole Library, UCC are Daniel Corkery's papers as donated after his death by his nephew Bill Corkery. This collection of letters, diaries, notebooks, drafts of publications and lectures provide a unique resource for the student of modern Ireland in the era pre and post Independence. The collection especially provides an in depth account of the undercurrents in the organisation of the Gaelic League in that period, and lays bare the formation of the mind of one of that organisations most illustrious supporters. The surviving papers span those years of Corkery's life devoted to Arts and Literature, with nothing surviving from his childhood or the era pre 1900 and only a few items reflecting his career as a teacher and educationalist. The bulk of the collection is formed by various drafts of his books, short stories, essays and notes from his voracious reading. Very little remains from his early days with the Gaelic League but an account of those years can be found in the manuscript of a lecture 'Corcaigh le linn m'óige'¹

What can be best gleaned from the early records however is an insight into the mindset of Corkery, the young man, and his hopes and aspirations for himself at that time. Between the period July 1907 and August 1910 Corkery kept a somewhat sporadic diary, recording conversations and literary discussions with friends, comments on and quotes from books he was reading, impressions of sights and people he encountered during the day and his hopes and fears for his literary endeavours.

In his diary Corkery rarely referred to his working life and his role as a National School teacher, a role at which he was considered gifted, but considered himself to be drudgery. On the 12th August 1907 he remarks ruefully "A teachers is one of the most melancholy lives." On occasions his job included looking for truant children and on the 20th August 1907 he records a visit to Paul Street, then a notorious slum in the centre of Cork, where everywhere he encountered "an ashamed look in the faces of those who opened the door for me; their faces always unwashed, with hair hanging, and effort made to draw the clothes over the breast, half naked children running around". It is such lanes as these turn out soldiers".

In November 1908 Corkery became a founder member of the Cork Dramatic Society, which had

their headquarters at 'An Dún' in Father Matthew Street, Cork. It was here that he came into close contact with Terence MacSwiney amongst others, and in 1911 the CDS put on a production of 'The Epilogue' by Corkery together with 'Holocaust' by MacSwiney and 'The Lesson of his Life' by Lennox Robinson. Although never very active in the Republican movement Corkery was a Nationalist and sympathetic to the aims of MacSwiney and MacCurtain. In 1952 he wrote to many of his old contemporaries asking them to record their memories of Easter 1916 in Cork, some of the replies to which are still extant.²

After 1916 Corkery channelled his patriotism into working within the Gaelic League to promote cultural nationalism. By 1921 he was travelling throughout West Cork organising Irish classes, recording as he went stories of the War of Independence told to him³. This association remained one of the touchstones of Corkery's life until his death in 1964. This is reflected in the Corkery papers by the large volume of correspondence stretching over almost 30 years between Corkery and his friend the prominent Gaelic Leaguer Tomás Ó Muircheartaigh. These letters are probably the heart of the Corkery collection. Invariably these two men discussed most often in their letters the subject that lay closest to their hearts; the Gaelic League and the struggle for an ongoing literary tradition in Irish. Cut off somewhat in Cork from the cut and thrust of the movement in Dublin, Corkery relied on Ó Muircheartaigh to keep him informed about activities within the League and to keep him up to date with the comings and goings of various friends and acquaintances.

It is revealed also through this correspondence that Ó Muircheartaigh also provided a vital support for Corkery in proof reading and advising him on his works written in Irish. Although devoted to the Irish language Corkery never achieved the easy fluency of the native speaker and it was one of the great regrets and ironies of his life that he felt he never mastered the language enough to write novels or stories in it. The letters paint a vivid insight into the internal wrangling of the Gaelic League throughout the 1940's and 1950's, and give a revealing insight into the fears and hopes of two of the last 'Irish Irelanders'. Often lenient in print Corkery could be cutting in private about authors who failed to follow his dictums and whose dedication to the Gaelic tradition was less than his. A friendly rivalry or game playing is also revealed in the letters where Corkery and Ó Muircheartaigh (a native of Kerry) would try to best each other at coming up with archaic or local Irish phrases each hoped would be unknown to the other.⁴

In 1931 in recognition of his contribution to Irish Literature Corkery was appointed Professor of English at UCC, a post he held until his retirement in 1947. One of the other candidates he beat for the position was his one time acolyte Sean O'Faolain. It was one of Corkery's regrets that throughout his life he always had to work to support his family and so could never devote himself to writing full time in the manner O'Faolain and O'Connor did. Although he never married, Corkery was responsible for the care of his widowed mother until her death after which he lived with his sister who acted as housekeeper. The surviving letters and

statements between Corkery and his publishers show just how little he earned during his lifetime from royalties and reveal quite starkly how with his family responsibilities he would never have been able to support himself if he gave up teaching. In 1917 with his first collection of short stories *A Munster Twilight* and his novel *The Threshold of Quiet* both in print he earned less than £50 in royalties for the year⁵. In 1925 he received just under £2⁶.

Since their deposit in the Boole Library the Corkery papers have been cleaned, sorted and listed. A full Descriptive List of the content of the collection is available at the staff desk in Q-1, the basement floor in the library. The Archives Service is open from 9.30 – 4.30 (closed 12.45 – 2.15) Monday to Friday. Researchers who are not students or members of UCC staff can consult the collection once that have a valid research reason. The collection cannot be accessed for casual browsing. Unfortunately given limitations of space school groups on not at this point be catered for. Anyone wishing to enquire about the Corkery collection can ring 021- 903180 or e-mail HYPERLINK mail to: c.quinn@ucc.ie.

The 2000 Daniel Corkery Summer School takes place on July 16th to 21st next. Contact Joe Creedon, Inchigeel, Co. Cork. Phone (026-49012)

¹ All items within the Corkery collection have an individual reference number. These numbers are accessed through the Descriptive List, the main finding aid for the collection. The collection reference number is (UC/DC/20).

² UC/DC/41FF

³ UC/DC/1

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⁵ UC/DC/647

⁶ UC/DC/655

Table of Family Names in Uibh Laoghaire over the Years. Numbers of Families living in the Parish.

Name	1767	1854	1993
(O)Leary	62	53	41
Cronin	27	29	25
Kelleher	0	13	25
Cotter	12	26	19
Lucey	0	10	19
(Mac)Sweeney	17	16	18
Twomey	8	7	17
Murphy	29	14	15
(O)Sullivan	23	22	14
Creedon/Creed	0	11	14
(Mc)Carthy	25	15	12
Lynch	5	7	12
(O)Callaghan	6	11	11
Moynihan	0	7	11
(O)Riordan	16	12	8
Buckley	0	5	8
Healey	1	4	7
Dineen	1	2	7
(O)Shea	1	3	6
(O)Mahony	5	7	6
Lehane/Lyons	8	8	6
(O)Connell	16	2	6
Murray	0	2	5
(O)Crowley	7	4	5
Galvin	0	3	4

Family Names in Uibh Laoghaire.

The adjacent table shows a listing of the 25 most common Family names in our Parish in number order. This has been analysed from Surveys which are available for the three years of 1767, 1852 and 1993.

The 1767 figures are taken from the Parliamentary Return for the Parish in that year.

The 1852 figures are taken from the Griffiths Survey.

The 1993 figures are taken from the Electoral Roll in that year.

In each case, we are counting numbers of Families, not Population. The Surveys differ slightly, but the Analysis gives a reasonable picture of the spread of the names at that time.

The general picture is one of continuity and little change from year to year. Most of the names in common use today, were there in about the same proportions in 1767. There are a few exceptions. Family Groups like the Kellehers, Luceys, Creedons, Moynihans and Buckleys appear to have come into the Parish since 1767, and in that sense are relative newcomers.

Individual Family Names.

1. **(O)Leary.** These are the descendants of the original Chieftains and Landowners of the Parish, and not surprisingly are still the most numerous.
2. **Cronin.** Like the O'Learys, the Cronins were from the Corcu Loigde tribe from South Carbery. One large section of this tribe may well have moved into Uibh Laoghaire in the 12th.c. with the O'Learys, and have been here ever since. They are reputed to have been Erenachs, and this could have been in relation to the Bishop's land in Gougan Barra.
3. **Kelleher.** These are a bit of a mystery to us. Peadar O'Donovan states that they were Dal Cassian in origin, and came from Co.Clare into Co.Limerick at the period when the O'Briens were kings of Munster.
4. **Cotter.** Of Danish origin-the macOitirs. The main families were very rich and influential in East Cork, and this branch may have come from the East.
5. **Lucey.** Again, little is known of their origins, but the name Lusaigh is clearly Gaelic.

6. **MacSweeney.** This Family were Scottish and came over to Donegal in the 13th.c. to offer their services as Gallowglas to Irish Chieftains. One branch were recruited by McCarthy Muskerry of Blarney and Macroom, and were in his service from then on. They were essential to the maintenance of the McCarthy overlordship, and were well rewarded with land and Tower houses locally.
7. **Twomey.** Another Corcu Loigde family who probably came to Uibh Laoghaire at the same time as the O'Learys. It has even been suggested that they were a branch of the O'Learys which was formed during the period when they were in South Carbery.
8. **Murphy.** This is the most numerous name in Ireland, but is made up of many different and separate families who happened to choose the same surname. One such family was an important branch of the Muscraige tribe in Muskerry, North of Ballyvourney, who were dispossessed of their lands first by the Cogans, Barretts and other Normans, and later by the McCarthys, Our Murphys are probably from this branch.
9. **(O)Sullivan.** Next to the McCarthys, the O'Sullivans were the most important branch of the Eoganacht tribe, who were kings of Munster for some 500 years. One major branch of the O'Sullivan Beares were located at Carriganass Castle just beyond Kealkil, and it is not surprising to find some members of a branch of this family moving the few miles down the road to Uibh Laoghaire over the centuries.
10. **Creedon.** This family were Chieftains in Co.Antrim but were dispossessed and moved South. Became traditional Harpists of note. Mainly centred on Macroom and Ballyvourney now. Some spell their name **Creed**.
11. **McCarthy.** The name of the most senior Clan in Munster. The Overlord of Muskerry Barony, and therefore of the O'Learys, was a McCarthy, who was based on Blarney and Macroom Castles. The McCarthys in our Parish are probably descended from one of the other local branches such as Tuath na Dromann, or Gleann an Chroim. But there was a McCarthy occupying Greater Augheras who may be the ancestor of many of them.
12. **Lynch.** Many Lynches believe they descend from the Galway family of that name, or the Dal Cassian Lynches from Co.Clare. But there was also a Lynch who was a member of the Corcu Loigde in South Carbery, and I would expect this to be the descent of our local Lynches.
13. **(O) Callaghan.** Were one of the principal Eoganacht tribes, their main centre being Clonmeen on the River Blackwater.
14. **Moynihan.** May have been a Muscraige tribe from the Western boundary of Muskerry, and living in Co.Kerry as well as Co.Cork.
15. **(O) Riordan.** These Riordans were probably from the Muscraige tribe. They were numerous in Muskerry, and were often Captains of Soldiers for the McCarthys and other families.
16. **Buckley.** One of the few surnames which is not derived from an ancestors first name, but is simply from the Irish buachaill, a young man. Believed to be from the Fir Maighe Feine, or people of Fermoy, this name is more frequent in East Cork than in the West.
17. **Healey.** This family were of the Ui Eachach tribe, but became associated with Donoghmore where they were Erenachs.
18. **Dineen.** Our Dineens were probably of the Corcu Loigde, and came up to Uibh Laoghaire with or soon after the O'Learys. There was another Dineen family in Fir Maighe Feine, and the two became somewhat intermingled.
19. **(O)Shea.** Probably from the well known family in the Dingle area of West Kerry, but it is unclear as to how and when this branch finished up here.
20. **(O)Mahoney.** The main branch of the great Ui Eachach tribe, their kingdom centred in the Bandon area. One of their offshoots, O Mahoney Ui Flainn Lua, was established in Kilmichael, and many of our Mahoneys come from this branch.
21. **Lehane/Lyons.** This was a large tribe in the Fermoy area, descended from a branch of the Corcu Loigde. Later, having been forced from their lands by Norman knights, they were well known as Physicians, in which role they served McCarthys and others, and as a result became scattered over the County.
22. **(O)Connell.** Despite an obvious association with the famous O'Connells, this family were probably of the Corcu Loigde, and nothing to do with the former Derrynane family.
23. **Murray.** Generally believed to be an alternative form of Murphy, which is understandable when the two names are considered in their Irish form.
24. **(O) Crowley.** These were firmly established in the area to the North of Dunmanway, although they originated in Connacht. Their Castle was in Ahakeera, and over the centuries there were numerous interchanges with the O'Learys, some friendly, others not.
25. **Galvin.** Probably the Gallivans from Co.Kerry who were followers of the Eoganacht kings, the O'Moriartys.

All these 25 families are seen to be Gaelic or Irish-Norse in origin, and most have some local association which explains their presence in Uibh Laoghaire.

Conclusions.

The names which make up the majority of our population today in this Parish, are Gaelic in origin, and have strong local associations. But all of us with a Gaelic name have to remind ourselves that our origins are not "pure" in any sense. Over the years we have all had introductions from other cultures such as Cromwellian, English Planter, Protestant, Scottish, Huguenot, Palatinate or other stock. There is no need for self delusion. Indeed such infusion of foreign blood is good for the stock line. In cattle terms, "there is nothing better for a pure Friesian herd than a good Hereford bull!"

When we look at our Parish descent we are right in taking pride in the Gaelic nature of our forebears, but must also consider the other introductions of people from other places which have generally improved our characteristics. In Uibh Laoghaire this can be evaluated by looking at the minor names, ie. those with only a population of one or two, and this will be the subject of a second part of this article in the next Journal.

GOUGANE COLLECTION (1984-1985)

"Growing up in the Sixties"

NIGHTDRIVE

Star-studded sky
above Gougane
kept me company
as I drove home.
Pity Pat Kavanagh
never knew
this wild starry place
for no poet praises
this local beauty.
"Fine for tourists
but what about us?"
Farmers prefer green fields,
high milk yields and a drop of rain.
What use are lakes
and worse still-hills?
Who profits from purple heather,
gold-flecked furze
and red-berried mountain ash?
Place of my heart and home
I return and rememeber..

~~~~~

## SUNDAYS IN THE VILLAGE

We spent silver sixpences  
in Kelleher's shop  
every Sunday after Mass.  
Eating ice-creams  
to observe the Sabbath.  
In Creedon's pub  
red faced men  
sank pints of porter  
to quench the weeklong thirst  
of field and bog.  
Their women went about their weekly shopping:  
swopping stories,  
sharing secrets,  
even scandals in long low whispers!  
The village hummed with life  
from near townlands and back the hills.  
People meeting, laughing, talking  
neighbours, friends, relations.  
No anonymity here  
or not for long  
a stranger stayed a stranger.

## JACK KEARNEY

Father of fun  
larger than life  
he burst into my childhood  
on his battered bicycle  
with images of Long Island.  
Singer of songs  
weaver of magic stories....  
Fairies, wild women and wakes,  
white horses in the night!  
I see him  
on a Sunday evening  
calling on his way  
up the caol  
to set other traps  
while warning me  
they'd break my bones  
before they'd let me go.  
September sees him always  
fixing up the thresher in the haggard  
happy swigging "white stuff"  
or a keg of porter.  
I see him sometimes  
at the bog  
on hot summer afternoons  
turning turf between his yarns  
or piking hay into the shed  
before the weather broke in mid-July.  
But-he is gone  
those days are lost  
and gone forever.  
No more barefoot toes  
sticking to tar bubbles  
coming home from summer school;  
no August nightfalls  
drawing warm milk  
from stall to churn  
and back again.  
No more.  
Old people leave us  
one by one  
and in their absence  
we are weaker  
but strong, calm places  
stand forever.

## MARY LEHANE

You'd never think that hillside  
 held a houseen like it.  
 The bóithrin is now bedecked  
 by honeybees and hives.  
 That time it was an open house.  
 Nights of laughter  
 at our "scórafócting"  
 echo down the years.  
 There were some good acres  
 a few rocky outcrops  
 a donkey and car  
 some cats, a dog  
 and a brother  
 smiling in the corner.  
 Her erady smile  
 with soft words of welcome  
 always put us at our ease.  
 The paraffin lamp threw shadows  
 through the kitchen  
 on dark wintry nights  
 while the door was always open  
 in the good weather  
 to let the light and callers in.  
 She knew joy.  
 We met like magnets around her  
 sharing stories and small secrets.  
 May you rest in peace, dear Mary.

## FULL CIRCLE

Flickering candles in the island church  
 held out against the rainy wind  
 of a mid-April evening  
 in Gougane.  
 What do I expect to see  
 when I drive in?  
 Each time I come to worship  
 I know the scene is set  
 and has been since the ice-age.  
 So-why wonder?  
 Times there are, the mountain-top  
 is dark and brooding  
 sheltering the valley  
 from the world without.  
 But on sunny summer evenings  
 those same hills  
 bend down  
 caressing holy waters  
 with the gentlest streams.  
 Place of peace and pines:  
 My heart comes home to you.

NORA O'RIORDAN,  
 GORTNALOUR,  
 INCHIGEELA.



Gougane Barra, Co. Cork

# Ice, Gales and Moving Bogs

by Donal Fitzgerald

Often when watching the television news some horrific scenes of a natural disaster are flashed on our screens. They may be of a hurricane with a fancy name wrecking havoc on parts of America, severe flooding and landslides somewhere in Asia, volcanoes, earthquakes or huge forest fires raging out of control over thousands of acres. Our usual reaction is to think how lucky we are to escape such severe weather conditions and natural disasters and to convince ourselves that disasters of great proportions could never strike poor old Ireland.

However a look through the history books would tell us otherwise and show us that many disasters have happened in the past and could very easily happen again and adversely effect our comfortable lifestyles. Without warning they have happened before and the resultant deaths, disease and severe hardships suffered were beyond imagination.

The great famine of 1845/48 has been well documented and everyone in Ireland is familiar with the happenings of those dreadful years. The potatoes were planted as usual, and as conditions were good, farmers predicted a bumper crop. The stalks were green and healthy looking but overnight a fungus which had originated in America struck the potatoes wiping out a large portion of the crop. The potato was then the only food of the vast majority of the 8½ million population and their outlook was now disastrous. The crops of the following three years were also a total loss. Starvation, disease and death were now the lot of the people of this land. One and a half million of them died and a similar number fled the country never to return. It took the country and the economy decades to recover but the population never recovered.

## The Forgotten Famine - The Great Frost

On the other side of the world a great volcanic eruption on the remote Kamchatka peninsula in Russia pumped thousands of tons of smoke, dust and ashes into the atmosphere in 1739. Most Irish people of the time would have been unaware of this occurrence and if they were aware of it they would not have known that it was responsible for the dramatic climatic changes in Ireland for the next two years. Nothing could have prepared them for the Great Frost of 1740 or for 'bliain an Aire' (the year of

slaughter) of 1741. Severe Arctic winds, hitherto unknown in these islands, caused chaos in the country and along the seacoast. A great many ships sank and the crews were lost in the icy water. The terrible winds abated after a week but the severe cold intensified in January 1740. Potatoes which had not been stored indoors were lost and hunger added to the great hardship of the people. The land, rivers and lakes were frozen over and vast quantities of fish were to be found dead on the shorelines. The ice was reported to be nineteen inches thick on the Shannon and shortcuts were being taken across rivers and lakes, sometimes with fatal consequences. A funeral ran into trouble when a thin patch of the ice was been crossed and twenty mourners were drowned. The country was in the grip of Siberian weather never before or after experienced here.

At first many did not realise the seriousness of the situation. By the end of January and early February food of all sorts was becoming very scarce. Many were delighted by the great novelty of the ice and went dancing and skating and held carnivals and banquets on the frozen lakes sometimes roasting a sheep. Hurling matches were also played by teams selected by the local gentry.

Country people who had turf stored for the winter could stave off the intense cold but the necessity to keep the fires high saw supplies running out earlier than usual. Coal was not available in the towns and fuel was collected where possible with trees and hedges soon stripped bare. The frozen rivers could not turn the waterwheels and mills were unable to grind oats and wheat thus adding to the food scarcity.

The frost ended in late February but this, unfortunately, did not ease the situation. The Spring rains did not come and the severe cold north winds persisted. By April the country had a parched bare look as nothing was growing. There was no sign of wildlife, birds and other animals had all died off. Crops of wheat and barley planted the previous Autumn had failed and grass and other fodder for farm animals was non-existent. Cattle and sheep were

dying all over the country of starvation. No rain fell and the terrible drought and cold continued with snow falling in May from Cork to Antrim. The price of wheat doubled and there were no potatoes available, while the news from Europe was equally bad with bad harvest prospects and food scarcity. Storms, blizzards, great amounts of snow and widespread flooding were reported from August to December. The end of December was particularly bad with snow and a great frost which lasted for ten days.

From January to late June of 1741 the frost and drought continued and the weather suddenly changed in early July. The rains fell and the remainder of the summer was very hot. The harvest was fair with a reasonable crop of potatoes and a good crop of wheat. Quantities of wheat were also imported from America and the prices of foodstuffs eased. Thus ended the great frost. Over 310,000 died of starvation, fevers and plague out of a population of 2½ million.

### **The Night of the Big Wind**

Old people in times gone by were never sure of their age or the date of their birthday and when the Old Age Pension was introduced in 1909 some found it difficult to establish whether they were entitled to it or not. In most instances parish records were not available but if a person could produce any evidence that he or she was born in the year of the night of the Big Wind or thereabouts then that increased his or her chances considerably. January 6th, Little Christmas, 1839 is a night that was much talked about for a long time in this country, and one hears reference to it occasionally to this day. There was a great calm as the sun was setting and the western sky was a blaze of the most wonderful colours. However a few hours later the sky changed and snow fell accompanied by a great blizzard. This was followed by the fiercest of gales which lasted for twelve hours from 8 pm to dawn. Houses were stripped of their roofs, the thatched cottages suffering the most damage. Falling thatch was blown onto the open hearths and furniture and belongings were lost in the flames. Huge old trees were blown down all over the country causing death and damage to people, stock and buildings. The strong winds overturned many ships and others were dashed to pieces on the rocks. Over 1,000 sailing ships went to the bottom with losses of 40,000 lives. Farmers left their houses to look after their stock and drove them out to the open spaces to avoid being killed by falling trees and falling houses. The tremendous winds wrecked havoc throughout the country and rivers overflowed their banks sweeping trees and bridges before them. Next morning the wind had abated but it left a trail of desolation in its wake.

### **The Moving Bogs**

In the old newspapers we often come upon another phenomenon, the Moving Bog, which happily has not happened for some time now. Monday 28th December 1896 was fair day in Killarney and the people of the Rathmore district slept uneasily waiting for daylight to walk over the hill to the fair. Many had been awakened by a strange sound in the night as if an earthquake was taking place. When daylight arrived they found the road blocked "with the mountain". As they assessed what had happened they realised that the mountain was on the move "in fits and spurts". They could hear the rumbling and hissing sounds as the bog rose and fell in its movement. The panic stricken people soon discovered that Donnelly's house had been swept away taking with it Con, his wife and five children. Over 200 acres of the bog was on the move in a southerly direction taking everything before it, leaving a deposit 30 feet deep in a ravine. It followed the course of the Ownachree river into the river Flesk. Donnelly's children's ages ranged from 1½ years to 16 years and were Daniel, Humphrey, Margaret, James, Lizzie and Kate. Kate was the sole survivor as she had been staying with her aunt. The bodies of Con, his wife and five children were found some ½ mile, others 1 mile and 1½ miles from where their home once stood. No trace was found of his hay, outhouses, three cattle and few pigs.

An inquest on the victims was held in the schoolhouse at Gneeveguilla. The verdict was "death by suffocation". The funeral to Knocknagoppal included all kinds of horse drawn vehicles and over 100 farmers on horseback. The bog continued to move until New Year's Day. It then came to rest covering hundreds of acres of pastureland.

## INCHIGEELA CHURCH

Inchigeela Church was built in 1842 by Rev. Jeremiah Holland, parish priest at the time and it was a building that was admired by everybody for its beautiful cut stone and arches. At the consecration the Church was described as a perfect gem of architectural beauty which never fails to attract the admiring gaze of the passing tourist, adding as it does a most enchanting effect to the charms of the scenery.

Rev. Jeremiah Holland was a native of Barley Field, Kilbrittain, where he was born in 1787. He was ordained in Maynooth in 1813 and served as a curate for 3 years in St. Finbarr's before his appointment as parish priest of Uibh Laoire in 1816 on the transfer of Fr. Tom Lane that year to Ballincollig. Uibh Laoire at the time of Fr. Holland's appointment was said to have required for its pastor a man of the most indomitable energy and the most ardent zeal religion.

Rev. Jeremiah Holland's assignment to Uibh Laoire was to have been a short duration on the promise of Bishop Murphy "not to leave him long in purgatory". He was destined to spend the remainder of his life there and to tackle parish problems single handed until 1857 when Rev. Jeremiah Carey became his curate. Fortunately for himself Rev. Jeremiah Holland cared not for faction or feud nor for Whiteboys or Tories who were numerous in the area. His courage was known to have been equal to all contingencies as he rode on horseback by torch light over the mountains to attend sick calls, led funerals over the high rough terrain and to bring the blessing of Mass and the Sacraments to his people in these distant outposts. Until he began his own Church building programme in earnest.

Fr. Holland is believed to have said Sunday Mass in what was known as "Inchigeela Cottage", a cottage in the village owned at the time by a tailor named Barry. Several contradictory accounts of this cottage prevail, but of the Churches accredited to Fr. Holland himself there can be no confusion. His Church of 1822 was built at the south of the village of Inchigeela. It was a small building to which an extension of about 12 feet was later made, giving it an area of 52' x 27'. This lasted as a place of worship until 1842. From that date until 1905 it was used as a schoolroom and after that as the parochial hall.

The second Church, that of St. Finbarr and the Holy Angels in the townland of Carrleigh was erected in 1842 at Fr. Holland's own expense, a sum that ranges from £450 to £1,200 according to tradition.

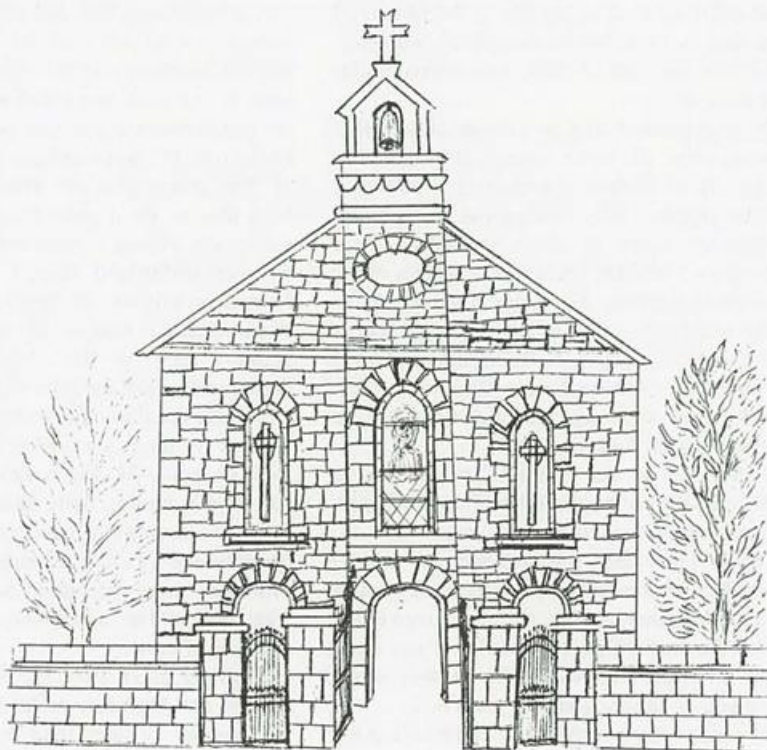
In educational terms Rev. Jeremiah Holland was not slow to avail of the advantages of the National School system from which he secured several well furnished schools which were an improvement on the five already existing schools. The many fine schools and Churches erected by him and other good works will be a lasting monument to his memory. He died on 17th of January 1864 and was succeeded by his nephew and namesake whose pastorate in Uibh Laoire lasted until 1888.

### From a newspaper report of the time:

"On the morning of Wednesday the 20th of January, (1884) the remains of Rev. Jeremiah Holland, whose death was announced a few days ago, were deposited in the grounds attached to the parish Church of Inchigeela. Previous to the internment, the Solemn Office and High Mass were celebrated in the Church which was filled to excess by the parishioners, amongst whom not a dry eye could be discovered. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, an immense assemblage of clergymen presented themselves to pay the last tribute of respect to the venerable departed in whom they recognized during life all the qualities that adorn the minister of God and exalt the character of man.

After the High Mass, a procession of the clergy chanting the funeral service proceeded from the Church, the coffin being born in the rear by four stalwart men, and then began a scene to which, for its touching effect upon our feelings, we have never witnessed a parallel. The immense concourse of people rushed around the coffin and vented their feelings in one loud prolonged wail, in which the solemn strains of the Benedictus were completely lost. Old men wept like children, while women and even some young girls and boys sobbed aloud as for the loss of a dearest friend, and well indeed might they weep for it is notorious that the good priest often saved many amongst the woes of enjunctments and the paupers grave, by the ready offer of his purse on the gale day, when they should otherwise have appeared penniless before the ruthless landlord or the unrelenting agent.

Oh happy must be the soul of that priest whose remains after a long life go down into the grave as those of Fr. Holland did amongst the tears of his sorrowing parishioners and the earnest prayers of those to whose best interests he devoted all the energies of his manhood and all the solicitude of his declining years. Where but in Inchigeela could such a spectacle be witnessed."



# In Search of Máire Bhuí ní Laoire

by Brian Brennan

My maternal grandmother first told me about Máire Bhuí ní Laoire when I was a small boy in short pants, with scabs on my knees.

— She is your great-great-great grandmother, she told me during one of those long summers of my early childhood when I journeyed down from Dublin on the train and spent the months between the end of school in June and the beginning of school in September living on the Twomey family farm in Ballyvourney. I couldn't imagine what a great-great-great grandmother would look like. My grandmother looked older than anyone I knew.

— Go down the boreen and bring back another galleen of water from the well. Cut the thistles in the meadow, then go to the shed and bring back some turf for the kitchen fire. Peel the poppies, dust the settle, and bring in the eggs from the henhouse.

That's the long-ago voice of my widowed grandmother, as I like to imagine it. There never seemed to be an end to the work that had to be done on this small farm where she lived with her second-oldest son, John Pat. Her oldest son, Mikey, abandoned his birthright when he took off for England during the Second World War.

My grandmother, Hannah, was one of the Burkes of Inchibeg. Her father John Burke was the oldest son of Máire Bhuí's fifth son, Alexander Burke. Máire Bhuí was married to a horse trader turned farmer named James Burke. That's how I trace my genealogical connection back to the celebrated folk poet of West Cork. My grandmother Hannah moved to Kippaghs after she married Michael Twomey in 1913, and she lived most of her life on the farm until she died in 1971. My mother Maud, who married Jack Brennan of Naas, was Hannah's oldest daughter.

My grandmother told me about Máire Bhuí during one of those many afternoons in Kippaghs when there was nothing to do but sit at the kitchen table, looking out the window across the valley to where St. Gobnait's old churchyard held the grassed-over graves of my Twomey ancestors. The fields rising up on the other side of the valley looked like a patchwork quilt of green squares. *Forty shades of green*. I would think of those fields, years later, when the Johnny Cash song came wafting across the airwaves from America.

— She wrote the poem, Cath Chéim an Fhiaidh, said my grandmother. Then my grandmother would sing the poem to me.

I never knew that poems could be sung. I thought that poems had to be memorized with your eyes clenched tight, and then given out in class like the multiplication tables. If you stumbled or forgot the words, the Brother would slap you on the ear and call you a eejit.

They didn't teach Cath Chéim an Fhiaidh at my school in Dublin, so I never learned the words. Though I had a famous poet in my family, I

could never tell my classmates about her. There was no opportunity for the subject to come up. Máire Bhuí ní Laoire, Yellow Mary O'Leary, what an unusual name. I stowed her name away somewhere in the back of my mind, and turned my attention to other things.

I grew up, left school, went to college, became a civil servant and a part-time professional musician, then emigrated to Canada.

I became a journalist in Canada, continued to moonlight as musician, married a French-Canadian lass from Prince Edward Island, and we raised a daughter, Nicole. When she turned 22, Nicole went to Ireland for a year. In Canada, they call this getting in touch with your roots. Nicole got in touch with her roots, and returned to Canada with a wonderful gift for me: A rare copy of a little red book, *Filíocht Mháire Bhuidhe ní Laoghaire* by an tAthair Donncha Ó Donnchú, M.A. First published in 1931, third and last printing in 1950. Oifig an gSoláthair, Baile Átha Cliath.

Máire Bhuí ní Laoire, how long had it been since I heard that name? This was 1992, and I had been gone from Ireland for 26 years. I leafed through the little red book and wished I could remember more of my Irish. "Rugadh Máire Bhuidhe Ní Laoghaire ar Thúirín na nÉan i mBliaín a 1774, agus is ann a chaith sí a saoghal le linn a hóige go dtí gur phós sí Séamas de Búrca timcheall na bliana 1792." *Máire Bhuí ní Laoire was born in Tooreennanean in the year 1774, and it was there she spent her early life until she married Seamus Burke around 1792.* Would that the rest of the words could come to me so easily.

I tried translating bits and pieces of the book with a tattered old copy of Dinneen's Irish-English Dictionary at my right hand. No such luck. Every Irish word that stopped me cold seemed to have three or four possible meanings in English. If I had managed to get some kind of flow going with the words, I might have been able to get a general sense of what the author was writing in much the same way that you can understand Hamlet when it is performed in Russian, or understand Finnegan's Wake when it is read out by Niall Toibín. But I couldn't get to first base with Father O'Donnchú. I put the little red book away and turned my mind to other things.

But not for long. Something kept drawing me back to this book which this long-ago priest had been moved to write about my ancestor. I needed to know more. How did a farmer's wife, illiterate and a mother of nine, become one of Munster's most celebrated folk poets of the 19th century? I needed to know more about this ancestor of mine.

I faxed off pages from the little red book to cousins and friends in Ireland whose grasp of the Gaeilge is surer than mine. I thought I would fashion their translations into a manuscript which I would circulate privately among

family members. The translations came back in bits and pieces, and I started to put together a text which — like the O'Donnchú original — was part genealogical exploration, part social history, part anecdotal biography, part literary preservation and analysis, and part homage to a woman who clearly was the poet of her people and the voice of the dispossessed.

I looked around for a printing firm that would turn the manuscript into book form, and good fortune brought me to the doorstep of The Collins Press in Cork, which undertook to publish the manuscript. That led to my taking a quick trip to Cork and Inchigeelagh, this past summer, doing some additional research in the Special Collections department of the library at University College Cork, and taking photographs of such local landmarks as the grave of Máire Bhuí in the old Inchigeelagh churchyard, the ruins of Carrignacurra castle, and the commemorative monument installed in 1998 in the Pass of Keimaneigh by the Bantry and Ballingeary historical societies.

Thanks to such supportive individuals as Helen Davis and Seán Ua Suilleabháin at University College Cork, and Seán O'Sullivan and Peter O'Leary of the Ballingeary Historical Society, I was able to complete a manuscript considerably expanded in scope from the O'Donnchú original. That indefatigable hotelier and social historian Joe Creedon introduced to a further translation of *Filíocht Mháire Bhuidhe ní Laoghaire* which proved to be a most valuable additional resource. It was privately published in 1996 by two American priests, Fr. Richard P. Burke SJ of College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Mass. and Father Seán Sweeney SMA of Dedham, Ma. They produced it as a non-profit venture for circulation to 150 people, and their labour of love immensely aided mine. All the mysteries of the little red-backed book were finally unlocked for me.

This literary labour of love has brought me great satisfactions and a few regrets. I am gratified to have been able to give wider recognition to one of the very few female Irish-language poets to achieve name recognition during the period from medieval times to the present. But I regret not having had an opportunity to fully experience Máire Bhuí's poetry in performance. What must it have been like to witness her singing the laments she composed in response to local tragedies, assuming ownership of her community's grief, and expressing it in all its complexity with her words, appearance, behaviour and voice? One can only just imagine.

Brian Brennan's literary biography, *Máire Bhuí Ní Laoire: Poet Of Her People*, will be published in 2000 by The Collins Press in Cork.

A major course in Máire Bhuí's poetry is being taught by Seán Ua Suilleabháin, this year, as part of an MA program in modern Irish in University College Cork.

## Major Michael O'Leary V.C.

Michael O'Leary was a very brave young soldier, serving in the British Army during World War I, who was awarded the Victoria Cross (VC) for conspicuous bravery in the field of battle.

The VC is probably the most prestigious and coveted award for bravery in the World. Awarded for outstanding deeds, it ranks before all other honours in Britain. Very few are awarded, and these are all heroic and magnificent acts of valour.

The medal was instituted in 1857 and is normally only awarded during times of War. It is a simple bronze cross, with a deep crimson ribbon which the proud recipients wear before all other medals or honours.

No one can wear a VC because of some deed done by their father or ancestor. No VCs are sent to the Front with the rations, and no one can inherit one. It marks a single deed of amazing bravery done by that one person, and marks him out for life. In the 140 years of its existence, less than 1400 VCs have been awarded.

By their very nature, many VCs have to be awarded posthumously. Michael was one of the fortunate few to survive in battle, and lived a



At the Presentation of the Victoria Cross to Michael O'Leary  
L to r 2nd from left, the future George 6th ; George 5th; Michael O'Leary; Lloyd George.

long and happy life afterwards. He was the first man in the Irish Guards to be awarded the VC, and this happened in the Front in France in 1915.

He was born in Inchigeelagh Parish in 1888 and belonged to the O'Leary Riabhach family. His father was Daniel O'Leary from Cooleen townland, and his mother was Margaret Lucey.

After leaving Kilbarry National School, young Michael joined the Royal Navy in 1904 and served as a Stoker. He was invalided out due to rheumatism. Later in 1909 he served in the Irish Guards until 1913. He

then emigrated to Canada and tried his luck with the North West Mounted Police until the War started in 1914 when he was recalled to the colours as a reservist, and was sent to the Front with the First Battalion Irish Guards with the rank of Lance-Corporal.

He won his VC at Cuinchy on February 1st, 1915 and was promoted to Sergeant on the field. After a period acting as an aid to recruitment in Britain, he applied for a commission, and was transferred to the Connaught Rangers as a first Lieutenant. He served in Salonika where he was mentioned in despatches, was awarded the Russian Cross of St. George in 1915, and left the Army at the end of the War as a Captain. He married Greta Hegarty of Ballyvourney in 1919, and they brought up a family of six sons and a daughter. He spent several years in Canada after the War, then returned with his family to England. He rejoined the Army at the start of World War 2 which he finished as a Major. He died in 1961 and is buried in St. Mary's Cemetery, Mill Hill, London. His VC was presented to the Irish Guards Regiment by his sons, and is kept in their Regimental Archives.



Michael O'Leary's sons. L to r Liam, Jerry, Danny and Tim.

# Random Reminiscences

by Donnchadh Ó Luasaigh  
Baile An Chollaigh

Is it long since you picked a sciortán? It must have been donkey's years since I performed such a specific operation. Long ago it was quite usual - maybe it still is but that I am no longer in the sciortán circle. I no longer go to the far-away bog footing tough turf and I didn't turn hay for ages, so maybe that is why I am no longer acquainted with them small obstinate little suckers. I suppose they are still doing their act somewhere - maybe it is that I myself am no longer as good a menu in times of plenty. And let me tell you that sciortáns are no fools. What insect or animal is? In fact they say that the bold fox is so cute that he never delegates to anyone as there is no one cleverer than himself available.

But coming to reflect on it, where have all the fleas also gone to? When I was a little garsún in short trousers made by the tailor from Johnstown it was rare to see a young fellow's neck without plenty flea-bites dotted all over it. Nasty little things too, that is the fleas. A relative of mine who spent a night in Athy years ago didn't sleep a wink due to a flea invasion. Isn't it very strange happenings I am recalling. Regression! Or maybe it's my own obsession.

I don't see any fellow lately with a big purple swollen sore finger. Whitlows we called the condition at the time. They were horrible old things and quite painful. I wonder were they caused from being run-down or 'undernourished' to quote the modern lingo. Whatever caused them they were quite common at the time. I haven't seen one le fada an lá. Coming to think of it, in my father's time the five fingers were titled: méar mhór, méar na leiteann (one for stirring the stir-about), peigí flintí, mairí liúití and liúití beag. In later years they were called - ordóg, méar thosaigh, méar fhada, méar an fháinne and an lúidín. The owl fingers are very important lads!

Another complaint which seems to be out of fashion now is the craobhabhar or sty that pestered the eye region. A

sore old boyo! And rightly so as it was said that the three sorest parts of the body were the eye, the knee and the elbow (súil, glúine agus uille). So they said anyhow, más fíor bréag!

The chin-cough was another common malady in my youth with lads barking all over the place. It is now called 'whooping cough' and I have never heard it in recent times since the custom of inoculation against it was introduced. But it was not being prevented then and the disease was quite common. It lasted for quite a while too and was very annoying.

Oh dear, things were so different then - measles, scarlet fever, mumps, scabies, boils and diphtheria were amongst the many illnesses of the day and indeed the night. At least steps were taken to prevent small pox as "cutting the pox" was done on young people, many of us still bearing the distinctive scars on the arm. The generation before mine seemed to have five scars; there were four in mine and it dropped to three or even two later on. Now there are none.

In those far-off days too, visits to or from the doctor were few and far between. So few, that doctor's visits then were linked to kicking the bucket. And if the priest was also seen to visit somebody it was a sure sign of impending death.

I was told a story about a man from Ballingearry who went to the dentist in Macroom to have a few teeth extracted. All went well until your man raised an unexpected shout from him in the middle of the procedure. The dentist got a terrible shock - he thought the pliers had been swallowed or that some major problem had arisen. "What is wrong with you?" he asked with intrepidation. "I forgot to eat my dinner" says your man. So much for priorities! Our friend was later seen in a local eating house doing his best with a big feed despite his oral condition. There were all sorts of species oozing out between his remaining grinders as you will imag-

ine.

There was an another old man who went to the doctor complaining of a terrible pain in his leg. The doctor duly examined the affected limb. "I regret to tell, my good man, that your pain is due to old age" he said. "I don't agree with you at all" says your man, "my other leg is exactly the same age and there's nothing in the world or under the sun wrong with it." So, there you go!

There's an interesting story told of a car that went off the road as it was being driven on the Renanirree side of Béal a'Ghleanna. It was occupied by four tourists. It somersaulted several times and ended up in the very deep valley down below. When at last it stopped, the rattled occupants emerged and, would you believe, took photographs of the incident, or was it the accident. I think it was a miracle that no one was hurt.

On learning the story of how injury was avoided an old local man exclaimed - "They must have recited their prayers very well that morning." It was later rumoured that they never said a prayer in their lives. So, there you go again!

We were told that St. Patrick never visited Ballingearry during his mission around Ireland. It was said that he came as far as Ros Mór, looking westward, raised his hand in blessing and exclaimed - "Beannaím uaim siar sibh."

So now to finish my rambles and to cheer you up I will ask you to give me the longest word in the English language. The best I can do is 'antidisestablishmentarianism'. Maybe you can do better, although some one said one time that 'smiles' was the longest word as there was a mile between the first letter and the last. So you may smile away now if you wish - not alone will you enjoy it, but it will also help your health.

Caithimís uaim é mar scéal!

# Reconstruction of Carrignacurra Castle



This year we can report an exciting new development in the Parish, the long awaited reconstruction of Carrignacurra Castle. There have been tentative plans for this Project for many years, but now it has reached the stage of action.

There were three Tower Houses built in Inchigeelagh Parish by the O'Leary ruling Clan. Two of these, Carrignaneela and Dromcarra, were sadly and wilfully destroyed, and the only remaining structure created during our Gaelic past is the noble pile at Carrignacurra. Even this was not expected to be spared by the vandals, and there was serious demolition of the four corners of the castle done during this century, and in an attempt to cause the castle to fall, and profit to accrue from the sale of stone. Luckily this failed due to the immense strength built in to these structures. I should also add that

this did not occur during the period of ownership by the Kellehers, who always respected the history of this building and did their best to ensure a safe future for it.

The new owner of the Tower House is Mr. Maxim Gormanov, who is of Polish-Russian ancestry, has lived in South West Cork for the past 16 years, is an Archaeologist, and has a long experience of the reconstruction of stone built buildings.

The first task was to save the building from collapse by building up and strengthening the four corners which had been undermined. Then followed the installation of three timber sub-floors at the second, third and fifth levels. More recently the old Loft has been restored, and with it its slated roof. In addition there has been considerable rebuilding of loops, windows, door surrounds, the murder hole and other details.

The whole effect is quite remarkable. All has been done in good taste and to a high quality. The original structure has been faithfully followed, and there have been no new or more modern designs introduced.

We understand from Maxim that the building will eventually be restored to allow its use for residence, and this will require a few

departures from the original to bring the living conditions up to modern requirements. The sub-floor construction will permit pipes and wiring to be concealed, and there will be use of electrics, water from a well, sewage and storm water disposal and central heating.

There is much to do in the garden areas surrounding the Tower House, and a start has been made in building a low wall where the Bawn wall originally stood. Over the next few years the garden will be brought under control and stocked with shrubs etc.

It is also a pleasure to report that there will be some limited access to allow members of our community, visitors with O'Leary connections and other interested parties to see the work in progress, as well as the finished work.

We will be watching progress with interest and will report this in subsequent issues of the Journal.



# Strike Up The Band; Búionn Piobairí Barra Naofa

Bunaíodh Buionn Piobairí Barra Naofa sa bhliain 1928. Roimhe sin bhí "Fife and Drum Band" i mBeal Atha'n Ghaorthaidh agus nuair a cuireadh deireadh leis an mbuionn sin chuaigh roinnt des na baill a bhí ann sa Bhuionn Piobairí. Timpeall an ama sin chuaigh Seamus O Se, Dinny Leary agus Danny Hyde R.I.P. go dtí Shanbally "to buy the Band". Bhí Buionn Piobairí Shanbally ag cur deireadh lena mbuionn fein agus bhí se oiriúnach do mhuin-tir Bheal Atha'n Ghaorthaidh uirlisi ceoil agus culaith eide a bhaint amach mar seo. Is fir ar fad a bhí páirteach sa Bhuionn Piobairí an uair úd agus ar feadh i bhfad ina dhiaidh san.

The Pipe Band was very active in the 1930's as there were a lot of elections being held during that decade. The Band used to take part in the Annual Manchester Martyrs Parade in Macroom around this time. They attended a lot of Feiseanna and other festivals and they travelled to all parts of South Kerry and from West Cork to Kinsale. The local Tug of War team always travelled with them and took part in Tug of War contests wherever they went. The group travelled in Tadhg Twomey's and Danny Shea's lorries. These lorries were covered over and seated.

Diarmuid O hEaluithe, (Jerh Healy), Gurteennakilla remembers his first outing with the Band. When he was about 15 years of age the Band were invited to Kenmare to welcome Eamonn De Valera after he had won an election. It was a very blustery night with high winds and Diarmuid was given the flag to carry before the Band. The wind was so strong that Jerry Moynihan, Lackabawn had to come to his aid to keep the flag from blowing away.

His best memory of his days with the Band is welcoming home the great Dan O Mahony to his native Ballydehob. The townland where Dan was born was called Goirtin Na Coille. Dan was the World Champion Wrestler in the late 1930's having beaten all the top wrestlers in America and other countries. The band were a bit late arriving in Ballydehob and after putting on their uniforms and tuning the pipes they proceeded to play through the town. He remembers a huge crowd being present and bonfires going on and the women dancing on the street. There were two other Bands taking part in the celebrations, one from Bandon and the other from the city. Bandon were leading the Parade and Buionn Piobairí Barra Naofa joined in at the back. The Marshall in charge was up and down the road outside the town keeping everything in order and then he made an announcement over the Public Address that Ballingearry Pipe Band had been requested to lead the Parade. It was a great honour to be chosen by a World Champion and in the following months while Dan O'Mahony stayed around his hometown and organised regattas and other functions Ballingearry Pipe Band were always invited to participate. Sadly Dan O'Mahony was killed in an accident involving his car and a parked lorry while on his way home from a Wrestling meeting in Dublin.



Ballingearry Pipe band 1964

Is cuimhin le Diarmuid la go raibh an Bhuionn Piobairí ag seinnt trí bhaile Scoil Mhuire (Schull) i rith an tsamhraidh. Bhí slua mor timpeall agus bhí roinnt poncánaigh (Yanks) ann chomh maith. Bhí poncánach amháin togha leis an gceol agus thaitin an Bhanna chomh mór leis gur thug sé an dream ar fad isteach i dtig tabhairne agus cheannaigh se deoch do gach duine diobh. Ag an am sin ní raibh ach beirt as an grúpa a bhí ag ól. B'shin 45-50 bliain o shoin.

In the 1950's Fr. Traynor from Lucan in Dublin used to spend a lot of holidays in Gougane Barra and Beal Atha'n Ghaorthaidh. He had a great interest in Pipe Bands and brought down 25-30 members of a Pipe Band from Bray for a week. They camped in James Battie's meadow and spent the week playing music with the local lads. On the Sunday they came to the village and played with Buionn Piobairí Barra Naofa after Mass. Fr. Traynor is buried in Gougane where the old cells are. His grave faces the lake.

In the 1950's the Band re-grouped and at that time Fr. O'Neill P.P. (a native of Kinsale) who had been an army Chaplain obtained army jackets for the Band members. These jackets were dyed black with orange braiding and worn with saffron kilts. By now there were 12 Pipers in the band. Many new members joined the band in the 1960's when it reformed again. Things were going very well at this stage and the band was being trained by Micheal O Laoire R.I.P. and Liam O Liathain both from Cork. Around this time Micheal O Laoire and Fionnbarra O Murchu organised a Mass Bands Competition in Beal Atha'n Ghaorthaidh in which many Bands participated.

I 1962 bhuaíodh an Banna Ceoil duais i gCoracaigh tareis páirt a ghlacadh i gcomórtas Bhannaf Ceoil na Mumhan. Bhuaíodh siad duaiseanna chomh maith i Mala i 1980, 1981, 1982 agus ag an Pan Celtic i gCill Airne.

Ta alan athruithe tagtha ar an saol os na blianta atá luaite ach tá an Bhúionn Piobairí fos laidir.

# The Emmet family connections with Inchigeelagh.

An article in Journal No. 2 mentioned the local story that Robert Emmet stayed in Dooneens in the Parish of Inchigeelagh sometime about 1790. Further details have recently come to light which add interesting detail to this odd fact.

The Robert Emmet in question was the one who became notable for his part in the 1803 uprising, and in particular, for his famous speech from the dock, later that year, when he was on trial for his life.

The father of the famous Robert was also called Robert. Dr. Robert Emmet snr, was born in Tipperary on 29th. November 1729 the eldest son of another medical man, Dr. Christopher Emmet. Robert snr. trained in Medicine in Edinburgh and then took up a post to practise his profession in Cork City. He lived in Hammond's Marsh in the City, and in 1760 married Miss Elizabeth, daughter of James Mason, a wealthy landowner living near Killarney. There were several children of the marriage, including the third son, Thomas Addis Emmet who was born in 1764 and later was leader of the United Irishmen. Robert jnr. was not born until 1778 when his father had moved to Dublin.

But Dr. Robert was not only a medical man. The family had modest wealth, and as was the custom of the time, they invested this in land and property. One of these investments was described in an advertisement placed in 1766. *"To let for 21 years from the 1st. May 1767 a remarkable good mountain farm in the West of the County of Cork, lying about four miles from Inchigeela and eight from Bantry. The lands are known by the names of Dooneens and Dereenvealnasio. They would be let*

*together or in separate denominations or subdivided to responsible tenants. Proposals to be made to Doctor Robert Emmet, Cork."*

It seems that Dr. Robert was not successful in letting the properties and this caused him to make a most peculiar and unusual proposal in 1767.

*"To the out pensioners of Chelsea College, Dr. Robert Emmet having a very improvable mountain farm in the West of the County Cork will give the following encouragement to any such pensioners as shall go out and settle therein. Every settler shall have a lot of twenty acres assigned to him at a very reasonable rent for the term of three lives, and shall set down, rent free for the first three years. He will also make application to secure for them, the premium of £5 which the Dublin Society has been pleased for some years past to give to disbanded soldiers, taking such lands and setting in the Provinces of Leinster, Connaught or Munster, and will to the utmost of his power in every respect assist in promoting their honest industry. Cork, 26 August 1767"*

Even this tempting offer did not bring any Chelsea Pensioners rushing over. The farm remained untenanted, and in 1769 he was still trying to sell it, as indicated in the article of Journal No. 2.

In 1770 Dr. Robert was offered and accepted the position of State Physician which required him to move to Dublin. In January of that year he was trying to dispose of several investments in property in the Cork area, partly because he needed £1,000 as the purchase price of his new appointment. The farm in

Dooneens was still included in his list, and he adds that he holds it by a lease renewable for ever at £20 per year, and half-a-crown for each renewal. It is four miles from Inchigeela, contains about 800 acres, 350 of which have a rich improvable bottom, and the upland is reputed the best in Iveleary... The Doctor being desirous to settle his affairs as soon as possible, will without delay, close with the first offer within the limit of acceptance.

Sadly we hear no more of the sale of Dooneens. He did move to Dublin and take up his new office in 1770, and some of his property was still up for sale during that year, but no more is heard of Dooneens. Robert jnr. was born in Dublin in 1778.

From the date evidence it would seem most probable that the Emmet family, as local lore has it, did use the farm as a holiday home, and this would have included many of the children of Dr. Robert snr. But equally, from the same date evidence, it most probably did not include young Robert jnr. who later became so famous, and who was not born until the family had resided in Dublin for eight years, by which time the farm would probably have finally been sold or let.

It is interesting to note that property sales could linger on for many years in those times, as indeed they do in the 20th century.

I am indebted for the theme to Christy Cronin's article in Journal No 2. And for the further detail to John T. Collins "The Emmet Family Connections with Munster" Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal. Vol. iv.

Peter O'Leary

# The Grehan Family Collection

The Grehan Family Collection is held in the Boole Library, University College Cork. The Grehans owned some land in Uibh Laoire (Inchigeela) Parish including Dromanallig, Ballingeary. The family would be primarily remembered as being involved as landlord to Jerry Mahony, Dromanallig in 1906 when an attempt was made to evict him and his family.

Carol C. Quinn, B.A., D.A.A. Archivist, Boole Library.

Clonmeen is the name of a townland just outside of Banteer, Co Cork. It is also the name given to the house and estate of the Grehan family, a family of Catholic landlords who lived in Clonmeen from the mid nineteenth century until the 1970's. After the sale of the estate Mr. Peter A. Grehan donated his family archive to the Boole Library, UCC, where they are now available for research. Estate records like the Grehan Papers are one of the most valuable and useful types of records for historians trying to piece together Ireland's past. Records exist in collections such as these recording names of tenants who because of their low social standing go unrecorded elsewhere.



Stephen Grehan with his five children at Clonmeen House, c 1935

Estate collections generally contain records which divide into two categories, the personal records of the family involved and the administrative records of the estate itself. This division is reflected very clearly in the Descriptive List (the main finding aid) to the Grehan Collection. A copy of this guide is available for consultation at the reference desk in the Special Collections floor of the Boole Library. The Grehan's, originally prosperous Dublin wine merchants, first acquired land in Co. Cork through a legacy of the lands of Clonmeen left by one John Roche about 1830. Stephen Grehan ([1776] - 1871), the main beneficiary of Roche's will, then set about acquiring more land in the area and also in County Tipperary. This work was carried on by Stephen's son George ([1813] - 1885), who in about 1860 moved from his Dublin home 19 Rutland Square, to take up permanent residence at Clonmeen, where his son Stephen (1859 - 1937) was raised. When the Grehan's first moved to their property in Co. Cork they lived in a small Georgian house now known today as Clonmeen Lodge. In 1893, Stephen Grehan who had married a fellow member of the Ascendancy, Esther Chichester in 1883, built the present day Clonmeen House. Large tracts of land were sold off

by Stephen Grehan through the auspices of the Land Commission throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, but Clonmeen remained as a working farm until the death of Major Stephen Grehan in 1972, after which the property was sold.

Once the Grehan archives had been transferred to UCC they were cleaned, sorted and listed. During the listing process records of similar origin were grouped together into four main sections A, B, C, D each containing records of similar origin and content.

**Section A, Legal Records** is further subdivided by records relating to land title, with a large section containing pre Grehan titles, wills and marriage settlements relating to lands at Clonmeen, and records of trusts administered by members of the Grehan family and finally legal case papers. Trusts and Marriage Settlements are invaluable tools for tracing the dissemination of wealth of a family. They also reveal how rents from vast tracts of lands could be tied up in encumbrances such as dowries and provisions for children and widows. No prominent family would ever

countenance a marriage without first having a settlement drawn up which stated very clearly the assets of a potential husband and how he planned to provide for any future family. A closely knit network of families of similar social class and religious background supporting one another is revealed through the numerous Trusts members of the Grehan family administered on behalf of relatives and fellow members of the Anglo Irish class. These records show that although separated by distance Ascendancy families remained in close contact with each other and shared similar lifestyles and goals throughout the country.

**Section B, Estate Administration**, contains records of the working of Clonmeen home farm and the letting and sale of tenancies as well as records of employment on the estate and within the main house. The Grehan's seem to have generally been regarded as fair landlords and very few records exist relating to evictions or agrarian disturbances which would have included the eviction of Jerry O'Mahony in Ballingeary in 1906.

Copious correspondence relating to the administration of the estate survives. In

the early years of Grehan ownership agents were employed to administer the estate especially the outlining holdings in Kildorrery and Inchigeela, Co. Cork.

**Sub section C 'Family and Personal Papers'** contains those records generated by members of the Grehan family which relate to their day to day lifestyle. Descriptions in this section begin with the records of George Grehan ([1813] - 1885). Both he and his father Stephen ([1776] - 1871), were prosperous wine merchants and members of Dublin's Catholic social elite. Stephen Grehan was appointed the first Catholic Director of the Bank of Ireland, and while at school in France witnessed the beginning of the French Revolution. His son George was a member of the St. Stephen's Green Club and graduated with a B.A. from Trinity College in 1835.

Similarly to most members of their class the Grehan sons completed their education with a 'Grand Tour' of Europe. Stephen Grehan's letters home from his tour describing his route and itinerary are preserved within the collection. Stephen, although born in Dublin, was the first member of the family to live out his life at Clonmeen and it was there that in 1883 he brought his wife Esther Chichester.

Chief amongst Stephen and his family's leisure pursuits was a love of hunting. Both he and his son, Major Stephen A. Grehan, were prominent members of the Duhallow Hunt Club, some records relating to which survive. Stephen had also four daughters May (Mary) b.1884, Magda b.1885, Kathleen b.1887 and Aileen b.1890. A son, George, (1892) died as an infant. The four girls were educated in England at Roehampton Convent, hunt. Their presence in the collection is reflected more through the very fine collection of nineteenth and twentieth century photographs and through references by other family members. All four married conventionally members of their own social group, the families of their husbands all being related to the Grehans through distant ties. The bulk of the nineteenth century material in the collection was generated by Major Stephen (Stevie) A. Grehan (1895 - 1972). Major Grehan went directly from school in England to the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and signed up as a cadet just at the outset of World War I. A

diligent letter writer, over 200 of his letters home written while on active service in Europe, Salonica and Mesopotamia (1914-1922) are contained within the collection. These together, with his diaries, evoke the world of a British Army officer, proud to be part of the British Empire. Contemporary attitudes towards current affairs and international events are all reflected in the letters and diaries, as well as contemporary British attitudes towards those colonised which may now grate harshly, but were entirely reflective of their times. Major Grehan was not given to introspection in his diaries or letters and there is little philosophical musing on the nature of or need for war. Rather he writes an enthusiastic account of soldiers doing their duty cheerfully, secure in the knowledge that they are on the side of right.

Major Grehan resigned his commission in 1937, shortly after the death of his father and returned to Clonmeen to live and work the farm there. His later diaries contain accounts of visitors to Clonmeen, visits made, references to farm work, harvesting, the purchase of new machinery, etc. He maintained his links with the British Army through organisations such as the British Legion, of which he was the North Cork representative. The section dealing with this work, much of which involved investigating hardship cases, is described in 10.4, but the material itself will remain closed to researchers for 30 years from 1996 to avoid any embarrassment to the families of those who contacted Major Grehan and the British Legion. An interesting aspect of social history which this section reflects, is the amount of support given by organisations such as the British Legion to ex-servicemen and their families in the Republic for so many years after Independence.

**Sub section D** then deals with material generated by relatives of the Grehan's which was for various reasons transferred to Clonmeen.

Records generated by the Murphy, Nugent and Johnson families (all interrelated) would have come into the possession of the Grehan family when in 1939 Major S.A. Grehan inherited the Murphy home at Osberstown, Co. Kildare. Although he chose to sell Osberstown, and remain at Clonmeen, some furniture was transferred to Cork and most likely also

the papers and memorabilia now preserved here. BL/EP/G1540 is a unique and poignant document, a history of her family by Mary Frances Murphy with some later additions spanning the period 1879-1912. She writes of her childhood in Dublin and her upbringing by her grandfather, William Murphy of Mount Merrion, who having quarreled with her father over money cut him off completely. Her parents were then forced to move to the continent where they seem to have spent their lives keeping always one step ahead of their creditors. William Murphy together with several members of his family died of cholera in 1849. Mary Frances' father died in 1853 after which she discovered the strain of her life had forced her mother into a sanatorium in Strasbourg. The history ends with Mary Frances's account of bringing her mother home and caring for her.

Other items in the Johnson section reflect the careers of Col. William Johnson and General Christopher Johnson who made their names fighting for various armies in Europe throughout the eighteenth century. A large number, over 500, of 19th century photographs are preserved within the collection. These range from the formal commercial photographs typical of the time, to more informal family shots of holidays abroad, friends and relations. Many of the more informal photographs were taken by Christine Chichester, a noted amateur photographer of her day. Her work is represented in many recent publications of photographic collections.

Far from being merely the records of one family the Grehan Estate Papers contain records both of the Anglo Irish elite they were a member of and also of the lives of the tenants and farm workers with whom they encountered. They are an invaluable source for the local history of the Clonmeen area but also reflect and reveal the decline and virtual disappearance of the class who built and inhabited the 'Big Houses' of Ireland.

Further information about the Grehan's and other archival collections held in the Boole Library can be made by ringing 021 - 903180 or by visiting our web site at <http://booleweb.ucc.ie/search/subject/archives/archives.htm>.

# The War Hero from Morley's Bridge

"Ar mo ghabháil dom siar chun Droichead Uí Mhóra".

So opens Dónal Ó Mulláin's classic song "An Poc Ar Buile", whose first verse can be freely translated as follows:-

"To Morley's Bridge on my way to labour  
With pike in fist, sharing work with neighbour  
What through the mist should I see await me  
On a mountain ridge, but a puck gone crazy"

More than sixty years ago a Morley's Bridge man saw through the mists of the 1930's that there was far more going crazy with the world than a puck goat. Michael Lehané decided that the menace of Fascism had to be confronted and he lived the rest of his life accordingly. What was it that was so exceptional about this man from that Co. Kerry cross-roads, where the road that runs across the Doire na Sagart mountains from Béal ;tha'n Ghaorthaidh links up with the Killarney-Kilgarvan road? How come his praises have been sung across Europe from Spain to Norway, and across the Atlantic in the Canadian city of Halifax, Nova Scotia?

Michael Lehané was born at Morley's Bridge on September 27, 1908. At the age of 19 he commenced his studies at Darrara Agricultural college outside Clonakilty. Economic circumstances were, however, to force him to abandon any hope of a future in farming and he moved to Dublin to work as a builders' labourer. It was there he became active in trade unionism. But his interest in the welfare of his fellow workers extended far beyond these shores. He enlisted in the International Brigades on December 14, 1936 and was accordingly one of the very first participants in the Irish Unit formed by Frank Ryan to defend the Spanish Republic against both domestic fascist revolt and foreign fascist invasion. He went into action on the Córdoba front on Christmas Eve, 1936 where nine of his fellow Irishmen were to be killed. The following month he switched fronts and fought in the Battle of Las Rozas de Madrid where he helped repel the threat to the Spanish capital.

Home on leave for a few months, he resumed work in the construction industry until the building strike of April 1937, during which dispute he became a member of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. He was, however, soon back in Spain in order to participate in the Battle of Brunete in July 1937. Contemporary reports spoke of his heroism under fire from the fascist machine-guns which were located in the Church tower of Villanueva de la Cañada. Lehané rescued many of the wounded and carried them to safety before being severely wounded himself.

In the early summer of 1938, having eventually recovered from these injuries, he began work as an ITGWU member on the construction of Dublin's Adelphi Cinema. But once again the call of the anti-fascist struggle led him to climb back over the Pyrenees into Catalunya and participate in the last great offensive of the Spanish Republic.

It was here that he first met a 20 year old volunteer from Cork City, my father Michael O'Riordan. Both of my father's parents hailed from Ballingearry - his father Micheál from Inchinossig and his mother Julia Creed from Illaninagh - and he immediately struck up a warm friendship with the Kerryman from the other side of the mountain border.

On July 25, 1938 the International Brigades re-crossed the river Ebro and advanced towards the town of Gandesa. Blocking their way, however, was Hill 481, under firm fascist control. Successive attempts by the poorly-armed Republicans to capture it were beaten back by superior, murderous fire-power. Lehané's closest friend on that front, the Jewish Londoner Max Nash, as well as his fellow Irishmen, Paddy O'Sullivan of Dublin, George Gorman of Derry and Jim Straney of Belfast, all lost their lives under such fire. Lehané was wounded on July 31 and carried to safety by my father, Michael O'Riordan, whom he cursed all the way down Hill 481 as every jolting step intensified the pain of Lehané's

wounds. On the following day, Lá Lughnasa, my father was himself wounded in a further unsuccessful attempt to take that Hill.

After the defeat of the Spanish Republic Michael Lehané and Michael O'Riordan were separated physically but not spiritually. 1940 saw O'Riordan imprisoned without trial in the Curragh Internment Camp and Lehané working on the building-sites of Birmingham. The generous Kerryman forwarded pocket-money to his imprisoned comrade and corresponded with him on the unfolding character of World War II. Hitler had to be stopped by hook or by crook! However, Lehané had a dilemma - perhaps it was the Kerry Republican in him, but he just could not bring himself to put on a British military uniform. He later informed O'Riordan that he had now found the solution to his problem - he would join the Norwegian Merchant Navy and sail in the trans-Atlantic convoys ferrying much-needed war supplies for the Allied cause.

My father subsequently learned of his comrade's death on one such convoy and on May 7, 1989, he unveiled a memorial plaque in honour of Michael Lehané at Morley's Bridge itself. Lehané's sacrifice captured my own imagination to such an extent that when I came across a poem by the internationally-acclaimed Spanish Republican poet, Rafael Alberti, which seemed to conjure up the spirit of a man such as Lehané, I was impelled to translate that poem into both of his native languages, Irish and English:-

Má fhaigheann mo ghuth-sa bás ar thalamh  
Beir síos é chun na mara  
Agus fág é ar an trá.

Beir síos é chun na mara  
Guth nach bhfágfar balbh marbh  
Más captaen é ar long chogaidh bán.

" bíodh mo ghuth-sa gléasta  
Le suaitheantais mhairnéalaigh:

Le hancaire ó mo chroí-se  
Gus é ceangailte la réalt  
As a n-ardóidh séideadh gaoithe  
Faoi lán seoil - mo ghuth gan éag!

If my voice should die on earth  
It's from the sea it may be heard  
If you leave it on the shore.

So take my voice down to the sea  
That a captain it may be  
Of a white ship of war.

Oh let my voice be decorated  
With the emblems of a sailor:

With an anchor from the heart  
That anchor reaching for a star  
And from that star the wind will rise  
With wind to sail - my undying voice!

It was a great privilege for me to be able to recite that poem in honour of Lehané in Spain itself at an International Brigades Commemoration near the Jarama battlefield on October 8, 1994. On that occasion I was afforded the added privilege of personally greeting Rafael Alberti himself. That outstanding poet has since died in his 97th year on October 28, 1999, with his ashes scattered at sea in accordance with his wishes.

But if the fact of Michael Lehané's own death at sea had become widely known by the early 1990's, the precise circumstances still remained elu-



Michael O'Riordan (Cork) in the uniform of the Spanish Republic.

sive. However, more than half a century after that death the key to unlock the mystery was provided. On the occasion of the SIPTU Delegate Conference in Killarney in October 1995 I wrote an article for my own (and Lehane's) Union journal *Newsline* on the hero born only eighteen miles away. The then Norwegian Ambassador to Ireland forwarded this article to Leif Vetlesen, a seaman veteran of those same war-time convoys. By utilising the date of birth provided on Lehane's International Brigade identity book, Vetlesen was able to establish the following facts from the Oslo records:-

On October 2, 1941 Lehane signed on as a fireman/stoker with the Norwegian steamer "Brant County". On one such convoy sailing out from Belfast in November 1942 three ships were suddenly sunk by torpedoes but Lehane's own ship came safely through. It was otherwise with the convoy that left Halifax, Nova Scotia on March 2, 1943. Eighteen Nazi German submarines set out to attack it on March 8 and on the evening of March 10 six of them went into action. The initial battle with the Allied escort ships saw one ship torpedoed with, however, two of the subs being hit in turn. But the remaining subs succeeded in torpedoing six merchant ships, the last of them being the "Brant County".

In the course of a few seconds during the early hours of March 11, 1943, the midship, including the top bridge, was enveloped in flames, gas and smoke. The Captain and four other crew members (including three in the engine room) perished immediately. Twenty three crewmen managed to launch the life boat. The remaining nineteen were also attempting to release two rafts but were too late:-

"Suddenly, when the life boat was about 225 yards aft the ship, the fire on board reached the ammunition part of the cargo, and the "Brant County" exploded. In the light from the flames, almost reaching the sky, they could observe big pieces of iron and other wreckage being flung into the air. Shortly afterwards, pieces of wreckage started to rain down around the life boat and where the "Brant County" had disappeared".

Altogether, twenty-four men perished on board, including Michael Lehane. On February 17, 1996 Leif Vetlesen related Lehane's story in the Labour daily newspaper *Arbeiderbladet* and in a further article on February 22 his fellow convoy veteran Bard Haugland also wrote:-

"Much indicates that Lehane suffered the cruel fate common to many stokers during the War. The torpedoes of the submarines usually hit midship where the engine and steam boilers were situated. Consequently the stoker on watch would perish in an inferno of explosions and scalding hot steam. However, there are

*signs to the effect that Michael Lehane's bereaved will get his Norwegian war decorations post mortem, an honour and well-deserved thanks for services rendered!"*

Because of the diplomatic and publicity campaign initiated by Leif Vetlesen, this eventually happened. On January 11, 1997 Oslo's foremost newspaper *Aftenposten* featured Michael Lehane as its lead story, carried an interview from Birmingham with his only-surviving 88 year old brother Stephen, and highlighted the interest taken in Lehane by our then Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dick Spring. On January 27 *Aftenposten* was able to report on the successful outcome with another front page headline - the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had finally decided to award to Stephen Lehane the Norwegian War Medal won by his brother's heroic sacrifice. And so it was that on May 11, 1997, a celebration of Michael Lehane's life took place both at Morley's Bridge itself and at the Michael J. Quill Centre in Kilgarvan, where the Norwegian Ambassador presented to the Lehane family the War Service Medal of Norway that had been earned by Michael's courageous life and death.

Two years later, on Victory-in-Europe Day, May 8, 1999, I found myself in Halifax, Nova Scotia and came across a newly-erected memorial to the members of the Norwegian Navy who had been lost at sea or buried in Nova Scotia during the Second World War.

As this had been Michael Lehane's last port of call, I realised that this was effectively his own gravestone as well as that of his Norwegian fellow-seamen. I laid a wreath in his honour and on Canadian radio I related Lehane's story and recited Alberti's poem. Two weeks later, on Norway's Constitution Day, May 17, 1999, the Norwegian Community in Halifax also paid tribute to Lehane at this memorial, ensuring that his Irish voice, in Alberti's words, did indeed live on again on the waterfront where he had been last ashore.

*"From Morley's Bridge his way he made  
A pike in his fist, fellow-workers to aid,  
Death cheated in Spain, Atlantic waves guard his grave,  
War convoys set sail, for freedom life gave".*

**Manus O'Riordan**

Manus O'Riordan is Head of Research with SIPTU and a grandson of Ballingeary.



First page of military identification book of Mick Lehane. For some months the language of command of the International Brigades was French; later all orders, documents etc. were in Spanish.

# Townlands of Uibh Laoire — Biggest to Smallest

Did you ever wonder which were the biggest or smallest townlands in Uibh Laoire. Here they are, all 118 of them.

|                                      |                    |                     |     |                     |     |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|
| Currahy                              | 1,076              | Gortaveer           | 436 | Teergay             | 235 |
| Coolmountain                         | 963                | Milmorane           | 431 | Coolcaum            | 230 |
| Coomroe                              | 953                | Gorteennakilla      | 423 | Dromcarra North     | 230 |
| Rossalougha                          | 923                | Carrignadoura       | 422 | Kealvaugh Beg       | 229 |
| Cleanrath South                      | 878                | Kilmore             | 417 | Gortnaloughra       | 224 |
| Shanacrane East                      | 866                | Keamcorravooly      | 415 | Gortatanavally      | 218 |
| Turnaspidogy                         | 827                | Tullagh             | 406 | Maulmore            | 207 |
| Augeris                              | 793                | Derryleigh          | 400 | Derryriordane North | 205 |
| Dooneens                             | 751                | Lackabaun           | 396 | Derreenclodig       | 204 |
| Cloghboola                           | 743                | Silvergrove         | 395 | Coorolagh           | 201 |
| Derrineanig                          | 743                | Kealvaugh More      | 390 | Tooreennanean       | 201 |
| Gortnahoughtee                       | 735                | Lackabaun           | 372 | Derryvaleen         | 198 |
| <del>Cooranahilly</del> <i>Cahir</i> | <del>729</del> 733 | Cornery             | 357 | Gortaknockane       | 191 |
| Shehy Beg                            | 720                | Derreen             | 355 | Garrynapeaka        | 188 |
| Shehy More                           | 645                | Derryvane           | 353 | Scrahanmore         | 187 |
| Gortafludig                          | 644                | Inchinaneave        | 353 | Gortsmoorane        | 186 |
| Rathgaskig                           | 607                | Cooleen             | 351 | Illauninagh East    | 186 |
| Inchi More                           | 602                | Bargariff           | 344 | Cloonshear Beg      | 182 |
| Gortnacarriga                        | 595                | Carrigbaun          | 342 | Cappanclare         | 181 |
| Coornahahilly                        | 594                | Milleen             | 342 | Derrygortnacloghy   | 173 |
| Graigue                              | 594                | Derryriordane South | 332 | Kilbarry            | 166 |
| Cooragreenane                        | 572                | Inchinossig         | 331 | Inchigrady          | 158 |
| Cleanrath North                      | 564                | Dromanallig         | 328 | Carrignaneelagh     | 154 |
| Coomlibane                           | 556                | Derreenacusha       | 327 | Tooreen             | 152 |
| Derreenlunnig                        | 542                | Derrynagree         | 320 | Gurteenowen         | 142 |
| Tooreenalour                         | 532                | Inchineill          | 311 | Tooreenlahard       | 139 |
| Shanacrane West                      | 528                | Gortaneadin         | 308 | Gortnamona          | 136 |
| Rossmore                             | 492                | Carrignamuck        | 302 | Dromnagcapple       | 135 |
| Gortnalour                           | 487                | Teeranassig         | 294 | Glasheen            | 130 |
| Lyrenageeha                          | 484                | Coolroe East        | 287 | Scrahan             | 130 |
| Monavaddra                           | 476                | Gortnarea           | 282 | Gorteenadrolane     | 125 |
| Illauninagh West                     | 456                | Derreenabourky      | 280 | Coolnacranagh       | 121 |
| Derreenglass                         | 454                | Inchideraille       | 277 | Carrig              | 119 |
| Cloonshear                           | 448                | Dromcarra South     | 276 | Coomdorragha        | 109 |
| Inchi Beg                            | 447                | Garryantornora      | 264 | Inchigeelagh        | 105 |
| Carrignacurra                        | 446                | Curraheen           | 255 | Coolroe West        | 104 |
| Clogher                              | 442                | Glebe               | 249 | Lagneeve            | 102 |
| Derryvacorneen                       | 439                | Moneylea            | 249 | Cappanaminna        | 99  |
| Derreendonee                         | 438                | Carrigleigh         | 246 |                     |     |
| Tooreenduff                          | 437                | Gurteenflugh        | 235 |                     |     |

# Books at Bantry Bookstore

## New Street Bantry

Tel: 027 50064 Fax: 027 52042

Email: bantrybk@iol.ie www.irelandbooks.com www.bantrybk.com

The following lists is an indicator of the type of books which are available for local research. We hope you will find them informative and that you will enjoy browsing through them. With our resident local historian (Michael Carroll) and archaeologist (Pippa Pemberton), we hope that you will find a visit to our premises stimulating and enjoyable.

We stock a multitude of more general books on Irish history, genealogy and archaeology which you may find of relevance.

10% off for students of History and Archaeology (on such books) on production of student card.

We look forward to meeting you, and wish you the best of luck with your researches.

### Abbreviations used in lists:

HB = Hardback

PB = Paperback

DW = with dustwrapper

(ed) = edited by

New books prices marked with \* are subject to variations due to sterling exchange rate fluctuations.

Lists correct as of 17.11.99

### LOCAL HISTORIES: NEW BOOKS

These books are usually carried as standard stock, and usually take 2-3 days to arrive if temporarily out of stock. All prices in Irish Punts. Prices marked \* are subject to slight variation due to sterling exchange rate fluctuations.

AALEN, F.H.A (ed) (1997): *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape*. UCC: Cork. HB £35.00

BARRINGTON, T.J. (1999): *Discovering Kerry: Its history, heritage and topography*. New foreword by Dick Spring. 1st published 1976. HB £30.00

BARRY, DR. J.M. (1998): *Pitchcap and Triangle: The Cork Militia in the Wexford Rising*. Sidney Publishing: Cork. Limited Private Edition of 500 (books numbered). PB. £20.00

BEGLEY, DIARMUID (1999): *The Road to Crossbarry: The Decisive Battle of the War of Independence* Deso Publications: Bandon. PB £8.00

BREHONY, TONY (1997): *West Cork - "a sort of history like..."* Kestrel Books: Bray. PB £9.95

CADOGAN, TIM (intro) (1998): *Lewis' Cork: a topographical dictionary of the parishes, towns and villages of Cork city and County*. Originally published 1837. PB £15.99

CARROLL, MICHAEL, J. (1992): *The Second Spanish Armada*. A local history detailing the period when the Spanish Fishing Fleet made Bantry Port their base giving the town a vital injection of economic boom, especially during the depression of the "50's". Private Publication. PB £4.00

CARROLL, MICHAEL, J. (1992): *Where the Deer Ran Wild*. A selection of Stories and Folk Tales from Bantry and its Environs. Reminiscences of Bantry in the post-war period; 1945-1960. Also details some major events and local folktales. Private Publication: Bantry. PB. £4.00

CARROLL, MICHAEL, J. (1995): *Wolfe Tone and the French Invasion of 1796*. A Brief History of Events. Excerpt from a Bay of Destiny. Bantry Design Studios: Bantry. Pamphlet. £2.99

CARROLL, MICHAEL, J. (1996): *A Bay Of Destiny*. A History Of Bantry Bay and Bantry from the earliest times to the present day including early Irish history, mythology, legends and local clans. Bantry Design Studios: Bantry. PB. £9.99

COTTER, DENIS (ed) (1999): *Reminiscences and Recipes of Bantry*: A Century in the life of a town, its people and their food. Tit-bits of local history and collection of local recipes. Private publication, proceeds going to the development of public facilities at Wolfe Tone Park. PB. £6.99

CROSS, ERIC (1942): *The Tailor and Ansty*. Mercier Press: Cork. £6.99

DE VALERA, RUAIDHRI, & O'NUALLAIN, SEAN (1982): *Survey of the Megalithic Tombs of Ireland Volume 4: Counties Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Tipperary*. HB £35.00

DU MAURIER, DAPHNE (1965): *Hungry Hill*. Penguin: London. £8.60\*

EVERETT, NIGEL (1999): *An Irish Arcadia: The Historic Gardens of Bantry House*. Hafod Press: Co. Cork. PB £5.99

FITZGERALD, DONAL (1994): *Bantry Historical and Archaeological Society Journal. Volume 2.* Bantry Historical and Archaeological Society: Bantry. PB £5.00

GALVIN, MICHAEL (undated): *The Slow Sunrise: Land Reform. Labour. Home Rule. in Mid Cork 1865-1881. Volume 1.* Private publication. PB £10.00

HART, PETER (1999): *The I.R.A. and its enemies: Violence and Community in Cork 1916-1923.* PB £16.00\*

KEMP, JULIA (1998): *Hidden Gold: History and Folklore of the Coomhola and Borlin Valleys.* Coomhola Borlin Community Development Association. PB £7.00

KRUGER, CHUCK (1994): *Cape Clear Island Magic: A photographic, historical and dramatic account of Clear Island, Ireland.* Collins Press: Cork. PB £7.99

LANKFORD, EAMON (1999): *Cape Clear Island: Its People and Landscape.* Cape Clear Museum. PB £9.99

MAC CORMAIC, TOMAS (1998): *1798! Rebel Cork in Insurrection* The United Irishmen of Cork City and County. Volume 1: Sedition; seditious nature. Private Publication. PB. £7.99

MCVEAGH, JOHN (ed) (1995): *Richard Pococke's Irish Tours.* Includes tour of West Cork in 1758. HB £27.50

MITCHELL, FRANK & RYAN, MICHAEL (1998): *Reading the Irish Landscape.* PB £18.99

MONK, MICHAEL & SHEEHAN, JOHN (1998): *Early Medieval Munster: Archaeology, History and Society.* Cork University Press: Cork. PB £15.95

MURPHY, JEREMIAH (1998): *When Youth Was Mine: A Memoir of Kerry 1902-1925.* Mentor: Dublin. PB £8.99

MYLER, DAVID (1998): *An Archaeological Survey of the Mealagh Valley.* The Mealagh Valley Community Development Association. PB £8.00

NOLAN, PAT (1997): *When We Were Young....Life in West Cork.* Private publication. PB £5.99

O'BRIEN, DANIEL (1991): *Beara: A Journey through History.* Beara Historical Society: Castletownbere. PB £4.95

O'BRIEN, WILLIAM (1996): *Bronze Age Copper Mining on Britain and Ireland.* Includes chapters on mining at Ross Island and Mount Gabriel. Shire Archaeology: Buckinghamshire. PB £5.99\*

O'BRIEN, WILLIAM (1999): *Sacred Ground: Megalithic Tombs in Coastal South-West Ireland.* Centre for Bronze Age Studies; NUI Galway. PB £25.00

POWER, DENIS (ed) (1992): *Archaeological Inventory of County Cork, Volume 1 - West Cork.* Archaeological Survey of Ireland. HB £20.00

POWER, DENIS (ed) (1999): *Archaeological Inventory of County Cork, Volume 3 - Mid Cork.* (Includes Ballingeary). Archaeological Survey of Ireland. HB £25.00

ROBERTS, JACK (1990s): *Antiquities of West Cork, Illustrated Map and Guide.* Key Books: Skibbereen. £4.50

ROBERTS, JACK (1990s): *The Ancient, Sacred and Historic Sites of West Cork, An Illustrated Map.* Bandia Publishing: Sligo. £2.50

ROBERTS, JACK (1990s): *The Stone Circles of Cork and Kerry: An Illustrated Map and Astrological Guide.* Bandia Publishing: Sligo. £2.50

SHEE TWOHIG, ELIZABETH & RONAYNE, MARGARET (eds) (1993): *Past Perceptions: The Prehistoric Archaeology of South-West Ireland.* UCC: Cork. PB £17.99

THE SHEEP'S HEAD WAY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (1996): *The Sheep's Head Way Map and Guide.* £6.00

WHITE, JANE (1999): *She Left Her Heart in China: The Story of Dr. Sally Wolfe, Medical Missionary 1915-1951.* PB £9.99

WILLIAMS, R.A. (1998): *The Berehaven Copper Mines: History of the commercial, social life and folklore of this region.* A. B. O'Connor: Kenmare. Originally published by the Northern Mines Research Society: Sheffield, 1991. PB £6.99

## PERIODICALS:

*Mizen Journal:* Mizen Archaeological and Historical Society. No 7, 1999 PB £5.00

*Bantry Journal:* Bantry Historical and Archaeological Society. Volume 2. 1994. PB £5.00

# AN CHEÁRD SCOIL 1939

Le Donncha Ó Laoire

D'oscailfodh dóirse na Ceárd Scoile do dhaltaí lán-aimsire lae don chéad uair i Meán Fomhair 1939. Bhíodh ranganna ag an gCoiste Ghairm-Oideachais roimhe sin sa halla agus bhíodh Gaeilge, Adhmadóireacht agus Tuath-Eolaíocht ar siúl de ló is d'oíche, ach ní ranganna lán-aimsire a bhíodh iontu, go bhfios dom. Bhí cúrsaí Samhraidh sa Ghaeilge á reachtáil ag an gCoiste, do mhúinteoirí i nGuagán Barra agus do pháistí i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh.

Bhí éileamh go dtógfaí Ceárd Scoil i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh á dhéanamh i rith na dtriochaidí. Chun tosaigh sna hiarrachtaí sin bhí Séamus Ó Séaghdha, a bhí ina Phríomh Oide ar Cheárd Scoil Mhagh Chromtha ag an am, ach bhí a chroí fós aige ina áit dhúchais. I measc a chuid pháipéirí, tá a lán litreacha ó pholaiteoirí éagsúla i 1935 ag freagairt litreacha a bhí scríte aige ag iarraidh orthu cás na scoile i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh a chur chun tosaigh. Tá litir ón Aire Tailte, R. Keyes T.D., agus ó pholaiteoirí áitiúla de gach páirtí: Dónal (Danny Arthur) Ó Laoire T.D., Baile Mhúirne, Dan Corkery, T.D. Mágh Chromtha agus T.J. Murphy T.D. Dún Maonmhuí. Tá an píosa seo tógtha as miontuairiscí an Choiste Gairmoideachais 19 Feabhra 1935.

"Letter from Munster College of Irish stating they are satisfied to give to the Committee a site for a Technical School, on the College Grounds, Ballingearry, free of rent and in fee simple. They hope the work will go ahead without further delay and they will give every help possible to obtain funds from the Department of Education for same.

## Deputation

A Deputation consisting of B. Searthain, S. Ó Criodhain, T. Ó Tuama, representing the people of Ballingearry, and Liam de Róiste, T. Ó Tuama, representing the Coláiste na Mhumhan, appeared before the Committee in support of the erection of a Vocational School at Ballingearry.

It was decided that the Minister for Education be asked to receive a deputation consisting of the deputation present, together with Very Rev. Canon O'Leary, representing the County Committee, and S. Ó Seaghdha, Head Master."

## An Suíomh

Mar a tharla, ní ó Choláiste na Mumhan a fuarathas an suíomh, ach ceannuódh é ó mhuintir Scríbhín.

Bhí toradh fóna ar na hiarrachtaí, mar léadh litir ón Roinn Oideachais ag cruinniú an Choiste 16 Meitheamh 1936, ag ceadú dóibh dul ar aghaidh le planáil na scoile maraon le deontas de £800 in aghaidh na bliana.

Ceannuódh an suíomh ansan agus sna miontuairiscí 28.7.36 tá sé seo:

"Approving of the proposal of the Committee to purchase from Mr. James Scriven, Dromanally, Ballingearry, in fee simple, for the sum of £225, the plot of ground comprising about 2 acres, the location and dimensions of which are shown on the site map submitted, for the purpose of erecting a Technical School thereon."

## Tenders

I Meitheamh 1937 ó na miontuairiscí arís:

The Committee proceeded to consider Tenders for the Erection and completion of a Technical School at Ballingearry.

The following Tenders were received :-

|                                                          |            |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Mr. Dónal Ó Laoghaire, Ballingearry, Co. Cork            | £5474 15 4 |
| Messrs. O'Shea Ltd., 41 South Mall, Cork                 | £5513 9 4  |
| Mr. Wm. Lynch, 10 Merchant's Quay, Cork                  | £5358 7 2  |
| Messrs. P. McCarthy & Sons, Gullane, Rathmore, Co. Kerry | £7044 16 0 |
| Messrs. Kelly Brothers, Barrack Street, Bantry           | £4735 19 6 |

To the last mentioned Tender a letter was attached in which the following statement was set out:-

"We have priced this work on present rates and condition of wages in the locality and we assume allowance will be made by your Committee should any unforeseen increase occur."

It was agreed unanimously to accept the Tender of Messrs. Kelly Brothers at

£4,735 19s. 6d. on the condition that the foregoing statement in their letter will be withdrawn, the acceptance of the Tender being subject to the approval of the Department.

## Cead na Roinne Oideachais

Thug an Roinn Oideachais cead dul ar aghaidh leis an tógáil agus mínítear an tairgeadú sa phíosa seo ó 29 Iúil 1937:-

Approving, subject to compliance with the Vocational Education (Contracts) Regulations, 1931, of the erection by the Committee of a Technical School at Ballingearry in accordance with the plans and specifications as finally approved.

They add that the Minister for Education is of opinion that the cost of the erection and equipping of this school should, by reason of the permanent character of the undertaking, be spread over a terms of years. The plans and specification having now been finally approved by the Department as required by Section (4) of the Vocational Education (Borrowing) Regulations, 1937, the Minister consents to the defrayal of the expenditure on the erection and equipping of the school being spread over a period of fifteen years. The Minister is however of opinion that, on the basis of the amount of the tender accepted by the Committee, such expenditure should not exceed £6,000, and he accordingly consents to the Committee raising a loan of this amount from the Munster and Leinster Bank Ltd., Cork, under Section 50 of the Vocational Education Act, 1930, on the terms set out in the Committee's application on form V. 21, to be utilised towards the defrayal of the expenditure involved.

## Príomh Oide

I miontuairiscí an Choiste i 1938 tá roinnt tráchta ar cheapadh an Phríomh Oide. Moladh go mbeadh S. Ó Séaghdha ceaptha mar Phríomh Oide i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh chomh maith le Mágh Chromtha. Níor glacadh leis an moladh seo cé gur pléadh

go minic é agus ar 21.6.38 ceapadh Mícheál Ó Drisceoil ina Phríomh Oide.

Ar 28.7.38 tá an giota seo:

#### Obair bhreise

The following Report was read from Mr. R. Conboy, Architect, re Ballingearry School and Kanturk Site Works:- "Upon a recent visit to Ballingearry I came to the conclusion that it will be necessary to insert a second flight of steps in the pathway leading to the Front Entrance door. The approach is very steep and another series of steps will do much to reduce the severe gradient."

Ar 20.9.38 tá litir ón Roinn ag ceadú na hoibre thuas chomh maith leis an giota seo:

"Approving of the proposal to instal Calor Gas Lighting in Ballingearry Technical School in accordance with the plan submitted and of the expenditure involved.

Ar 29.11.38 ceadúfodh meastúcháin de £279 don chóras teasa a chur isteach sa scoil.

#### Oscailt na Scoile

I Meán Fomhair 1939 bhí gach rud ullamh agus in oirúint do oscailt na scoile, díreach ag an am céanna agus a bhí an dara cogadh domhanda ag briseadh amach in Iarthar na hEorpa.

#### Múinteoirí

Mícheál Ó Drisceoil,

Príomh Oide,

Liam Ó Briain

Éamonn Ó hArgáin

Maighréad Ní Chochlái

Tomás Ó Murchú

Adhmadóireacht, Líníocht

Tuatheolaíocht, Matamaitic

Gaeilge

Tíos

Miotalóireacht

Bhí cuid de na múinteoirí seo ag obair in ionaid eile agus bhí ranganna oíche acu chomh maith.

Bhí Seán Ó Loinsigh ceaptha mar fhreastalaí agus bhí baint níos faide aige leis an scoil ná éinne eile. Bhí sé ann go dtí 1977.

#### Daltaí

De réir na gcúntaisí a cuireadh go dtí an Roinn Oideachais ag an am, clarúfodh 29 sa scoil i 1939.. Bhí 22 cailíní agus 7 buachaillí. Bhí 18 fé 16 agus 11 ós cionn 16.

Ag an am seo níl na leabhair rollaí le fáil agus mar sin ní féidir bheith cruinn fé na daoine a bhí ann. Seo leanas an liosta atá curtha le chéile ó bheith ag caint le na hiar-daltaí sin.

#### Cailíní 1939/40

Caitríona Ní Bhuachalla

Maighréad Ní Cheallacháin

Seosaimhín Ní Chéilleachair

Maighréad Ní Chonaill

Máire Ní Chremín

Cáit Ní Chríodáin

Máire Ní Chríodáin

Maighréad Ní Chroínín

Máirín Ní Chroínín

Nóirín Ní Chroínín

Nóra Ní Chroínín

Na Fuithirí

Cathair

Goirtín Fliuch

Gort na Binne

Leaca Bán

Oileán Aibhneach

Drom an Ailthigh

Carraig an Lóiste

Goirtín Fliuch

Bán a' Teampaill

Cora Glas

Síle Ní Laoire

Mairéad Ní Loinsigh

Máire Ní Liatháin

Gobnait Ní Luasa

Julia Mai Ní Luasa

Cáit Ní Mhuimhneacháin

Nóra Ní Mhuirithe

Sinéad Seartan

Nóra Ní Sheitheacháin

Cuar na hAthchoille

Ladhar na Gaoithe

Goirtín Fliuch

An Choill Mhór

Carraig na Dobhaire

Céim an Fhia

Gort an Éadain

Curraithe

Cathair

#### Buachaillí 1939/40

Conchúr Ó Conaill

Mícheál Ó Críodáin

Dónal Ó Laoire

Mícheál Ó Mathúna

Séamus Ó Scribhín

Mícheál Ó Suibhne

Seán Tóibín

Carraig na Cora

Céim Corra Bhuaile

Ínse Mhór

Ceap an Chláir

Oileán Aibhneach

Céim an Fhia

Ínse an Fhosaigh

#### 1940's

Seo an clárú a bhí sa scoil 'sna dachaidí:

| Bliain | Buach. | Cail | Iomlán |
|--------|--------|------|--------|
| 1939   | 7      | 22   | 29     |
| 1940   | 5      | 19   | 24     |
| 1941   |        | 15   | 15     |
| 1942   | 10     | 10   | 10     |
| 1943   | 4      | 11   | 15     |
| 1944   |        | 22   | 22     |
| 1945   |        | 17   | 17     |
| 1946   | 9      | 14   | 23     |
| 1947   | 10     | 18   | 28     |
| 1948   | 11     | 16   | 27     |
| 1949   | 15     | 15   | 30     |

Bhí blianta áirithe nach raibh aon bhuachaillí ann agus i gcuid de na blianta san d'fhanadh cailíní i gceann de na seomraí cosúil le scoil chónaithe.

Bhíodh a lán ranganna oíche ar siúl sa scoil féin agus bhí rang Ghaeilge ag Éamonn Ó hArgáin i gCéim an Fhia. I 1943 bhuaigh beirt dalta leis, an comórtas sean-nóis san Oireachtas: Siobhán Ní Cheallacháin, Ínse Mhór agus Mícheál (Mitchell) Ó Suibhne, Céim an Fhia.

#### Séamus Ó Séaghdha

I 1945 a aistrigh Séamus Ó Séaghdha Ó Mhág Chromtha mar Phríomh Oide go Béal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh. Mar a dúirt mé cheana, eisean is mó a chinntigh go dtógfaí An Cheárd Scoil. Mar a dúirt Tomás Ó Murchú, duine de na céad mhúinteoirí, liom éсна seascaidí: "Murach Séamus Ó Séaghdha, is féidir leat bheith cinnte dhe nach mbeadh aon Cheárd Scoil i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh.

# Ceadarscoil Bhéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh

Ag scoláire '48/'49 agus '49/'50

I dtús báire ní mór a shamhlú nach raibh an bhéim ar oideachas foirmiúil an uair úd chomh láidir is atá anois de bhrí nach raibh an caighdeán maireachtála sa tír ábalta a leithéid a chothú. Bhí suim san oideachas ceart go leor ach chomh luath is a fhágfadh furmhór na scoláirí an bhunscoil bhíodh orthu dul ar obair chun crústa a chur ar na mbórd dóibh féin is dá dtuismitheoirí. Faoi láthair freastalann gach éinne nach mór ar iarbhunscoil ach an uair úd ba bheag duine a fhreastal. Théigheadh fo-dhuine, ámh, go meánscoil lae nó meánscoil chónaithe.

Fo-dhuine eile ná beadh fonn air ná acmhainn aige chun dul ar mheánscoil roghnóch sé an cheardscoil. Bhí difríocht mhór idir an cineál oideachais a bhí le fáil sa dá shaghas scoile ag an am sin. Bhí an bhéim ar teoiric 'sna meánscoileanna agus ábhair cosúil le Laidean fiú á mhúineadh ach sa cheardscoil bhí an treise ar ábhair phraicticiúla cosúil le hAdhmadóireacht. Oideachas leanúnach nó teicniúil a tugtaí ar oideachas na ceardscoile an tráth úd, meán oideachas ar oideachas na meánscoile. Thóg cúrsa na meánscoile ceithre bliana de ghnáth agus b'iad an Mheán Teist agus an t-Árd Teist na scrúdaithe. Cúrsa dhá bhliain a bhí sa cheardscoil agus bé an Teastas Grúpa an scrúdú caoi. Thosnuigh mo chuid oideachais leanúnach féin sa cheardscoil i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh i Meán Fómhair 1948. Ní mór a thuiscint go sroicheadh scoláire rang a h-ocht sa bhunscoil ag an am, sé sin dá rang níos aoirde ná mar atá anois. De ghnáth bheadh an Teastas Bunscoile ina ghlaic aige chomh maith. Mar sin bheadh caighdeán áirithe aibíochta sroiste aige. Bhí an-difríocht idir an cheardscoil agus an bhunscoil a bhí fágtha agam. Foirgneamh réasúnta nua spásúil a bhí sa cheardscoil. Ánsin i n-ionann an múinteoir céanna a bheith agat i rith an lae bhí beirt ar a laighead. Thug sé sin níos mó éagsúlachta ó thaobh timpeallachta agus teagmhála.

B'é Séamus Ó Sé a bhí ina Ard mháistir n duine de mhuintir na háite. Bhí togha na Gaeilge aige chomh maith le bheith ina oráidí agus ina thírghráthóir. Bhí an-suim aige i ngach rud Gaelach n bhí sé ina chathaoirleach ar Choiste Chontae Chorcaí de Chumann Lúthchleas Gael is mé sa cheardscoil. B'é Liam Ó Loingsigh a bhí ina mhúinteoir Adhmadóireachta nuair a bhíos sa chéad bhliain n ceardaí den scoth chomh maith. B'é Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin ó Chiarraí a chomharba is mé sa dara bhliain. Bhí sé siúd ina Ard mháistir ar cheardscoil an Daingin

níos déanaí ina shaol. Liam Ó Briain a bhí ina mhúinteoir Tuaitheolaíochta cé nach raibh sé linn ach lá sa tseachtain n bhí a cheanncheathrú i Maghchromtha. B'é an tAthair Conchúr Ó Luasaigh a bhí i mbun cúrsaí Creidimh agus ina Shagart Óg sa tsráidbhaile. B'í Máirín Ní Scanaill a mhúin Tíos do sna cailíní n ó Chúil Aodh di. Agus ar ndóigh, bé Seán Ó Loingsigh an freastalaí. Tá a bhfurmhór imithe ar shlí na fírinne, go ndéana Dia trócaire orthu.

Bhí aon bhuachaill déag agus cúigear cailín déag ag freastal ar an scoil sa scoilbhliain '48/'49, seisear is fiche ar fad. Ní raibh ranganna meascaithe. B'iad ábhair na mbuachaillí ná:

Gaeilge, Béarla, Geograif, Obair adhmaid, Matamaitic, Líníocht, Céimseata, Gairneoireacht,

Tuaitheolaíocht, Cúntasaíocht Feirme agus Teagasc Críostaí. B'iad ábhair na gcailíní ná: Gaeilge, Béarla, Uimhríocht, Cniotáil, Sláinteolas, Tíos, Cócaireacht, Níochán, Eolas ar Nadúir agus Teagasc Críostaí.

Cé nach raibh brú le mothú, do bhuaidh an scoil duaiseanna sa Teastas Grúpa agus i Scúdaithe na gceardscol. Fuarthas an chéad áit in ...irinn i nGaeilge an Teastais Grúpa, an chéad áit agus an dara háit i meánghrád Gaeilge agus arís in Ardghrád Gaeilge i Scrúdaithe na gceardscol sa bhliain 1949. Bhí Príomhchigire na Roinne i láthair ag searmanas bronnta duais. I gcomórtas de chuid Taispeántais Talamhaíochta Chorcaí i gCorcaigh tháinig ceithre duais i dtreo na scoile do thionscnaimh éagsúla adhmaidóireachta. Bhí taispeántas d'obair na ndaltaí uile ós comhairan phobail sa scoil féin. Agus um Nollaig 1948 tugadh dinnéar speisialta do sna scoláirí lae sa scoil ag a raibh amhránaíocht agus scléip.

Chomh maith leis na ranganna lae bhí cuid mhaith rang oíche. Do ghlac an rang Gaeilge mórfháirt sa drámaíocht ach go háirithe. Deineadh a lán taisteal go hionaid eile i gcomórtaisíocht agus i léiriú drámaí agus fuarathas a lán duais. Chuaigh an grúpa drámaíochta go dtí an Rinn, Eochaill, an Corrán, Cill Áirne agus go hOireachtas na Mumhan, mar shampla. Is léir go mba gnóthach taitneamhach an áit í ceardscoil Bhéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh an uair úd. Ní raibh galar an dithnis fós i réim n bhí an capall is an trucail ar an mbóthar is bhí an dara cogadh domhanda agus éigeandáil thart n ní raibh eagla níos mó roimh coinscríobh. Agus nuair a smaoiním air bhíomar fós sa dorchadas n níor shroich comhacht na haibhléise an áit go dtí 1955. Saol eile!

Cuirfidh mé bailchríoch ar mo ghearrchúntas ar cheardscoil Bhéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh sna blianta '48/'49 agus '49/'50 le mionaiste a scríos ar an 14ú lá d'Fheabhra 1950 is mé im' scoláire lae. Cé gur samhlaíocht atá ann tugann sé saghas léiriú ar dhearcadh meóin an ama. Tá sé scríofa focal ar fhocal mar a bhí (fuachtáin agus méiscri sa áireamh) n ní mór a thuiscint ámhthach gur cló Gaelach a bhí á úsáid againn an tráth úd, cé gur cló Romhánach a bhí againn sa bhunscoil. Seo é:-

## "Mar a Chaithfinn Deich Scillinge."

Is mór agamsa scilling amháin gan trácht ar deich scillinge! Dá bhfaghainn deich scillinge anocht ní fhéadfainn néall amháin a cholla bheadh an oiread san áthais orm.

D'éireóchainn le breaca an lae agus sara mbeadh uain agat machtnamh do bheadh mo éadaí Domhnaigh umam agus ní fada go mbeinn fé lán tseól. Do rithfinn síos an staidhre agus do shuidhfinn chun búird ach ní bheadh ar mo chumas faic a ithe le neart dithnis.

Taréis greimín éigin a ithe i gcoinnibh mo thola do rithfinn amach agus do chuirfinn carraig-fle sa ghluais-teán, do léimfinn isteach agus seo chun bóthair mé lem'deich scillinge go daingean im' phóca agam. Do ghluaisfinn seacht ngeal ó gach aoinne a bheadh ar an mbóthar róm.

Nuair a shroichfinn an baile mór do léimfinn amach as an ngluaiseán agus do raghainn isteach go siopa mísléan agus do cheannóchainn cúpla bloc seaclaíde ar scilling. Do bheadh naoi scillinge fágtha annsan agam.

Do raghainn isteach go dtí siopa eile annsan agus do cheannóchainn cúpla bosca toitín ar leath-choróinn, agus ní bheinn sásta go dtí go mbeidís go léir ólta agam.

Seo isteach mé go dtí tigh ósta annsan agus d'ólfainn an té. Chaithfinn dhá scilling a thabhairt ar sin. Ní bheadh ach ceathair is raol fágtha annsan agam. Do raghainn amach as an tigh ósta agus isteach go tigh tábhairne agus do chaithfinn an fuighleach ar uisce beatha agus ar lionn dubh. Do bheinn cuíosach súgach go maith annsan, ach mar sin féin do raghainn abhaile slán agus ní bheinn sásta go mbeadh na mísléain agus na toitíní ithe agus ólta agam."

Donnchadh Ó Luasaigh  
Baile an Chollaigh  
(Samhain 1999)

Scoil Mhuire 1959 - 1999

# Fionnbarra Ó Murchú 1922 - 1968

Ins na blianta fada ó d'imigh Fionnbarra, beannacht Dé leis, uainn, is minic a cuireadh an cheist orm "Conas a tharla gur chuir Fionnbarra Ó Murchú tús leis an Meánscoil i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh? Tá sé in am dom na cuimhní atá agam ar na céad blianta do Scoil Mhuire a bhreacadh síos. Ós rud é go bhfuil Scoil Mhuire ar an saol le dachad bliain i mbliana, is mithid dom a chúlra a chur ar fáil d'éinne go mbeadh suim acu innti.

Ag tosach na bliana 1922, rugadh Fionnbarra os cionn an tí tabhairne ar an bPríomh Sráid i mBeanntraí, áit a raibh cónaí ar Seán Ó Murchú agus a bhean, Siobhán Máire Ní Chróinín. Sar a phós siad, chaith Seán roinnt blianta in Américá ag obair i monarcha bróg. B'í máthair Fhionnbarra úinéir an tí tabhairne, agus lámh leis bhí siopa beag deisiú bróg ag a hathair. B'é Fionnbarra an leanbh deiridh ag Seán agus Siobhán Máire, an duine is óige de seachtar. Garsún breá oscailte, misniúil ab ea Fionnbarra. Is dócha go raibh airgead níos flúirsí fén am seo - bhí cuid des na páistí ag obair, agus bheartaigh Seán agus a bhean go mbeadh seans meánscolaíochta ag an mac ab óige acu. Cuireadh Fionnbarra go Choláiste Fearann Phiarais i gCorcaigh sa bhliain 1936.

Scoláire stuama, aibidh, cliste ab ea Fionnbarra. Níorbh aon ualach dó an staidéar. Iománaí an mhaith ab ea é chomh maith. Bhí sé ar fhoireann an Choláiste agus nuair a bhí sé fásta go leor, ar fhoireann Mionúr Chorcaí. Bhí an saol ag dul go maith dó, go dtí Cásca na bliana inar thóg sé an Scrúdú Árdteistmeireachta. Ag filleadh ar ais dó go dtí Choláiste Fearann Phiarais i ndiaidh saoire na Cásca, fuair sá an bus ó lár chathair Chorcaí go dtí an Linn Dubh. In ionad fanacht go dtí

gur stop an bus, léim sé, agus thit sé ar a dhroim. Bhí an drom gortaithe, ach ní dúirt sé faic le héinne, ar eagla ná ligfí dó imirt dá chontae. D'éirigh leis an gortú a cheilt, go dtí gur imigh sé abhaile go Beanntraí i ndiaidh na scrúdaithe, ach thug a mháthair fé ndeara láithreach go raibh a mac ab óige bacach.

Thóg a mháthair go dtí an dochtúir é, agus thosaigh sé ar bhóthar an tinnis, tinneas a lean ar feadh geall leis fiche bliain; tinneas a chuir deireadh leis na brionglóidí a bhí aige dá saol. Chaith sé tréimhsí fada san ospidéal. Ní raibh ainm ar bith ag na dochtúirí don galar a bhí air. Bheartaigh sé, idir na tréimhsí san ospidéal, an chúrsa staidéar a dhéanamh in Ollscoil Chorcaí chun Céim B.A. a bhaint amach. Fad is a bhí sé san Ollscoil, bhí suim aige i nGlún na hAiséirí, Conradh na Gaeilge agus na Cumainn Gaelacha eile, mar bhí an ghrá aige don Ghaeilge. Lean sé ar aghaidh san Ollscoil go dtí Cásca na bliana 1942. Ba é seo bliain na Céime dó. Ach in ionad bheith ina shuí san Ollscoil, bhí sé i leaba a thinnis san ospidéal.

Idir na blianta 1942 agus 1954 bhí sé sa bhaile ach ní raibh sé díomhaoin. Múinteoir den scoth ab ea é agus ós rud é nach raibh meánscoil do bhuachaillí i mBeanntraí ag an am sin, ní raibh aon ganntanas scoláirí air - leads a bhí ag dul dos na gárdaí, nó ag iarraidh scoláireacht Meánscoile (a chuir an Comhairle Chontae ar fáil) a bhaint amach, mar shampla.

I 1955, chuala Fionnbarra go raibh máinlia in Essex, Sasana a d'fhéadfadh obráid a dhéanamh ar na cosa aige (fén am seo bhí na cromáin agus



Fionnbarra Ó Murchú 1922 - 1962

na glúine ar fad tinn ón ngalar) a cuirfeadh ar a chumas carr a thiomáint. D'imigh sé go Sasana chuig Mr. Shires in Ospidéal Grays, in Essex. Deineadh na hobráidí ar na cosa agus fad is a bhí sé i Sasana cheannaigh sé "Invacar". Bhí an Invacar oiriúnach do dhuine nach raibh úsáid na gcos aige.

I 1958 d'fhill sé ar an Ollscoil chun an Céim a ghnóthú agus i Samhain na bliana 1959 bhain sé amach an tÁrd Teastas in Oideachas. Bhí Fionnbarra ag súil go bhféadfadh sé an bearna i mBeanntraí a líonadh le meánscoil do bhuachaillí a bhunú. Níor éirigh leis an iarracht seo agus bhí an t-ádh le Béal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh gur mheas Fionnbarra go mbeadh fáilte roimh meánscoil ins an mbaile beag Gaeltachta seo.

Níor éirigh leis seomra a bheadh oiriúnach mar seomra scoile a aimsiú go dtí gur mhínigh sé an fadhb a bhí aige do Shéamus Ó Corcora, Bainisteoir Uachtarlainne i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh. Chuir Séamus agus a bhean, Eibhlín céad míle fáilte roimh

an scoil nua, agus is i seomra suite Uí Chorcora a chaith an scoil nua an chéad bhliain dá saol.

I mí Márta 1968, d'fhógraigh an tAire Oideachais, Donncha Ó Máille (bean-nacht Dé lena anam) go mbeadh saor oideachas ar fáil ag gach scoláire dara leibhéal. Roimhe seo, ní bhíodh oideachas meán scoile ar fáil ach ag daoine a raibh an tairgead acu an táille scoile a íoc. Bhíodh comórtas do scoláireachtaí meánscoile ag roinnt des na scoileanna reiligiúnda agus bhuaigh na daltaí ba chliste sa ceann-tar iad. Mar sin, fágadh formhór muintir an cheanntair gan deis oideachais meán scoile.

Sa bhliain 1965 thosnaigh an Roinn Oideachais ar feachtas chun réimse na n-ábhar a bhí ar fáil ins na meánscoileanna a leathnú. Chuige sin, bheartaigh an Roinn Oideachais ar chomhnascadh scoileanna beaga le chéile i mbailte ar fud na tíre. Ba é an "buzz word" comhnascadh, nó amalgamation. Roinneadh an tír ar fad ina limistéirí. Tugadh an limistéir ba lú i gCúige Mumhan do Scoil Mhuire. Mheas an Roinn Oideachais go mbeadh oideachas níos éifeachtaí ar fáil do scoláirí meánscoile dá mbeadh aon scoil mór amháin in aon ceann-tar ar leith in ionad roinnt scoileanna beaga agus toisc go mbeadh na scoileanna mór, bheadh réimse ábhair níos leithne, agus rogha níos fearr, ag scoláirí. Áit go raibh scoil an bheag, bheartaigh an Roinn Oideachais í a dhúnadh síos agus na daltaí a aistriú go dtí scoil níos mó. Is é an tainm a bheadh ar na scoileanna móra seo ná scoileanna phobail.

Chuir an Roinn Oideachais cruinnithe ar siúl ar fuaid na tíre chun an chomhnascadh a mhíniú do mhuintir na háite agus do lucht bainistíochta na scoileanna. Ní cruinnithe ciúin, dea-bhéasach a bhí ins na cruinnithe seo. Bhí muintir na háite agus lucht bainistíochta na scoileanna an mhí shásta leis na socruithe a bhí i ndán dos na

scoláirí. I mórán bailte idir beag agus mór, bhí turasanna buis fada i gceist dos na daltaí. Is minic a tógadh raic ag na cruinnithe seo.

I gcás Scoil Mhuire de, ós rud é gur tugadh an réimse talún is lú i gContae Chorcaí di agus gur mheas an Roinn Oideachais go raibh an líon daoine ró bheag chun an scoil a choimeád ar siúl, ba é an réiteach a bhí acu ná Scoil Mhuire a dhúnadh agus na scoláirí a thógaint ar an mbus go Baile Bhúirne. Gan aon dabht ní raibh muintir Bhéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh, ná lucht bainistíochta na scoile sásta, ná leath shásta leis an réiteach seo. Tionóladh roinnt mhaith cruinnithe, a bhí achrannach go maith, sar a bhfuair Fionnbarra (beannacht Dé leis) bás obann i mí Iúil 1968, agus leanadh leis na cruinnithe seo, nach raibh réiteach ar bith ag teacht astu, go dtí 1974.

Fén am seo bhí an Chéim B.A. agus Árd Teastas san Oideachais bainte amach agam agus bhí mé ag múineadh agus mé im' bhainisteoir ar Scoil Mhuire. Timpeall an ama céanna tháinig an tUasal Roibeárd Ó Buachalla mar Phríomh Oifigeach Feidhmiúcháin do Choiste Oideachais Ghairm Bheatha Chontae Chorcaí. Chuir an tUasal Ó Buachalla roinnt tuairimí chugam i dtaobh saoil Scoil Mhuire sa todhchaí. Ba é an toradh a bhí ar an iniúchadh ná go gcomhnascfaí an mheán scoil, Scoil Mhuire, agus an Gairmscoil a bhí i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh le roinnt mhaith blianta sar ar bunaíodh an mhéanscoil. As sin amach Scoil Phobail a bheadh ann. Choimeádfaí an t-ainm "Scoil Mhuire".

Nuair a bhí Fionnbarra Ó Murchú ag druidim i dtreo fearúlachta, ba mhór a dhílseacht don Ghaeilge agus bhí deamhóid thar chuimse aige don Mhaighdean Mhuire. Ní tré tionóisc a hosclaíodh Scoil Mhuire ar fhéile na Maighdine. Ba é an chéad turas scoile a bhí ag daltaí na scoile nua-bhunaithe ná oilthireacht go dtí Cnoc Mhuire.

Tháinig an dá grá a bhí aige - don Mhaighdean Mhuire agus dá theanga dúchais le chéile nuair a chuir sé aithne ar an Léigiún Mhuire agus ar an mbrainse de, "An Réalt" a dhein a gnó trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Bhuail mise le Fionnbarra Ó Murchú don chéad uair nuair a thug brainse Cathair Chorcaí den Réalt cuairt ar Bheanntaraí. I ngan fhios dá chéile bhí an Maighdean Mhuire ag tabhairt an bheirt againn le chéile. Shocraíomar go bpósfaí sinn ar an 21ú lá de Mheithimh 1960. Cheannaigh Fionnbarra suíomh tí ó Dhiarmaid Ó Mathúna (beannacht Dé leis) Drom an Ailligh, agus thóg Dónal Ó Seitheacháin (beannacht Dé leis) bungaló an bhreá dúinn ar an láthair sin. Le himeacht ama, rugadh triúr clainne dúinn - Máire, Seán agus Caitríona.

Lá stairiúil do Bhéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh agus do dhaltaí Scoil Mhuire, ab ea an 8ú lá de Mheán Fomhair 1959 nuair a hosclaíodh doras na scoile nua do naonúr déag scoláire óg, idir bhuachaillí agus cailíní, don chéad uair. Ar an lá stairiúil sin lasadh coinneal beag bídeach, coinneal an dóchais, do ghluain óg Bhéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh, nuair a tháinig Scoil Mhuire ar an saol, don chéad uair, i seomra suite Shéamuis (beannacht Dé lena anam uasal) agus Eibhlín Uí Chorcora. Ó am go chéile bhí laetha dorcha i ndán do Scoil Mhuire ins an naoi mbliana a bhí Fionnbarra Ó Murchú ina Árd Mháistir, ach fé choimirce na Maighdine Muire ní fhéadfadh go mbeadh teip i ndán don scoil nua. Tá an coinneal bídeach a lasadh i Meán Fomhair 1959 ag soilsiú go láidir ó shin. Tá doras Scoil Mhuire ar oscailt ó shin i leith i nGaeltacht Mhúscraí. Gura fada buan í.

Máire Bean Uí Mhurchú, 8ú Meán Fomhair 1999.

# Meán Scoil Mhuire 1959

## Ar Bhóithrín na Smaointe le Maighréad Uí Laoghaire (Ní Chróinín)

Samhradh 1959 a bhí ann. Bhíos féin san ochtú rang i Scoil na gCailíní i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh agus bhí Peadar san seachtú rang i Scoil na mBuachaillí. Bhí dúil againn sa scolaíocht agus bhí brionglóid againn go bhféadfaimís leanúint ar aghaidh agus freastal ar mhéan scoil. Ní raibh aon cheist ar sin, áfach do fhorhmór dhaoine óga na háite ag an am.

Ansan Domhnach amháin go míorúilteach bhí fógra ón altóir ag rá go raibh meán scoil á bunú af Fionnbarra Ó Murchú as Beanntraí (Beannacht Dé leis) i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh. Bhí sceitimíní áthais orainn agus bhí sé á phléidh mórthimpeall na dúthaí ar fad. Lasadh lóchrann an dóchais an lá san. I ndáiríribh bhí lag-mhisneach a dhóthain san áit ag an am. Is beag fostaíocht a bhí ar fáil sa dúthaigh agus ní raibh mórán airgid ag teacht ón bhfeirmeoireacht ach an oiread. Bhí imirce go forleathan agus ní raibh i ndán don chuid is mó des na daoine óga ach an bád go Sasana.

Ar an ochtú lá de Mhéan Fhómhair (Féile na Maighdine Muire) thosaigh an scoil i seomra suite Uí Chorcóra. Tháinig an máistir Fionnbarra ina "galoppy" gorm le Cáit Ní Ruairc as Ōnse Rua, Caolcoil in súf taobh leis ar stól shúgáin. Bhí deisceanna fada timpeall na bhfallaí - na buachaillí ar thaobh amháin agus na cailíní ar an dtaobh eile. I mo thuairim-se thosnaigh fiche scoláire ar an scoil an lá sin, ach níor chríochnaigh ach naonúr déag an bhliain ar fad. Dob iad

Cáit Ní Ruairc  
Sorcha Ní Chorcóra;  
Peadar Ó Chróinín  
Maighréad Ní Chróinín  
Eibhlín Ní Luasaigh,  
Caitlín Ní Luasaigh,  
Amhlaoibh Ó Luasaigh  
Gobnait Ní Loingsigh  
Seán Ó Tuama  
Seán Ó hÉalaithe,  
Míchéal Ó hÉalaithe  
Diarmuid Ó Laoire,  
Siobhán Ní Shuibhne,  
Máire Ní Loingsigh,  
Eibhlín Ní Thuama,  
Cáit Ní Thuama,  
Seán Ó Mhocháin,  
Gobnait Ní Mhocháin,  
Cáit Ní Laoire,  
Eibhlín Ní Laoire,

Inse Rua, Caolcoil;  
Coill Mhór  
Coill Mhór  
Coill Mhór;  
Drom an Ailligh  
Drom an Ailligh  
Drom an Ailligh  
Drom an Ailligh;  
Leaca Bán;  
Gort a Phludaigh  
Gort a Phludaigh;  
Inse an Fhosaigh;  
Céim Cora Bhuaile;  
Doire an Aonaigh;  
Cúil Aodha;  
Baile Mhuirne;  
Cill na Martra;  
Cill na Martra;  
Ros Mór;  
Inse Geimhleach.

Ó thosach bhíomar mar chlann mhór amháin. Is cuimhin liom go maith ar an gcéad lá go ndúirt an máistir linn féachaint air mar

athair agus is cinnte gur mar athair a bhí sé dúinn fhaid is a bhíomar ann. Sampla beag amháin de sin - nuair a bhí súil an-tinn agamsa chuir sé a lámh ina phóca féin agus chuir sé siar mé go dtí Máire Ní Laoire san Siopa Poiticéara chun "Golden Eye Ointment" a cheannach.

In ár gcás féin lean an cáirdeas eadrainn i ndiaidh na scoile chómh maith. Bhuaillimis le chéile ag an gCoróin Mhuire agus ag na deabhóidí eile a bhí go rialta sa tSéipéal. Bhímís ag caint agus ag scoraíocht le chéile ina dhiaidh, ag pléidh cúrsaí scoile agus obair bhaile. Shiúlaimís siar le Gobnait Ní Loingsigh go rialta, thar Casadh na Spride. Ins na hoícheanta dorcha bhíodh scanradh a dhóthain orainn nuair a smaomhnímís ar na scéalta go léir a bhí cloiste againn ó Mhaidhcí Tadhg (Beannacht Dé leis), fé an taibhse a bhí le feiscint ag an gcúinne sin. Ní fhacamar faic riamh ach is mór an spórt a bhíodh againn le Molly agus Jack Lynch (Beannacht Dé leo) agus is mó cupán tae a ólamar ann. B'shin iad na laethanta sona roimh teacht na teilifíse.

Bhí dhá ghrá mhór ag Fionnbarra - grá Dé agus na Maighdine Muire agus an ghrá d'ár dteanga agus d'ár gcultúr. Spreag sé sinn chun leanúint ar aghaidh le h-obair na h-aithbheochana ar son ghrá na Maighdine Muire, Banríon na h-Éireann.

Dob é Meán Scoil Mhuire an chéad mhéan scoil meascaithe sa Deoiseas agus bhí ar Fionnbarra geallúint a thabhairt don t-easpag, an Dr. Conchubhar Ó Luasaigh, nách mbeadh aon chúrsaí grá ar siúl idir bhuachaillí agus cailíní. Is mór an t-athrú atá ar an saol anois.

Bhí modhanna múinte ag an máistir bunaithe ar idéalachas Pádraig Mac Piarais, agus na tuairimí a bhí aige faoi oideachas. D'inis sé dúinn faoin leabhar "The Murder Machine" leis an bPiarsach, ag cáineadh an Córas Oideachais a bhí againn anseo in Éirinn, a bhí bunaithe ar an gCóras Sasanach. Dá réir, ba chóir go mbeadh Oideachas taitneamhach, leathan agus go n-ullmhódh sé an dalta don saol mór.

Cinnte bhaineas taitneamh as gach lá a chaitheas ar an scoil. Ní raibh sé riamh leadránach agus bhí sult agus greann i gcónaí ann. Gan dabht dheineamar an obair ach bhí an-spórt againn chomh maith. Bhí Peadar go maith chun cleas a imirt ar dhaoine. Thuig an máistir é seo agus bheartaigh sé ar bhob a bhualadh air ar lá na n-amadán. Chuir sé é ag rothaíocht siar go Túirín Dubh le scéal seafóideach éigin do Mhíchéal Mac Cárthaigh (Beannacht Dé leis). Tháinig an bháisteach síos go tiubh agus bhí sé fliuch go craiceann ach chonaic sé an taobh greannmhar de. Is cuimhin liom lá eile, Peadar ag tabhairt taispeántas den "Peeler and the Goat" dúinn suas ar na deisceanna i rith am lóin.

Thuig an máistir an tabhacht a bhí ag baint le spórt. Bhí an pheil ann dos na buachaillí ach ní raibh faic ann dos na cailíní. Thosnaigh sé an chamógaíocht dúinn agus bhímís ag traenáil sa pháirc imeartha taobh le tigh Uí Chorcóra. Bhíos dainséarach leis

an gcamán agus dúradh liom é a choimeád ar an dtalamh ar eagla go ngortóinn éinne. Ní dóigh liom gur bhuamar aon chluiche ach bhí an-chraic againn.

Ní fada taréis oscailt na scoile, thosnaíomar ag cleachtadh dráma - "An Fiach Bán" a scríobh an Máistir Ó Murchú féin. Bhí sé bunaithe ar luíochán Crosbaire. Thóg gach éinne páirt ann ag aisteoireacht, ag rinne, ag seinnt, ag amhránacht agus taobh thiar stáitse. Chuireamar ar siúl sa Choláiste é timpeall na Nollag 1959.

Bhí béim mhór ar ealaín sa scoil chomh maith. Théimis amach ag péinteáil agus tugadh tuiscint agus meas dúinn ar an dtimpeallacht agus an nádúr.

Is deacair a chreidiúint go bhféadfadh múinteoir amháin na hábhair go léir a mhúineadh dúinn. Bhí Gaoluinn, Béarla, Matamaitic, Stair, Tír Eolas, Ealaín, Laidean agus Teagasc Críostaí againn. Bhí tuiscint iontach ag Fionnbarra ar na tréithe difriúla a bhí ag na scoláirí go léir. Mheall sé sinn chun pé féith nádúrtha a bhí againn a chothú - cosúil le ceol, amhránaíocht scríobhnóireacht, ealaín, matamaitic agus rí. Sa tslí seo thug sé féin-mheas dúinn agus d'fhoghlaimíomar conas iontaoibh a bheith againn asainn féin - rud a chabhraigh linn san saol mór ina dhiaidh sin.

Ní raibh aon éide scoile againn mar thuig an máistir go raibh airgead gannachúiseach ag na tuismitheoirí. Cheannaigh sé leabhair dara-lámhach i gCorcaigh dúinn i dtreo is nach mbeadh an iomad streo orainn. I dtosach na bliana 1960 bheartaíomar go raghaimís ar oilireacht go Cnoc Mhuire i Mí Bealtaine. Thoghamar cisteoir agus chuireamar airgead i dtaisce go rialta agus mar sin níor tháinig sé deacair ar éinne. Dheineamar suaitheantaisí dúinn féin as ribín gorm le Meán Scoil Mhuire fúáilte ar le snáth dearg. Nuair a tháinig an lá d'éiríomar leis an dorchadas agus chuamar ar bus go Corcaigh. Chuamar go Cnoc Mhuire ar an dtraein - an chéad uair ar traen don chuid is mó againn. Bhíomar ag rá an Choróin Mhuire agus ag canadh iomann an slí ar fad. Bhí na sluiate daoine san áit agus iad ag paidreoireacht go deabhóideach mór-thimpeall an tSéipéil. Tar éis an Aifrinn thosnaíomar ar an slí abhaile agus bhíomar

tuirseach go maith nuair a shroicheamar Béal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh arís, tuairim is a h-aon a chlog.

Ón gcéad bhliain iontach sin, lean an scoil ar aghaidh sa Choláiste le rang breise agus múinteoir eile Nollaig Ó Súilleabháin, Céim an Fhia (Beannacht Dé leis) san dara bhliain. An bhliain ina dhiaidh sin tháinig Seán Ó Fathaigh ón nGaillimh. Ar an gceathrú bhliain tháinig múinteoir eile Gráinne Ní Mhathúna as Corcaigh - múinteoirí den scoth iad go léir, leis na h-idéalacha ársa céanna agus an suim céanna ionainn. Dhein roinnt dinn an Árd Teist i gceithre bliana agus d'oir sé seo go maith dúinn mar bhí cuid againn níos sine ná an gnáth.

Ón tosach beag sin i seomra Uí Chorcair chuaigh tionchar na scoile i bhfeidhm ar an dúthaigh mór-thimpeall chun misneach a thabhairt dos na daoine agus bród a chothú ionnta ina n-oidhreacht uasal Gaelach. Bhí brainse den Réalt sa scoil, go raibh mar aidhm aige an Ghaoluinn agus an gcultúr Gaelach a leathnú ar son grá Dé agus na Maighdine Muire. Fé choimirce Fhionnbarra thóg Béal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh páirt i gComórtas Glór na nGael agus eagraíodh an-chuid imeachtaí difriúla. Bhí comórtas don teaghlach is Gaelaí san áit. Bhuaigh Risteárd Ó Coitir agus a bhean Áine (Beannacht Dé leo) agus a gclann an comórtas sin don gcéad uair. Bhíodh na daltaí páirteach ins na himeachtaí seo. Is cuimhin liom an t-Ath. Tomás Ó Fiach ag caint linn - sagart fíor dheas, umhal, lách, greannmhar. Bhíodh scoraíochtaí ins na tithe chomh maith. Bhíos ag scoraíocht an-taitneamhach i dTigh Uí Thuama, Túirín Dubh agus bhí Seán Ó Sé ag canadh ann. Ag léacht eile sa Choláiste d'inis Seán Ó Riada (Beannacht Dé leis) dúinn cén fáth gur fhág sé an chathair. Dúirt sé "ní bhím ag faire ar an gclog agus ní bhíonn an clog ag faire orm".

Le dachad bliain anois tá Scoil Mhuire ag tabhairt scoth oideachas do mhúintir óg an dúthaigh. Gura fada buan í. Táimid go léir fé mhór-chamaoin ag Fionnbarra Ó Murchú go raibh misneach aige sa bhliain 1959 chun a aidhmeanna a chur i gcrích. Tá buíochas mór tuillte chomh maith ag Séamus Ó Corcora (Beannacht Dé leis) agus a bhean Eibhlín a thug an seomra suite dúinn ar feadh bliana. Cé eile a dhéanadh é?

3/6/1961

THE CORK EXAMINER

## Ballingeary's Science Section



At the opening of a new Science Room at Meán Scoil Mhuire, Ballingeary, were (left to right) Mr. S. O h-Urmoltaigh, Bandon; the Minister for the Gaeltacht, Mr. G. Bartley; Mr. F. O Murcha, B.A., A.T.O., Headmaster, and Mr. Nollaig O Sulleabhain, B.A., A.T.O. ("Examiner")

# Nios Mo Na Fiche Blian a' Fas

Reflections on Some Years of Real Value.

Le Peadar Ó Croinín

Had the great poet Oliver Goldsmith the chance to experience life in our little village, instead of penning "Sweet Auburn..." he no doubt would have felt instead "Sweet Ballingearry! Loveliest village of the plain. Sweet smiling village, parent of the blissful hour." That surely would sum up my memory of the most beautiful place on this side of Heaven.

I remember how the warmth of the Ballingearry community was like the proverbial nest that gives security, comfort and warmth to its members, especially the young and growing. People were sincerely interested in one another's well being. People looked out for one another, and without reservation stepped in to provide what was needed when the need was there.

To begin with, I am strongly mindful of the words of the baptism ceremony that exhort the parents to be "the first teachers and the best of teachers" of their children. My parents were indeed all of that, proving it time and time again, as Wordsworth said "in the many unremembered acts of kindness and of love."

I remember the times of Christmas, the times of threshings, of the stations, of the strawboys and wrenboys, of baptisms, weddings, wakes and funerals.

I remember the nights of high winds and scary lightning and rumbling thunder when the bunch of us kids jumped into the same bed under the clothes to seek comfort from being together and to shut out the terror of the night.

I remember the times when the river rose and the water came up to the front step and the cross between Corkery's

and Tig na Croise was like a scene from Venice, when the only mode of transport was a boat.

I remember the times when we awoke to an eerie silence of early morning and realized with intense delight that our world was blanketed with snow.

I remember, selectively, some silly boyish pranks (actually some girls were also involved) putting that donkey in the back of Donal & Mary's truck, during their courting period.

And finally, I well remember the time when a most significant person came into my life and into the life of the Ballingearry community. That person was Fionnbarra O Murchu. He came out of the West and the mist in his three-wheel contraption. Despite empty pockets he enriched the lives of individuals and the community at large. I fully realize that without his contribution, both I and many others would certainly not have had the chance to be enriched by the level of higher education that he provided. Also it is with sincerest thanks that I remember the generosity of Jim Corkery who made available his family living room as the first classroom for the fledgling Mean Scoil Mhuire. As Goldsmith put it, it was there "the village master taught his little school." I remember well the wonderful experience it was to have been one of the original nineteen who were blessed to be a part of that birthing of Mean Scoil Mhuire. I still vividly remember those times of learning and laughter, of innocence, simplicity and most things lovely. It was there the Master led us to an increased awareness of and love for all things beautiful. Time and time again he stressed, "How extraordinary the ordinary is!" His passion for the goodness of life left us with a deeply felt appreciation for the beauty of life

- art, music, drama, life, love, paint, dance, song, words, poetry, Shakespeare, Yeats, Wordsworth, O' Riada, and Mozart. I remember all of these most fondly. In the words of Yeats, "always night and day...I hear it in the deep heart's core."

It was Alfred Lord Tennyson who said that "I am a part of all that I have met." I sincerely believe that, and I give thanks to all those with whom I shared those ever so special years — to my parents, my brothers and sisters, to my neighbors, to my eighteen classmates, to Seamus O'Se and to the Master, Fionnbarra O Murchu.

As a tribute to all of the above, I'd like to close with some words of Francois Mauriac, "We are molded and remolded by those who have loved us..No love or friendship can cross the path of our destiny without leaving some mark upon it forever...The marks left by one individual on another are eternal."

meán-scoil mhúire  
béal átha an ghaorthaidh  
NOLLAIG, 1959

CEAD LEIRIÚ DEN DRAMA

"An piac bán"

LE FIONNBARRA O MURCHU

I gCOLAISTE NA MUMHAN,

BÉAL ÁTHA AN GHAORTHÁIDH,

DOMHNACH, 20 NOLLAIG, 1959, AG 8 P.M.

Daltaí sa Chéad-bhláin na hAisteoirí Uile.

## Scoláire Bocht na Seascaidí

Samhradh na bliana 1959. Bhíos réidh leis an mbunscoil agus ní raibh fhios agam ó thalamh an domhain cad ab fhearr dom a dhéanamh. Ní raibh mórán rogha ag duine óg an uair sin – dul ar obair mar chailín aimsire nó dul go scoil chónaithe, rogha an dhá dhfóg i ndairíre.

I lár an tSamhraidh áfach tháinig réiteach na faidhbe mar fógraíodh ar an Cork Examiner go n-osclofaí meán scoil i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh. Scoil chomhoideachais lán-Ghaelach a bhí i gceist. Cheapas go mbeadh sé sin oiriúnach dom. Thapaíomar an deis agus cláraíodh mé féin agus naonúr déag eile sa scoil nua. B'é Fionbarra Ó Murchú a bhunaigh an scoil agus b'é a bhí mar árd-mháistir. Ar an ochtú lá de Mheán Fomhair tar éis Aifrinne i Séipéal Fionbarra agus Rónáin bhailigh daltaí na céad bliana le chéile i seomra suite Uí Chorca. Ba dheacair a chreidiúint go raibh meán scoil i ngiorracht scread asail de mo thig féin. Bhí cónaí ormsa i nDrom an Ailligh agus ní raibh le déanamh agam ach pocléimnigh síos an bóthar.

Chuireamar aithne ar chárde nua sa scoil, daoine óga ó Bhaile Bhúirne, Réidh na nDoirí, Ínse an Gheimhlihdh agus an Céim. Chuireamar aithne ar chairde nua eile chom maith, Canon Sheehan ó Dhún ar Aill, Wordsworth agus Shakespeare, Eisirt agus Jimín Mháire Thaidhg. D'fhoghlaimíomar nithe cosúil le "Mensa Mensa Mensam". Teoragán Pythagorus and "Fair Daffodils, We weep to see you haste away so soon".

Rud amháin a chuaigh i bhfeidhm orm ná an deabhóid a bhí ag an Máistir Nua don Mhaighdean Mhuire. D'oscail sé an scoil ar an ochtú lá de Mheán Fomhair, breithlá don Mhaighdean Muire agus thug sé Meán Scoil Mhuire mar theideal ar an scoil. Thug sé Teaghlach Mhuire ar a theach chónaithe féin. Thug sé an rang ar oilithreach go Cnoc Mhuire i ndeireadh na bliana. Bhí pictiúir de

Mhuire na Dea Chomhairle ar crochadh sa tseomra ranga agus dúirt sé go mbeadh a chuid oibre agus an scoil faoi choimirce na Maighdine Muire.

Is cosúil go ndeachaigh fealsúnacht an Phiarsaigh i leith an oideachais i bhfeidhm ar an Máistir.

Luaigh sé "The Murder Machine" go minic. Bhí sé beagáinín mí fhoighneach le córas na scrúdaithe. Cheap sé go raibh an t-oideachas sin an-chúng. Mheas sé go raibh dualgas air forbairt a dhéanamh ar an duine iomlán. "Ní theastaíonn uaim asail a dhéanamh daoibh" ar seisean go minic. "Tiomáineann tú asal ach spreagann agus mealann tú an duine."

Gan amhras bhí béim ar gach gnéith den chultúr Gaelach. Is í an Ghaeilge a bhí mar ghnáth theanga na scoile agus fiú sa chéad bhliain ghlacamar páirt i ndrámá Gaeilge "An Fiach Bán," dráma faoi luíochán a deineadh in aimsir na nDubhchrónach. Léiríomar an dráma sa Halla

C.Y.M.S. i gCorcaigh. Is cuimhin liom go maith go bhfuairéamar tae agus ceapairí i dteach fairsing galánta Mrs. Danny Bán an Aoil san Mardyke níos déanaí an oíche sin.

D'fhanamar sa scoil seo ceithre bliana agus dheineamar go léir ár ndícheall. Ní raibh brú ró mhór orainn mar ní raibh córas na bpointí nó an fhoirm C.A.O. ag déanamh inní dúinn. Bhíomar saonta i gcomparáid le daltaí scoile an lae inniu ach bhí an timpeallacht inar mhaireamar simplí freisin.

Ní raibh an Máistir léannta seo ach naoi mbliana i bhfeighil na scoile. Samhradh na bliana 1968 bhí sé ar saoire i gCorca Dhuibhne san áit ab annsa leis nuair a tháinig an Rógaire Báis aniar

adtauidh air. Bhí an téarma caite aige i ngleann seo na ndeor agus bhí éacht oibre déanta aige. Fuair sé a luach saothair sna Flaithis san áit nách mbeadh aon ní de dhíth air.

Thóg sé an bhunchloch agus leanann a chuid oibre ar aghaidh. Chuir sé síol an oideachais agus táimídne, na h-iarscoláirí, ag baint an Fhómhair.

Go rabhaimíd go léir i gcomhludair a chéile i Ríocht Dé.

Eibhlín Ní Luasa  
Drom an Ailligh.



Go luath sna seascaidí  
Cúl, ó clé; Críostóir Ó Laoire; Sean Ó Buachalla; Peadar Ó Croinín;  
Tosaigh; Fionnbarra Ó Laoire; ???; Seán Ó Croinín; Donál Ó Croinín; ???.

# Mo Smaointí ar Mheán Scoil Mhuire

le Cáit Ní Rouirc

Cois Abhann Ghleanna an Chéime, in Uibh Laoire sea bhímse  
Mar a dtéann an fia san oíche chun síorchodladh sóil  
Ag macnamh seal liom féinig, ag déanamh mo smaointe  
Ag éisteacht i gcoillte le binnghuth na neon.

Is minic an maidin luath agus tráthnóna déanach a chuaigh mé tríd an Chéim ag macnamh seal liom féinig.

**1959:** Bhí rang a seacht críochnaithe agam i Scoil Náisiúnta Cappabuí. Ní raibh aon deimhneacht ann ar cad a bhí romham. Ba mhian liom leanúint ar scoil ach ní raibh aon mhéan scoil níos cóngaraí ná Beanntraí - dhá mhíle déag uaim. Ní raibh aon gluaisteán againn, mar ba gnáth an tam sin. Bhí an leictreachas againn ar feadh bliana. Bhí radio againn ach ní raibh aon teilifís. Chuamar ag rothaíocht i ngach áit, nó thógamar an capall agus trap ar Aifreann. Bhí orm cabhrú sa bhaile i mo saor aimsire; ag crú na mba, ag dul go dtí an portach, ag sábháil an fhéir agus rí. Ní raibh aon seans agam dul ag feirmeoireacht mar bhí deartháir níos sinne ná mise.

Lá mór a bhí san chéad Aoine de gach mhí; bé sin lá an Aonaigh i mBeanntraí. Chuaigh mo athair chun an Aonaigh gach mhí. Tháinig mo athair abhaile ó Aonach an Iúil 1959 le scéal mór. Chuala sé ráfla go raibh Meán Scoil nua chun oscailt i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh i mí Meán Fhómhair - Meán Scoil lán Ghaelach agus ó Bheanntraí ab ea bunaitheoir na scoile nua - Fionnbarra Ó Murchú.

Ní raibh aithne againn air, ach bhí aithne againn ar a ghaolta. Bhí siopa ag a dheartháir Pat san Sráid Nua. Bhí uachtar reoite iontach le fáil ó Pat agus bhíodh sé againn gach uair a chuamar go Beanntraí. Do cheannaigh mo mháthair na bróga dúinn ó Daithí - deartháir eile le Fionnbarra agus is ón a dheirfiúr - Hurleys the corner shop a cheannaigh mo mháthair na gréithe cistine. Chuaigh Fionnbarra timpeall na paróistí in aice le Béal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh ag lorg daltaí. Bhí súil aige daltaí a fháil ón a pharóiste féin, cé nach raibh ár bparóiste sa Ghaeltacht. Bhual mo athair le Jack Jim Murphy, cara le Fionnbarra, agus d'iarr sé air an raibh aon

dalta aige go mbeadh suim acu san scoil. Tháinig mo athair abhaile ón Aonach leis an scéal agus bhí sceitimíní orm nuair a chuala mé faoin scoil. B'fhéidir go mbeadh seans ann, nach mbeadh orm dul ag obair, nó dul ar an mbád go Sasana, ba iad san an dá rogha a bhí ar fáil i 1959.

Tamall ina dhiaidh sin tháinig Fionnbarra chun ár mbaile ina ghluaisteán beag (An Jellogy) ag lorg daltaí. Scoil Lán Ghaelach do bhuachaillí agus do chailíní a bheadh ann agus bheadh táille £10 gach bliain. Ní chuirfeadh an Ghaeilge bunúsach as dom, mar labharamar Gaeilge sa bhaile. (Bhí sean Ghaeilge fíor dheas ag mo mháthair) agus fuaireamar an cúig púnt deontas bliantiúil ón Rialtas, chun Gaeilge a labhairt sa bhaile, bhí scrúdú ón gcigire againn gach bliain. Bhí sórt eagla orm roimh na hábhair nua i.e. Laidin, Algebra, Geometry agus Líníocht tré Ghaeilge. Theastaigh uaim triall a bhaint as, agus tugadh cead dom dul ar aghaidh.

**Meán Fhómhair 1959:** Bhíos im aonar ag dul go Meán Scoil Mhuire ón taobh thiar den Chéim, agus bé Fionnbarra an t-aon múinteoir a bhí againn. I bPárlús Séamus agus Eibhlín Bean Uí Chorca a chaitheamar an chéad bhliain, 19 daltaí agus 9 ábhar a mhúin Fionnbarra dúinn agus mhúin sé roinnt mhaith eile freisin.

Thosnaigh an scoil ar an t-ochtú lá de Mheán Fhómhair (lá breithe na Maighdine Muire) le Aifreann sa Séipéal. Bhí Fionnbarra ag taisteal gach lá ó Bheanntraí agus thug sé spin dom. Bhual mé leis ós comhair mo thig amach ar an mbóthar nua. Bhíodh stól beag súgáin agam chun suí in aice leis, mar is dóigh liom gur gluaisteán do dhuine amháin a bhí san "Jellogy". Bhí mór áthas orm go bhfuair mé seans chun freastal ar an Meán Scoil agus bhíos i ndáiríre faoin staidéar.

Bliain iontach abea 1959/60. Bhí oideachas leathan á fháil againn. Bhí

cómhrá éigin againn geall leis gach lá, nár bhain leis na hábhair scoile i.e. Thug Fionnbarra le tuiscint dúinn muinín a bheith againn asainn féin. Thug sé idéalachas, misneach, creideamh, dóchas don lá a bhí le teacht, agus bródúlacht as ár dteanga, cultúr agus as ár dtír féin dúinn. Spreag sé sinn chun oibre, go háirithe le na shampla féin, agus caithfidh go raibh sé deacair go leor de bharr a easláinte, ach bhí sé ana dífongbháilte. Bhí suim aige i ngach gné dár scoláireacht agus oideachas i.e. drámaíocht, spórt, amhránaíocht agus ár gcreideamh. Bhí turas scoile go Cnoc Mhuire againn. Bhí orainn éirí ar a dó a chlog ar maidin chun dul ar bhus ó Bhéal Átha go Corcaigh. Bhí Aifreann againn ar leath i ndiaidh a cúig i Séipéal Naomh Pádraig, roimh an turas traein a thosnaigh ar leath i ndiaidh a sé. Bhíomar ar ais i mBéal Átha timpeall meán oíche. Chuamar go Cnoc Mhuire díreach sar a dheineamar an tÁrd Teastas i 1963.

**1960:** Phós Fionnbarra agus Máire sa Samhradh agus thóg sé tigh i mBéal Átha agus chaill mé mo spin chun na scoile. Bhí múinteoir nua againn agus bhí na ranganna sa Choláiste don chéad uair. Bhí an t-áth liom arís, mar bé Nollaigh Ó Súilleabháin as Céim an Fhaidh ár múinteoir nua agus thug sé spin dom ar scoil ón a bhaile. Bhí orm dul ag rothaíocht thar an Chéim gach lá. Is minic a thug máthair agus aintín Nollag tae agus toast dom agus téamh cois na tine ar maidin agus mé préachta agus fliuch b'fhéidir, Dia leo go léir. Bhí na crainn á chur sa Chéim ag na fir a bhí ag obair san foraoiseacht agus mise ag dul tríd an Chéim agus mé ag smaoineamh liom féin, cá mbeinn nuair a bheadh na crainn sin fásta. Buíochas le Dia, táim anseo chun pléisiúr a bhaint astu, cé go bhfuil Nollaigh agus Fionnbarra imithe ar shlí na Fírinne, Beannacht Dé leo.

**Meitheamh 1961:** Do dheineamar an Mhéan Teist tar éis dhá bhliain agus is

cumhin liom gur rugadh Máire óg Ní Mhurchú nuair a bhí na scrúdaithe ar siúl. Bhí sceitimíní orainn go léir de bharr breithe Mháire mar bhíomar go léir cosúil le clann ag Fionnbarra agus Máire. D'fhág cuid den rang i ndiaidh an Mheán Teastas.

**Meán Fhómhair 1961:** Bhí rang nua eile agus saotharlann nua againn, agus múinteoir nua, strainséar ón nGaillimh, Seán Ó Fathaigh. Mhúineadh sé eolaíocht dúinn. Bhí sé deacair dúinn é a thuiscint i dtosach mar bhí Gaeilge Connachta aige i.e. phataí in ionad prátaí. Bhí an-suim ag Fionnbarra san eolaíocht mar theastaigh uaidh gach seans a thabhairt dúinn obair a fháil in ár dtír féin.

**1962:** Fuaireamar múinteoir nua eile, Gráinne Ní Mhathúna ó Chorcaigh agus rang nua eile freisin. Thosnaigh mo dheirfiúr Maighréad an bhliain sin agus thug Nollaig spin di freisin. Bliain an-tabhachtach dár rang é seo mar bhí an tÁrd Teist á dtógaint againn sa Samhradh. Bhí an scoil tar éis fás, ach bhraith rang '59 go rabhamar cosúil le clann Fhionnbarra féin go fóill. Thóg sé go Corcaigh sinn chun an dráma Julius Caesar a fheiscint mar bé sin an dráma a bhí againn don Árd Teist. Dheineamar an scrúdú don Stáit Seirbhís. Dhein daoine eile scrúdú don Comhairle Chontae.

Bhí ag brath liom abhaile tríd an Chéim tráthnóna amháin agus stop Síle Ní Bhriain as Radio ...ireann chun cainte liom. Dhein sí agallamh chun craoladh agus bhí le cloisint ar Junior Journal go gairid ina dhiaidh sin. Fuaireas 10 scilling tríd an bPost don agallamh sin.

Bhí tinneas ag Fionnbarra ar feadh cúpla mí i rith na bliana sin agus bhí múinteoir eile againn ar feadh tamaill bhig, bí sin Áine Nic Cárthaigh as an gCeatharlach. Bhí scoil gach Satharn againn roimh an Árd Teist. D'fhanfainn i mBán an Teampaill, geall leis gach Aoine, le col ceathrar le mo Athair, Máire Bean Uí Chróinín nó Mary Lehane mar bhí aithne againn uirthi. Is mó oíche a chaith mé ag éisteacht leis na comharsain agus iad ag scoraíocht san tigh sin. Ba bhreá liom bheith ann. Is minic a thug na comharsain spin dom suas agus síos ón scoil freisin. Bhíodh an lón agam le Maighréad Ní Chróinín go minic agus chuirfeadh a h-athair agus a máthair mór fháilte romham.

San bhliain deireanach sin, do thógfadh Seán Ó Fathaigh mé féin agus mo rothar abhaile chomh fada le Scoil Cappabuí dá mbeadh an tráthnóna ag cur feartainne go trom. Is dócha go raibh trua aige dom, mar bhí sé cruaidh go leor ag dul tríd an Chéim agus an bháisteach agus an ghaoth ag bualadh isteach im' aghaidh. Is minic a dheinim smaoineamh ar na maidine breá i Mí Meán Fhómhair agus mé ag buaileadh síos an Chéim ar an rothar le mo dhá lámh im' phóca agus an drúcht go fuar ar mo aghaidh, stadfainn ag bun na Céime, ag macnamh seal liom féinig agus mé ag breathnú ar an áilleacht im' thimpeall.

D'fhág Nollaig Ó Súilleabháin agus Seán Ó Fathaigh an scoil linn i Meitheamh 1963 agus phós Gráinne Ní Mhathúna agus d'imigh sí freisin. Tháinig triúr múinteoir nua, ach bhíos imithe. Thosnaigh mé ag obair i mí Iúil 1963, i monarcha Gearmánach i mBeanntraí agus d'aistrigh mé go dtí Customs agus Excise, san Stát Seirbhís i mBaile Átha Cliath i mí na Samhna an bhliain sin. I 1967 tháinig mé ar ais go Corcaigh go dtí Customs.

**1970:** Chuaigh mé ar ais go Baile Átha Cliath mar Hostess le Aer Lingus agus ar ais go Corcaigh arís i 1979 nuair a bunaíodh Base do Hostesses in Aerphort Chorcaí. D'éirigh mé as bheith ag obair tar éis dom cúig bliana is fichead a chaitheamh le Aer Lingus agus táim im' chónaí i gCorcaigh anois.

Bhí Teacht le Chéile (an chéad ceann) ag ranganna 1959 agus 1960 i nGuagán i

1997 agus tá áthas orm a rá go bhfuil an chuid is mó againn in ár gcónaí in ...irinn agus ana chuid dinn i gContae Chorcaí. As ár rang tá an tAthair Peadar Ó Croinín i Los Angeles agus tá Eibhlín Ní Thuama i mBoston agus tá Amhlaoibh Ó Luasa imithe ar slí na Fírinne, Beannacht Dé leis.

Is dócha go mbeadh slí beatha an-difriúil agam murach gur oscail Meán Scoil Mhuire i 1959 agus sé a bhí scríobhta im' dhialann '63 ná "Slán beo leis an saol aoibhinn" Sin mar a bhí dom i Meán Scoil Mhuire. Tá Scoil Mhuire ann fós, a tháinig i ndiaidh Meán Scoil Mhuire agus go mairfidh sé i bhfad.

Mo bhuíochas do gach éinne a chabhraigh liom agus tá súil agam go bhfuil na daoine atá imithe uainn i Solas na bhFlaitheas i.e. mo thuismitheoirí Seán agus Cáit, Fionnbarra Ó Murchú, Nollaig Ó Súilleabháin agus a mháthair Cáit agus a áintín Peggy, Máire Bean Uí Chróinín, Bán an Teampaill, Séamus Ó Corcora a thug an párlús dúinn don chéad bhliain, Diarmuid Ó Liatháin gaol liom - bhíodh an-scéalta aige agus thugadh sé tae dom freisin, Seán agus Máire Bean Uí Chróinín, an Choill Mhór, athair agus máthair Maighréad agus Peadar, a thug go leor lón dom. Mo bhuíochas do gach duine uasal a thug spin dom féin agus mo rothar agus mé ag teacht agus ag imeacht idir mo bhaile in Inse Rua agus Meán Scoil Mhuire i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh.



Foireann Comoige

Eibhlín Herlihy; Eibhlín Ní Croinín; Siobhán Ní Cheallaigh; ????; Nora Herlihy; Maire Herlihy; Eibhlís Ní Shuilleabháin.

## MAIDHC MHICHÍL Ó CRIODÁIN

This story and translation were collected from The Tailor, Tim Buckley, Gaernapeaka, Ballingeary. Casadh Na Spride is on the section of the "Old Road" between Teddy Galvins house and Padraig Con Patsie's.

### MAIDHC MHICHÍL Ó CRIODÁIN AGUS AN SPRID

Tá Casadh na Spride ar an mbóthar thoir ar Drom an Ailligh. Níl sé ceathrú mhíle ar fad siar ó Bhéal Átha an Ghaorthaidh. Tá sé díreach ar an dtaobh thoir de thigh Uí Chríodáin atá ar thaobh an bhóthair. Tá ainm na bpúcaí ar an mball san chomh fada agus tá aithne agamsa ar an áit. Bhí sprid ann fadó.

Bhí fear gurbh ainm dó Micheál Ó Críodáin in Oileán Eidhneach. Throid an fear san an sprid. Bhíodh sí i bhfoirm mná, agus ní fheiceadh éinne í ach duine a bhíodh amuigh go déanach istoíche. Bhí Micheál ag dul abhaile oíche, agus bhí sé go maith déanach. Bhuail an sprid uimis ar an mbóthar, díreach ag an gcasadh san. Chuireadh sí ceist ar dhaoibh, agus mura réiteofa an cheist di mharódh sí tú. Is dóigh liom gur mhairbh sí daoine ann, ach níl aon chuntas agam orthu san.

'Coinneal agus coinnleoir ann', a dúirt sí, agus cuirse leathrann air sin'. Sin é an rud a deireadh sí leo so a thagadh ann, agus bhí sé mar phionós uirthi go gcaithfeadh sí fanúint ansan go bhfreagródh duine éigin an cheist di. Bhí rud éigin déanta as an slí aici. B'shin iad na sprideanna – a leithéidí sin a bhíodh tas éis bás a fháil.

Chaitfeadh Micheál Ó Críodáin an rann a fhreagairt di. Dúirt sé: 'Cuileann a fhásann i ngleann agus é a chur mar cheann a thigh'. éNí réiteodh san mo cheist', a dúirt sí. Dúirt sí an rann an tarna huair. Thabharfadh sí trí sheans duit. Thug Micheál freagra eile ar an gceist ansan: 'Muileann ag scilligeadh ar abhainn agus buille aige thall is abhus'. éNí réiteodh san mo cheist,' ar sise leis. Dúirt si an rann an tríú huair, agus dúirt Micheál: 'Ba chuirte dhuit bheith i bhFlaitheas Dé in am ná bheith id shamhail ansan!' Chomh luath agus bhí an méid sin ráite aige d'imigh sí as a radharc in áirde sa spéir. Ní fhaca éinne ann í as san amach.

Foinnse: - "Seanchas An Táilliúra",

Seán Ó Cróinín a bhailigh; Aindrias Ó Muimhneacháin a chuir in eagar;

© Cló Mercier Teoranta, 1978.

### MAIDHC MHICHÍL CREED AND THE SPIRIT

Casadh na Spride (i.e. The Spirit Turn) is on the road east at Droumanallig. It is not fully a quarter of a mile west of Ballingeary. It is just east of Creedon's house, which is on the roadside. While I have known the spot it is reputed to have had pooka associations. There was a spirit there in former times.

A man named Michael Creedon lived in Illanynagh. He fought a spirit there. She would appear in the form of a woman, and only those out late at night would see her. Late one night Michael was on his way home. The spirit accosted him on the road, just at the turn. She used to put a problem to people and would kill anyone who failed to solve it. I believe that she killed people there, but I don't know who these were.

'A candle and a candlestick there is, and you fit a couplet to that', she would say. That is what she would say to those whom she met, as she had been condemned to stay there until someone solved her problem for her. She had done something wrong. Such were the spirits – after death.

Michael Creedon had no option but to respond to the couplet. Said he: 'Holly agrowing in a glen, and being put as a roof on a house'.

'That doesn't answer my question', said she, and she repeated her couplet. She would allow one to make three efforts.

Michael tried again: 'A mill on a river mangling, and striking on all sides', said he.

'That doesn't answer my question', said she again. She then posed her problem for the third time, and then said Michael: 'You ought to have got to Heaven in time rather than being a ghost as you are!' He had no sooner said that than she disappeared up into the air. No one has ever since seen her.



Micheál Ó Críodáin of Oileán Eidhneach (Illaninagh), otherwise Maidhc Mhichíl Creed, pictured with his wife Máire Ní Chróinín of Guagán Barra. Grandparents to both the late Micheál Creed of Illaninagh, who died October 1999 (R.I.P.), and the Spanish War veteran Micheál O'Riordan.

Photo courtesy of Maidhc Mhichíl's great-grandson, Manus O'Riordan.

Source: - "Stories From The Tailor";  
Edited and translated by Aindrias Ó Muimhneacháin;  
The Mercier Press; © Aindrias Ó Muimhneacháin.

## The Bawnaneal O'Learys

With this article we feature a fine sepia tint photograph taken in about 1918 and showing a family group, the Bawnaneal O'Learys from Augheras. Who were these people, and where is Bawnaneal?

Bawnaneal is a sub-division of the townland of Augheras, and is situated in the Northern part, forming about one quarter of that townland. We have other examples of townlands being sub-divided such as Copse in Dromanallig. These are usually large townlands, and the names of the sub-divisions, whilst still well known locally, are rarely shown anywhere on a map.

Augheras has an unusual history. It was part of the Civil Parish of Uibh Laoghaire, but for much of its time did not come under the rule of the O'Learys, the paramount chieftains. Instead, it was peopled by McCarthy families and a McCarthy chieftain. McCarthy of Augheras was descended from Donncha an Drumin, the sixth son of Cormac Fionn who was MacCarthy mor in ad.1247. By 1640 there was a separate area called Greater Augheras which was owned by this McCarthy family, and which included the present townlands of Carrigbaun, Cahernacaha, Gurteenflugh, Lackabaun, Carrignadoura, Lyrenageeha, Gurteenowen, Derreenclodig, Coomdorragha, Derreenabourky, Gortnaloughra, Scrahanmore, Keamcorravooly, Gorteenakilla and Augheras. Fifteen townlands in all, under the rule of McCarthy Eachruis. Note that these Augheras McCarthys were not related to the Muskerry McCarthys, but instead claimed allegiance to McCarthy Mor in Co.Kerry.

Chris Daniel's house was the centre of Bawnaneal and is shown on some old maps as "Augheras Castle". There is no evidence that there was ever a tower house there, but there may well have been a Ringfort, and this Ringfort was probably the home of the ruling McCarthy of Augheras.



Family of Dan and Mary O'Leary, Bawnaneal, c. 1920s. Bawnaneal is a part of Augheras townland.  
Back l to r. James; Paddy; Jerry; Maggie; Peter; Danny; John.  
Mid. l to r. Minnie; Mrs. Mary O'Leary, (nee Murphy, Gortluachra); Mr. Dan O'Leary; Katie.  
Front. Nora.

By the 18th.c. these McCarthys had disappeared, and Augheras townland in the Griffiths Survey includes three separate O'Leary families who are substantial tenants to the landlord, William B.Hoare. Farm 2A is shown as 78 acres and farmed by Cornelius Leary in 1854. This Cornelius was the son of Timothy Leary and Ellen Sullivan. He was born in 1823 and married Catherine Barry. Cornelius died young however and there then followed a complicated series of marriages in which the widow, Catherine married John, Cornelius' cousin, and John married Mary Sullivan in 1858 following Catherine's death. Daniel, born 1866 was the eldest child of the marriage of John Leary of Bawnaneal and Mary Sullivan. He inherited the tenancy of the 78 acre farm and married Mary Murphy from Gortluachra in 1891. They are the parents in the picture, surrounded by ten of their eleven children, Con having died before the picture was taken.

These O'Learys were O'Leary Breac from Dromanallig, related to the O'Leary Breac in Glasheen. They were often known as the Barnaby O'Learys and should not be confused with the other big O'Leary family in Augheras, the Diamond O'Learys who were a branch of O'Leary Riabhach from Derryvane.

John in the picture had a family, several of whom now live in Dublin. Danny also had a family. Bawnaneal House was sold in recent times to Chris and Pauline Daniels from England.

# The Unveiling of the Keimaneigh Monument

by Donal Fitzgerald

Sunday morning April 18th. 1999 dawned bright and sunny much to the relief of the Ballingeary and Bantry Historical Societies' members and particularly the members of the sub-committee, consisting of Seán O'Suilleabháin and Peter O'Leary, Ballingeary and Sheila Harrington and Donal Fitzgerald, Bantry. They had been assigned the task of having the memorial plaques erected to those who died at the battle of Keimaneigh and one who was hanged at Deshure for his part in the battle. For weeks previously the weather had been rainy and all the plans for the blessing and unveiling had been made with the usual rain in mind. Those who had speeches to make were warned to keep them short, not to exceed five minutes and the whole ceremony was to be completed in thirty minutes.

However the Gods smiled on the day and the great sunny weather allowed the arrangements to proceed at a more leisurely pace.

His Lordship, Bishop Buckley, who was to bless the monument, planted a tree at Inchageela after 8 o'clock Mass to mark his appointment as Bishop of Cork and Ross. He celebrated 11 o'clock Mass in Ballingeary after which he blessed the Famine Pot which had been erected in the village. He spoke of the Famine in the area in 1845/1848 when distress and hardship reached a most alarming pitch. Between 1841 and 1851 the population of the parish decreased from six and a half thousand to four and a half thousand.

The Ballingeary Pipe Band then led Bishop Buckley and a large crowd to the monument at Keimaneigh where Seán "Súilleabháin (master of ceremonies) welcomed the Bishop and all present to the unveiling. There are two plaques, one an English translation of the other which is in Irish. After the ceremony the Bishop said that the Battle of Keimaneigh was a very important event in the struggle for Irish freedom. The 1820's were a dark period in Irish history and there was much agrarian unrest. There was widespread poverty and oppression. Today we remember our ancestors who died here - Michael Casey, Auliffe Lynch, Barry O'Leary and Edward Ring. We remem-

ber also all those who were subsequently hanged as a reprisal. It is quite possible also that men were wounded in the battle, taken home and died from their wounds. They would have been buried quietly.

He also said that it was very appropriate that the name of John Smith, the British soldier who was killed, should be inscribed on the monument. This is unusual and relevant when one considers the peace process today. Máire Bhuí Ní Laoghaire's poem about the battle will ensure that it will be remembered. He concluded "Today we remember those who have gone before us. Their sacrifices and inspiration provide us with the reasons for living and hoping. In the words of the Bible "we should never forget the rock from which we were hewn, the quarry from which we were cut".

Peter O'Leary, Ballingeary, after a humorous remark about the time limitation on him, gave a brief account of the events of that fateful week in 1822.

Gerald Harrington of Bantry thanked everyone for coming to the unveiling and said, "when this monument was being planned it was agreed that we should intrude only to the smallest degree possible with the unspoiled beauty and grandeur of this famous Pass. Any material used was of the local rock which had slipped from the hillside over the years. The rock to which the plaques are attached was found twenty yards from the position it now occupies and was used uncut and unpolished to blend in with its surroundings.

We would like to thank Bishop Buckley for coming as we realise that he is a very busy man with many calls on his time. But we also feel that next to lofting the bowl a visit to Ballingeary is very dear and special to him. And while we have the opportunity we would like to compliment him on the Holy Week ceremonies which were broadcast from his beautiful Cathedral.

Gerald Harrington then thanked Pat and Jackie Twomey who kindly donated the land for the monument. Gearóid Hayes was also thanked for his assistance with the project, as were the Cork Co. Council "who gave us assistance far and beyond our

expectations". He also thanked the Council workers who really did a great job. The Ballingearry Pipe Band who provided music on the day, Tomás O'Sullivan for his excellent rendering of Máire Bhui Ní Laoghaire's "Cath Chéim an Fhiadh", the Gardaí and the stewards for traffic control were all thanked by Gerald.

While we were not acquainted with all the relatives of those who died at the ambush our attention was drawn to the following -

of Michael Casey -

Joan and Brian Doherty, Chicago  
Teresa Breslin, Chicago  
Eileen and Seamus Young, Co. Louth  
Mary and P.J. McCarthy, Ballineen  
Kathleen McCarthy, Ballineen  
Patricia and Eric Dukelow, Durrus  
James Cooney, Macroom  
Sheila, John and Gerald Harrington, Bantry

of Barry O'Leary -

Margaret Murphy, Bantry  
Audrey and Finbarr Murphy and family, Bantry  
Regina Creedon, Michael Daly, Bishopstown  
Lena Daly, Bishopstown  
Mary Joe Byrne, Glounthaur  
Sheila O'Donoghue, Crookstown

of Auliffe Lynch -

Cotters, the Flatts, Ballyvourney

When bringing the ceremonies to a close, Seán Ó Súilleabháin invited all present to partake of refreshments which were laid on by the societies at Cronin's Hotel Gougane, an invitation which was readily accepted by a great number.



Bishop John Buckley unveiling the plaque of Keimaneigh, 18th April, 1999

# Scoil Mhuire 1974

## Le Donncha Ó Laoire

I 1974 a tháinig Scoil Mhuire ar an saol. 'Sé a tharla ná gur tháinig Meán Scoil Mhuire isteach faoin gCoiste Ghairm Oideachais agus d'úsáideadh foirgneamh na Ceárd Scoile go hiomlán don scoil nua agus Scoil Mhuire mar ainm air. Coláiste Pobail a ghlaofaí air inniu ach ní raibh an teideal sin tagtha chun cinn ag an am. Comhnascadh a bhí ann ar shlí ach bhí comhnascadh de shaghas eile ann ó 1967. Bhí na hábhair phraicticiúla agus cúpla ábhar eile ag an gCoiste Ghairm Oideachais do dhaltaí na Meán Scoile. D'úsáideadh foirgneamh na Ceárd Scoile do na hábhair sin ach bhí furmhór mór ama na scoile caite sa Halla agus níos déanaí san Óstán.

Fuair Bainisteoir agus Bunaitheoir Mheán Scoil Mhuire, Fionnbarra Ó Murchú bás go hobann agus go tragóideach i 1968. Ina dhiaidh sin bhí a bhaintreach Máire mar Bhainisteoir agus Conchúr Ó Murchú mar Phríomh Oide ar Mheán Scoil Mhuire. Bhíos féin mar 'Mhúinteoir Feidhleach' ar thaobh na Ceárd Scoile dhe ón sochrú i 1967.

### Bagairt don scoil

Ag deireadh na seascadaí agus tús na seachtóidí bhíodh cruinnithe ag an Roinn Oideachais timpeall na tíre, ag iarraidh scoileanna a thabhairt le chéile agus comhnascadh a chur chun tosaigh. Is cuimhin liom bheith ag ceann de na cruinnithe sin i gColáiste Íosagáin, Baile Mhúirne ag deireadh 1971. Dúirt ionadaí na Roinne, an tUas Ó Cúill, go neamhbhalbh linn gurb é polasaí na Roinne é scoil amháin a bheith i nGaeltacht Mhúscraí agus go mbeadh an scoil sin i gColáiste Íosagáin. Is ait an scéal é gur sin an áit nach bhfuil scoil ann inniu. Cuireadh coiste ar bun i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh chun an bhagairt i gcoinne na scoile a throid. Chuaigh toscaireacht go Baile Átha Cliath i mí Feabhra 1974 chun bualadh leis an Aire Oideachais, Risteárd De Búrca T.D. Ar an dtoscaireacht bhí Máire Bean Uí Mhúrchú, Bainisteoir Mheán Scoil Mhuire, Conchúr (The Lodge) Ó Cróinín, Siobhán Bean Uí Éaluithe, Dónal S. Ó Céilleachair, Tadhg Ó Gealbháin, Donncha Ó Laoire agus an An tAth Liam Mac Cárthaigh. Ní cuimhin liom aon rud mór ag teacht as an gcruinniú. Gheall an tAire nach ndúnfaí an scoil go dtí 1976 ar a luaithe agus gur chóir féachaint ar shlí chun breis ábhair a chuir ar fáil agus uimhreacha na ndaltaí a ardú.

### Sochrúchán nua

Timpeall an ama seo tháinig Príomh Oifigeach nua go Coiste Ghairm-Oideachais Cho. Chorcaí, sé sin, Riobárd Ó Buachalla. Chuir sé suim i mBéal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh ón tús agus ní raibh aon trácht aige ar dhúnadh na scoile. Mhol sé go gcuirfí sochrúchán i bhfeidhnm a bhí déanta aige roimhe sin sa Tóchar i gCiarraí. Réitigh sé an plean atá luaite i dtosadh an ailt seo.

### Múinteoirí 1974

Tháinig cúigear mhúinteoir ar aghaidh le Meán Scoil Mhuire go Scoil Mhuire i 1974. Is iad san ná Conchúr Ó Murchú, Máire Bean Á Mhúrchú, Stiofán Ó Raifterí, Máire Ní Chadhla agus Seosamh De Nógla. Is iad na múinteoirí a bhí cheana féin leis an gCoiste agus a bhí ag múineadh i Scoil Mhuire i 1974 ná Donncha Ó Laoire (a ceapadh ina Phríomh Oide) Máire Bean Á Mhuirthe, Tadhg Ó Conaill agus Seán De Plás. Tháinig Caoimhín Ó Buachalla in áit Seosamh De Nógla i rith na bliana san. Bhí 67 daltaí sa scoil i 1974/5 agus bhí 18, 7 cailín agus 11 buachaill sa chéad bhliain. Is iad san ná:-

### Daltaí na céad bhliana 1974

|                         |                    |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Cáit Ní Chreimín        | Leaca Bán          |
| Criostóir Ó Ceallacháin | Cathair            |
| Síle Ní Chrofnín        | Inse an Fhosaigh   |
| Dónal Ó Céilleachair    | Goirtín Fliuch     |
| Siobhán Ní Dhonnchú     | Ladhar na Gaoithe  |
| Seán Ó Céilleachair     | Goirtín na Coille  |
| Martina Ní Laoire       | Doire Mhagh Cóirín |
| Risteárd Mac Coitir     | Coill Mhór         |
| Máire Ní Liatháin       | Goirtín Fliuch     |
| Art Ó hÉalaithe         | Coill Mhór         |
| Ana Ní Mhuirthe         | An tSráid          |
| Pádraig Ó Laoire        | Curraithe          |
| Neasa Ní Shuibhne       | Túirín Dubh        |
| Donncha Ó Luasa         | Inse Geimhleach    |
| Séamus Ó Caochlaí       | Muing a'Mhadra     |
| Séamus Ó Maonaigh       | Inse Rua           |
| Donncha Ó Mongáin       | Tír na Spideoige   |
| Aodán Ó Murchú          | Gortluachra        |

### Ó 1974 i leith

'Sé an tathrú is mó a bhí le feiscint de bharr búnú Scoil Mhuire ná gur caitheadh airgead poiblí arís ar threallamh, péinteáil, cothú agus forbairt na scoile. Bhí Roibárd Ó Buachalla, Príomh Oifigeach Feidhmiúcháin an-bháidhiúil leis an scoil, an tam san agus níos déanaí. Cuireadh síneadh de sheomra tionóil agus seomra nua Adhmadóireachta, chomh maith le háit imeartha, leis an scoil i 1982 agus cuireadh seomra eile leis an scoil i 1996.

Agus sinn ag teacht go deireadh an chéid agus deireadh na mílaoise, tá sé go maith dúinn agus suimúil, féachaint siar ar 60 bliain na Ceárd Scoile, 40 bliain Mheán Scoil Mhuire agus 25 bliain Scoil Mhuire.

# THE STATION

(7-4-1981)

Whitewashed walls  
welcomed  
the misty March morning..  
while fresh paint  
and daffodils  
were lost  
in the crowded kitchen.  
"Pobal Dé"  
an maidin sin  
i láthair.  
Neighbours  
knew the silence  
after sin was total  
until the bread of God  
was swallowed  
in the breakfast babble.

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"THE STATIONS - a brief history"

"The station" is a relic of Penal Times, when Mass was not celebrated in public but in some private house and very often in a barn or even under open air. Mass Rocks commemorate these open-air places of worship today and we have our own Mass Rock on the South Lake Road.

Even when the Penal Laws were relaxed and Catholicism emerged into the open after 1830, the custom of saying Mass in private houses continued for various reasons. In many rural areas, isolation was the key problem and there was also the very practical problem that few Churches were available for worship in the years immediately after Emancipation.

Rev. J.Cunnane's writing in *The Furrow* in 1968 remarks that:" The reason for preserving the custom of "the stations" was that when the Irish Church emerged from persecution at the beginning of the nineteenth century it found itself fixed with the problem of a lack of Church buildings and of priests to serve a rapidly growing population. Many people among the old and sick, found themselves at great distances from the Church. In very large areas lack of roads and transport made the problem of Mass attendance and the Sacraments an acute one for great numbers. To overcome these difficulties the parish clergy developed the system known in Ireland as: 'The Stations' ".By arrangement with the people, the priests twice a year visited each townland, offering Mass and hearing confessions in one of the houses - each house was expected "to take The Station in it's turn"

Times have changed and life moves on but thankfully this lovely custom is thriving in the parish of Iveleary.

Nora O'Riordan, Gortnalour, Inchigeela

Ócáid bhronnadh an Fháinne i Meán Scoil Mhuire, Beal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh i 1964



Line ar chúil Dónal Ó Buachalla; Caoimghín Ó Buachalla; Eoin Ó Súilleabháin; Máirtín Ó Céilleachair; Peadar Ó Cróinín; Pádraig Ó Céilleachair; Pádraig Ó Droma.

Line a trí: Síle Ní Chearúil; Nóra Ní Choitir; Máire Ní Riordáin; Siobhán Ní Liatháin; Máire Ní Bhuachalla; Síle Ní Luasa; Máiread Seartan; Máiread Ní Loingsigh; Gobnait Ní Loingsigh; Máiread Ní Chárthaigh; Nóra Ní Luasa; Bríd Ní Chróinín; Eilín Ní Mhócháin; Cáit Ní Choill.

Line a dó: Máiread Ní Ruairc; Fionnbarra Ó Murchú; Eilís Ní Shuilleabháin; Siobhán Ní Thuama; Cristín Ní Dhroma; Síle Ní Chearúil; Neil Ní Mhuineacháin; Nóra Ní h-Iarfhatha; Noreen Ní Shuilleabháin; Caitlín Ní Mhócháin; Siobhán Ní Chárthaigh; Máire Ní Loingsigh;

Áine Ní Mhuineacháin; Áine Ní Mhuiríthe; Nóra Ní Dhuinnín; Eilín Ní Loingsigh; Máire Ní Laoire; Eilín Ní Sheilteacháin; Cáit Ní Choitir; Siobhán Ní Luasa; Máire Ní Thannúir;

Tosach ó chlár: Siobhán Ní Cheallaigh; Máire Ní Shíocháin; Nóra Ní Shíocháin; Eilís Ní Chróinín; Tadhg Ó Lian; Antóin Ó Clúmháin; Eilís Ní Dhuinnín; Dónal Ó Cróinín; An t-Athair Liam Ó Riagáin An Ceannfort Máirtín Ó Murchú; Conchúr Ó Murchú; Nollaig Ó Buachalla; Áine Ní Mhuineacháin; Máiread Ní Cheallaigh; Eilín Ní Thuama; Siobhán Ní Shuibhne.