

Expanded Commentary for the Newtownmountkennedy for Heritage Guide

No. 1 Newtownmountkennedy

Mottes were a feature of the Anglo-Normans. They often constructed them at fording points on a river to control the passage of people and goods. Later, mills were constructed on the river to provide an income and a means of grinding corn. People were hired to work the mill and its associated activities, and cottages were constructed along the river for these workers. This developmental process is documented for Shanganagh castle and others.

This scenario is most likely the origin of what would become Newtownmountkennedy, initially known simply as 'Newtown'. The motte still exists on the Mount Kennedy demesne, visible through the back gate just up from the old bridge which marks a river crossing. Originally the townland name was Ballygarny, or the settlement of Kearny.

Kearnys in this part of Ireland were a professional family, being clerics, i.e. priests, and not uncommonly having children as well. The surname existed in this area until at least 1600. Cooladoyle, then the name of the townland on the other side of the river, was said in 1623 to contain a hamlet and a mill. The earliest examples we have of the name Newtownmountkennedy being used are on a Delgany baptismal record of June 1671, and on a lease for a house and garden of 1672, from the estate papers.

No. 2 The Kennedys of Mount Kennedy

The Kennedys of Mt Kennedy were from a Gaelic Catholic family that operated in Dublin city from the middle of the 16th century through the end of the 17th century. Originally, they probably came from Co. Tipperary. The family had at least 2 branches. This branch were legal clerks, barristers, with one making it to a judgeship. The founder of Mount Kennedy was Robert Kennedy (c. 1584-1668), who, from 1626 to 1640, acquired around 7,500 acres of land in Newcastle barony. This was done primarily by Kennedy giving mortgages to the Gaelic freeholders, which he knew they would be unable to repay and thus lose their land to him. He had also become a member of the Established Church, as the Church of Ireland was known at that time. Without this change, it is unlikely that he would have progressed professionally.

He funded his property acquisitions from his post as the Chief Remembrancer of the Court of the Exchequer. His job was to be in charge of all record keeping and accounts for the Exchequer. In those days, a man's salary in such a post was incidental, though not insignificant. A clerk's main income would be sourced in bribes, some of those gained by helping others to acquire Irish land. At this time, Irish land was being removed from Gaelic ownership at a rapid rate.

With his increasing wealth, he sent 2 of his 3 sons to Lincoln's Inns, London to train as barristers (after an education at Trinity College Dublin). His eldest son died, probably of the plague, c. 1650, but his next son, Richard, became one of the judges at the Court of the Exchequer in the early 1660s.

Richard became a captain of a Welsh regiment loyal to Cromwell in 1647, so that the family would be well in with the Cromwellians after they had defeated the king. This allowed the Kennedys to keep all their land during Cromwell's time. But the family was primarily loyal to the English king. Because of Richard's help with the return of Charles II as king in 1660 (he'd gone into exile in 1649 after his father, Charles I, had been beheaded), he was awarded the judgeship, another 7,500 acres of land, and his father was made a baronet. In 1664 their land was made the manor of Mount Kennedy.

Unfortunately, there continued to be political turmoil to the end of the 1600s. In that process, Robert's grandson and heir (also a Robert) died prematurely, as did his wife and both of his sons. The 2nd son of Richard the judge, William, became a Roman Catholic, a Benedictine monk, and a priest, and lived in England and France. He died in 1738, the last of Sir Robert Kennedy's male line to die.

Eventually the manor was sold, and bought by Gen. Robt Cunningham in 1759. Mount Kennedy House was built from 1769 to 1779. It is known for its impressive stucco work. After 1801 when he died, his niece married George Gun from Co Kerry. In 1826 he changed his surname to Gun Cunningham. His descendants held the estate till 1928, when they sold it.

No. 3 Coillte

Coillte means 'woods' in Irish. It is a commercial forestry business that is owned by the state. It was set up in 1988 and manages over 50% of forested land in Ireland. It employs over 800 people. It now owns less than 10% of Irish woodlands, having been selling off land over the years. This building is the national headquarters. It was built in 1996 of 17 types of Irish wood. The architect was Duncan Stewart (of Eco Eye fame); he modelled it on a ship resting with its bottom up.

No. 4 The Mighty Oak

The mighty oak tree is located in the Mountkennedy Wood. It is a deciduous tree and its fruit is the acorn. The tree's girth is 6.2m in length, making its diameter/width at its widest place, around 2 m. It is one of the more impressive trees in this forest. It has inspired many students in Newtown to explore the natural world.

There are 17 species of trees in this forest, but not all of them are native. Bird, bat, squirrel, and butterfly boxes have been placed on some of the trees, especially at the entrance from the main road.

No. 5 The River

The Altidore river, as it is now known, rises high above Newtownmountkennedy in the Drumbawn bog, a Special Area of Conservation, and home to a unique 'Jack Snipe' bird population. It flows out to the sea through the Kilcoole/Newcastle bird reserve. In the 1600s it was the boundary between Ballygarny (now part of the Mount Kennedy demesne) and Cooladoyle townland which then included Season Park townland. In the early 20th century, it powered an electric generator, providing light to the Altidore estate, one of the first such generators in the county.

After Altidore the river flows down through the Coillte woodlands, under the main road and into valley east of the centre of the village. In days gone by it was important for the village as it provided water for washing, watering livestock, and powering mills. Some people may have even used it for drinking water. Children would dam it in Shortt's field for swimming in the summer.

The road emerging from the back gate of Mount Kennedy demesne is most likely the route of the original road from the north, coming from Kilmacanoge. It would have come by the motte (from the point where the Mt Kennedy gate lodge is now) and then over the river at this location, likely a fording point before the bridge was built. Later, when the privacy of the estate owners was more important than controlling the local traffic, the road would have been rerouted away from the main living area of the owners. (This phenomenon is documented with the road from Windgates to Bray along the Kilruddery estate.)

No. 8 St Matthew's Church

St Matthews Church was originally built as a chapel of ease for Newcastle parishioners living in Newtown, completed in 1835. The land was donated by Robt. Gun Cunningham then owner of Mountkennedy. Although made a separate parish in 1844, the building wasn't consecrated until September 1895, dedicated to St Matthew. What is now called Season Park House (across the road) used to be the old rectory for this church.

No. 7 Fisher's building

Around 1840 a thatched school to accommodate 120 children, and apartments for the school master and mistress, was built on land, again donated by Robert Gun Cunningham of Mount Kennedy. In 1849 the school had 90 children on the school roll. It was known as the Mountkennedy School, and was for the education of Protestant children. Roman Catholics were allowed to attend if approved by the school governors. School governors were a group of people who acted much like the Board of Management of today's schools.

In 1860 Mr Harris was the school master; he was paid £16 per year. School equipment such as pens, ink, paper and slates cost about £8/year for the entire school. Children used chalk to write on slates to practice writing, sums,

etc., and they could wipe the chalk writing off the slate if they made a mistake or after the teacher checked their work. This was a way of recycling and saving expensive paper and ink in the 19th century. The school was heated by a coal fire.

Over the years the school was used as a Sunday school for Protestant children. Rebuilding in 1900 saw a slate roof replace the thatch.

In 1938 the children in the school took part in a nationwide school project to record local heritage. It closed in 1940, amalgamated with Newcastle school because the number of children on the roll had fallen to a low number. The last teacher at the school was Mrs Ida Georgina Hutchinson.

After the school closed the building became the residence of the owner of Hughes Premier Dairy in Dublin, which supplied milk to the whole of the city. Later it became an art gallery. Now it is known as Fisher's shop.

No. 6 The Post Office

In the late 1700s, the British created a postal system for these islands, the Royal Mail. In Ireland, a system of roads was created, with its hub at Dublin. It avoided steep inclines as much as possible, so that mail coach horses wouldn't tire as quickly. Service started in the early 1800s, after roads and bridges had been either widened or newly constructed. This system later became the main national road pattern in Ireland. Newtown's status rose when it was made a mail town, and its main street was part of the road from Dublin to Wexford.

The first post office was located in the same building as it is now, and was known as the 'Stop and Pop Inn' Public House. At that time, it was a 2-story building, but the post office was where the family now live. In 1824 the Post Master was Mr Robert Roe. Mail was delivered from Dublin by the mail coach at eleven each morning on its way to Wexford. Mail from Wexford direction was delivered to Newtown post office at eleven in the evening by the mail coach on its way to Dublin.

In the 1841 Newtown had a population of more than 800 people and it was an important Post Town. In 1846 the postmaster in Newtown post office was Patrick Lamb. Letters from Dublin and various parts north arrived at the post office every forenoon at eleven and at 10 at night. Letters from Wexford and parts South and West arrived at the Post office every morning at one, and were despatched every night at half past ten. This means that the coaches were operating through the night, with no street lights. Around this time the post office was located at Carisbrook further down the main street near the bridge.

As mentioned above, in 1938 children in Mountkennedy School had taken part in a heritage project and one of the children wrote the following story about the building opposite their school which was then (1938) called Cullen's

but is now the Nolan family's house beside the Post Office. This is what they wrote:

Ancient Inns.

Newtown was a place of importance long ago. Being situated on the main road to Dublin and twenty-two miles from the city. It was a place where the horses were changed, and so in the town we find houses in which the business and posting stables were carried on.

Opposite to Mount Kennedy school is a long house - now known as Cullen, dilapidated now and without any business premises. Long ago it was known as "Stop and Pop in" public house. It has the remains of numerous stables, and a great paved yard which at one time was full of horses. It also has a wine cellar built underground where the wine and ale were kept in by gone ages.

The Post Office at one time was the principal Hotel in Newtown. Here the traveller broke his journey and rested till conditions or the weather were more favourable.

Newtown has had a post office for over 200 years and during that time it was located in different parts of the village. In 1838 it was in roughly the same position it is in today. In 1842 it was located at the Carisbrook building. From about 1890 to 1910 it was located where Eugene's foodstore is today. After 1910 it was located in what is known as Mulberry House (a grand, 3 story house) on the lower main Street and then at the bottom of Church Hill before moving back to its present location. Mrs Nevins ran the post office when it was next to the old RIC barracks. Later that house became a doctor's surgery.

No. 9 Old RIC Barracks

The RIC (Royal Irish Constabulary) was the police force in Ireland from 1836 till it was disbanded in 1922 and replaced by the Garda Siochana. Policing in Ireland was not a dangerous job until the 1919 – 1922 period so the Constabulary rented houses to use as a barracks from the local landlord instead building a secure building like a small army barracks. In modern terms the Barracks would have been more accurately called a Constabulary station.

A Sergeant and 3 or 4 constables were based at the Newtown RIC Barracks. The Barracks was divided into 2 sections, one section was the Constabulary station and the other section was the living quarters for the Sergeants family. Single Constables lived in the barracks and married constables lived in rented houses in the village.

The barracks had a day room which was attended by the duty constable, and had much the same function as the public office of a modern Garda station.

The constables had a large kitchen where they could have their meals and relax when off duty. There was a small cell where, if it was necessary, a person who committed a minor crime could be held overnight.

The RIC were an armed police force but Newtown was a very quiet area so the RIC did not generally carry arms during normal daily duties and patrols. The RIC in Newtown carried out patrols on foot or in later years on bicycles. They did not have horses or motorised vehicles. When the constables would go out, they would walk in pairs. During the war of independence, they would carry rifles slung over their shoulders.

Ordnance survey maps show that the Constabulary barracks were located in 2 other houses in the village before moving to the location at the bottom of Church Hill. The grandson of the last RIC sergeant now lives in this building with his family.

No. 10 Milestone

The milestone, a 4ft tall, square granite stone, originally 5m south of its present location, is probably about 240 years old. It has also been used as a seat and a meeting place by local people. It was one of the milestones that were erected every mile along the road from Dublin to Wexford. One side reads “From Dublin 17 miles” and the other side reads “From Bray 5 miles”. The North side of the milestone which faces Church Hill direction has the lettering “Wicklow 7 Miles”

A benchmark was later carved at the top of one side of the milestone. It is sometimes described as a Crow’s Foot Marking because of its shape. It tells the height above sea level at the point where it is made. Newtown is 278 ft. above sea level.

It is called the ‘17th milestone’ because it is 17 Irish miles from Dublin Castle. Before 1837 miles were measured in Irish miles and from the Gate of Dublin Castle. One Irish mile equalled 1.272 English or Statute mile. It is 21.6 Statute Miles from Dublin. After 1838 Miles were measured in statute English miles.

It’s not certain when the milestone was first erected but it’s assumed it was sometime before 1778 because a 17th milestone is shown in this location in Taylor and Skinner’s *Maps of the Roads of Ireland* which was first published in 1778. Milestones, like this one, were also used as direction indicators to show the direction of Towns from the Milestone. This was important information for travellers in the days before maps or road maps were generally available.

This Milestone can be seen in its original location in early 1900 photos of the North side of Newtown and a photo taken in the 1930s. Sometime during the late 1930s the milestone was removed from its standing position at the roadside and was left lying on its side on the ground very near its present location. For over 70 years the milestone was used as a seat and a meeting place

by local people. In 2006 the milestone was cleaned and erected in its present position by a Newtown Tidy Towns team.

Benchmarks

In 1838 the first ordnance survey of Ireland was carried out by ordnance surveyors assisted by the army. When the Newtown area was surveyed the surveyors used the top of the old existing 17th milestone and carved the benchmark symbol on it. This benchmark's location and height above sea level was then included in Ordnance survey maps and can be seen in the Griffith's survey map of 1842, and later historic maps including the 1903 Ordnance Survey map.

The Crow's foot Benchmark on the top of the Milestone does not have lettering. You must look at the ordnance survey map and it will tell you that the mark carved on the top of the 17th milestone was recorded as being at 278 ft. above sea level.

No. 11 **Saddlery and Livery Stable**

The Village Practice (now the North Wicklow Medical Practice) is a very old building and may be more than 200 years old. In 1938 children in Mountkennedy School took part in a heritage project and one of the children wrote the following story about the building opposite their school which was then (1938) a workshop where carpentry was carried out.

'Long ago a saddlery sold saddles and harnesses as travel was by horseback or carriage. There were no footpaths and only the well-off had shoes.

A livery stable flourished on the western side of the Main Road, which is now occupied by workshops in which carpentry is carried on. Here in by gone days the horses were changed in the coaches and all was bustle and merriment. The event of the day was the arrival and departure of the coach.

Opposite to this side flourished another livery stable. It would be unremarkable now except the old gateway attracts notice. You can see it was a place of importance.'

The 'old livery opposite' is now a surgery. There could have been another livery stable on the western side of the main road, but it would have been either north or south of the milestone, as the land has always risen sharply at that place, not allowing for any kind of building fronting the street.

At present we are *not* sure that surgery & Corner House were a livery stable, but in 1842 the building was leased by William Chapman who ran a saddle and harness making business. The Hutchinson family carried out a carpentry business in the part of the building now occupied by the surgery from about 1890 to 1960. Originally the Hutchinson family were wheelwright's who made and repaired wheels used by coaches and carts.

In the 19th century wheelwrights were kept very busy repairing and making wooden wheels which easily got damaged on the unsurfaced, potholed roads of the day.

Old maps (1838) indicate that there was a large yard or walled garden behind the Village Practice in the grounds of what is today is Valle Pacis. This area may have been a yard for horses as it was there before Valle Pacis was built. The walled garden still exists today. It was accessed from the Corner House side. The rounded pillars at the old entrance with the metal arch over it indicate that it was for horses, as they made it safer by eliminating sharp corners.

No. 12 **The Parkview Hotel**

The Parkview Hotel was built in 2006 on the site of James Synnott's house, butcher shop, yard, and out buildings which included an abattoir for slaughtering animals. The park was created in an area known as Butler's Field. Previously there was a small lane inside the wall of the bridge leading down to the river called "Hell's Lane".

In the 19th century, Newtownmountkennedy hosted a number of coaching inns or hotels, as at least 3 or 4 are listed in the records. There was the 2-story building where the post office now operates; Bianconi coaches are said to have used the main building of the Corner House; what is now called Mulberry House was built as a coaching inn.

A very practical consideration is the reason why Newtownmountkennedy had so many coaching facilities. It is just the distance from Dublin at which the horses could go no farther. Thus, the coaches stopped here, changed horses, and discharged passengers who were then looking for accommodation. The mail coach would have continued on immediately, being in a hurry. But travellers were ready for food and rest, which they found in the village.

No. 13 '**Carisbrook**' and bridge

In 1773, John Armstrong was a brewer who owned the orchard and garden. There were two street level cottages with stables below, and access to the river for watering for coach horses (This is still preserved, though the backyard of the house is higher than it had been originally.)

In the 1840s it became the post office; and in 1910 it housed a confectionery bakery.

From 1932 to 1970 it was a country guest house, known as "The Hotel", run by Babs Byrne. It was popular with postwar UK visitors and locals. The eradicator of TB in Ireland, Dr Noel Browne, stayed here initially while working at

Newcastle Hospital, which was then a TB sanatorium. Babs Byrne's nephew still lives here with his family.

The bridge was done in the early 1800s with the setting up of the Royal Mail. The level of the road would initially have been much lower than it is currently. The bridge originally may have been a humpback type. It was done by John Blachford, who lived in Altidore Castle and had an engineering background. Making the road flat for the mail coach meant that Carisbrook House was made more difficult to access. If you look at it from the street side, you can see the original street level at the entry way.

No. 14 Mills

The oldest mill recorded in Newtown was on the Altidore river in the early 17th century at Cooladoyle. There are the remains of a mill on the land of Valle Pacis (Valley of Peace), which may have been a tuck mill. This type of mill was used for agitating woollen or linen cloth in water to make it pull more tightly together, increasing the strength of the cloth. At other times, it may have been used as a threshing mill, to separate the grain from the stalks. The ruins are about 300 m from the bridge between Carisbrook and the Parkview Hotel. The other mill, also from the mid-17th century was on the Kilcoole Road, just down on the right. This mill was called a bolting mill which describes a type of mill that could produce a finer grade of flour.

This mill had two water-driven wheels, each thirteen feet in diameter, which provided the power to turn millstones and other equipment in the mill. The water which powered this mill was diverted from the river via a mill race to a mill pond which was located on higher ground behind and above the two waterwheels at the mill. When the miller wanted to start the milling of grain, he could open a sluice gate above one of the water wheels and allow the water to flow down into the waterwheel buckets which turned the millwheel.

The waterwheel could be stopped by closing the sluice gate which interrupted the flow of water, and thus the movement of the waterwheel and milling equipment. Water could be stored in the millpond during the night or at times when the mill was not in operation; this helped keep the mill running when there was a low flow of water in the river. There was also a bakery at the site of this mill.

A house has been built on its remains. The millrace that ran it was destroyed when the road was rebuilt in 1850.

Both of these ruins are on private property and not accessible.

No. 15 The Mountkennedy Inn

The Mount Kennedy Inn is an old building, perhaps more than 160 years, but we don't know much about its history. Long ago it was not unusual to have a grocery shop in part of a pub. From 1900 to the 1920s the Newell family ran a select grocery, wine, and spirit shop. They emigrated to the USA after 1920. In the 1940s it was taken over by the Haslam family, run by Lillie Haslam in the 1970s and '80s.

No. 16 St Joseph's Church

St. Joseph's Church was built in 1865; it replaced the Kilmurry Church, located up the hill to the west, now a ruin. However, the chalice and paten used in the old church are still stored in St. Joseph's. In addition, the crucifix is also from the older building. The corpus on the crucifix is hollow in the chest area. This space is accessed from the back of the figure, and was used as the tabernacle previously. Other memorial plaques from Kilmurry are now seen in the Kilquade church.

St. Joseph's church was made using Wicklow granite and local slate from Ballinahinch. Although there is a bell at the top, it does not move when it rings! Up until the 1970s, a woman would ring the bell by pulling its rope, but now the striker is electrically controlled and moves instead of the bell.

Up the street from the church is the site of another location of the old RIC barracks.

No. 17 Metal Spinners

In the 1940s and '50s, Fr John Masterson, parish priest and visionary, had a large Hall built in the orchard of the presbytery; it was known as the 'Kilmacullagh Auditorium'. (Kilmacullagh is the name of the townland on this side of the main street.) It had had a fully sprung maple floor, and hosted many dances and large events, until it was sold to Metal Spinners as a factory, in 1962. Fr Masterson was also responsible for bringing in this employer.

Kitchenware - electric kettles, pots, and saucepans - were manufactured there until it closed in 1983. In the 1970s, it employed around 160 workers, so its loss was devastating for the village. Grove Motors now occupies an extension of the old Hall, with other shops and premises in the original building at the other end.

The presbytery was a two storey over basement Georgian building, similar to Valle Pacis house. It stood directly opposite St Joseph's church. In a picture taken for the unveiling of the Michael Neil monument, you can see it just off to the left. It burned down in 1968, but the hall survived.

No. 18 Michael Neil

The monument opposite St Joseph's church is dedicated to Michael Neil, an important Wicklow insurgent in the rebellion of 1798. The story of this

monument and his role in the 1798 rebellion was written by Una Mulleady, a primary school student at Holy Faith Convent (located out on the Trudder road, now signed as the 'River Lodge'), Newtownmountkennedy in 1938.

'About three or four months ago there were great celebrations all round County Wicklow commemorating the heroes of '98. The school master and the late Mr. C.B. Haslam arranged for the people of Newtown Mt. Kennedy to honour those great men and to erect a monument to one of them.

The man chosen was Michael O'Neill. He was a native of Newcastle which is about three miles from Newtown. He was executed at Newtown courthouse but before he was hanged the soldiers pulled out his eyes. While he was standing waiting to be hanged, he caught up two weights and threw them behind his back and killed two of them [the soldiers].

Many of his descendants live in Newcastle and Mr Andrew Byrne lives in his house. It is said that if you scratch his tombstone it will shed blood. He was buried in Killadreenan Graveyard. My father told me the above.'

The Newtown court house/market house was a white washed stone building just diagonally opposite the Neil monument. It stood out into the street, as far as the edge of the current pavement. It was taken down for road widening. The Monteith monument is on that corner now.

No. 19 **Robert Monteith**

Captain Robert Monteith, revolutionary, visionary, and poet, was born on the Woodstock estate in 1878. As a captain in the Irish Volunteers, he was involved with Roger Casement in the hazardous gunrunning attempt at Banna Strand in 1916, involving a German submarine and *The Aud* cargo ship. He died in Michigan in 1956.

This monument was erected by Newtown Tidy Towns to honour him. His brother lived in Newtown, and some of his relatives still do.

No. 20 **Eugene's**

Shops were scarce in olden times. Some people had to walk miles to get goods, sometimes shopping after church on Sunday. Money was used but occasionally farmers' wives exchanged butter. Credit was known as 'kick'. There was a certain woman in this area named 'Mas Willimas'. She and her sisters ran a well-stocked shop.

The building where Eugene's is located is about 180 years old. It was an RIC police barracks before the RIC moved up to the junction of Main Street and Church Hill. Then the post office was located here from about 1890 to 1911. At that time, the Post Master was Michael Reilly who had taken over the post office business from his father and mother who ran it before him.

Then as now the post office was very important to the local community. The Postmaster was responsible for Post, Money Postal Orders, Telegraphs, and a Savings bank. The telegraph equipment was operated by a trained Telegraph operator. Messages sent via the Telegraph were called Telegrams. In the Late 19th and early 20th century, before the phone and internet technology we use today, the only way to send a message efficiently and effectively was by Telegram.

To send a Telegram you usually had to go to your local post office and write your message on a telegram form. The post office telegraph operator would then transmit your message to a post office near the location of the person to whom you wanted to send the message. A member of the staff at the post office receiving your message would then write out the message again on a Telegram and give it to a delivery boy who would take it to the addressee. Local boys were employed as Telegram delivery boys at Newtown post office. Telegrams were the old-fashioned way of sending a text Message.

Sometime after 1911 the post office was moved down the street to a building which is now called Mulberry House when Mr Conroy took over the post office business.

By 1911, when the building was no longer the post office, it was taken over by John Synnott who used the building to expand his Grocery, Drapery, Footwear, and General Merchant business. He eventually owned all the buildings up to the corner opposite the church. He and his family lived in the building that is now used by the Credit Union. He had 5 sons. The eldest, John, opened a pub in Ashford. James ran a butcher's shop and lived in the house now part of the Parkview Hotel. William became a solicitor in Dublin, and his son continues his practice to this day. Eventually John senior passed the shop on to Patrick and Joseph. Patrick emigrated to Canada in the 1950s, but Joseph continued with it until he sold it.

Eugene O'Toole took over the Grocery and Butcher part of the business and opened as Eugene's Foodstore in 1976.

Recent research has revealed that the 3-storey building which is now called Mulberry House was originally called the Mountkennedy House. It was built as a coaching inn for the passengers. It was the smaller building adjoining it via the archway, that was called Mulberry House. It was for the driver of the coach and the men who took care of the horses. The coach would be driven through the archway for the night, and the horses would be kept in the stables at the back. There was a loft over the stables that had direct access to the field up behind the house. When the hay was harvested, it was stored in the loft, and pushed down to the horses via a trapdoor as needed. Later, this building was used as a milking parlour.

It has also been said that the main house was burned during the 1798 rebellion, but there is no evidence of burning in it. What was set afire were the stables.

On the corner opposite the 1798 site (where apartments have been built), there was a very large pub called the White Horse Inn which was famous for miles around.

No. 21 1798 Memorial

The Battle of Newtownmountkennedy

A battle was fought on 30 May 1798, between forces of the British Crown and a force of local Irish Rebels, during one of several Irish efforts to gain independence over the centuries. Approximately 170 Irish rebel forces were killed out of 1,000. They are buried in an unmarked grave down the road from the monument's site.

In the 1790s, the Wicklow Militia had been formed to combat Irish resistance to British rule. One member, Lt Edward Hempenstall, born in Newcastle, Co Wicklow, was well over 6 ft tall, and of powerful build. He became infamous for hanging men over his shoulder until they were dead. He was known as the 'walking gallows'.