

Community Monuments Fund Conservation Plan
Whitefield Graveyard,
Tinahely,
County Wicklow.

*On behalf of Wicklow County Council with funding from
Community Monuments Fund 2021 (Ref: CMF21-2-WI003)
Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage*

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1 Introduction

Wicklow County Council successfully applied for funding for the compilation of a Conservation Management Plan for Whitefield graveyard, Tinahely, County Wicklow. (Figure 1).

Whitefield graveyard lies within the townland of Whitefield, civil parish of Kilcommon, barony of Ballinacor South in County Wicklow. Funding for the plan was granted under Stream 2 of the Community Monuments Fund 2021 which was administered by the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage through the National Monuments Service (Ref: CMF21-2-WI003).

Whitefield graveyard is located at the end of a farm road 1.7km east of Tinahely, its entrance is marked by a small granite signpost. This historic graveyard is under the management and ownership of Wicklow County Council. The church and graveyard are RMP sites with monument numbers WI038-016 Church and Graveyard WI038-016001 and are protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2014).

This Conservation Management Plan will enhance the understanding of this early penal era church and will project a clear path forward to protect this historically significant site.

This Conservation Management Plan has been prepared by a multi-disciplinary team and aims to enhance our understanding of the monument and put forward policies for its conservation and use as a community asset now and in the future.



Figure 1: Site location Whitefield, Tinahely, County Wicklow.

1.1 Summary of Cultural Significance- Kevin Lee and Yvonne Whitty

The site at Whitefield is now accessible following CMF Stream 3 2021 funding approval. Improved access will increase awareness and appreciation of the cultural, historical and archaeological value of the site. It will also increase access to the site especially for older people who may not be able to walk the distance from the road. This in turn will keep alive the tradition and memory of the site for future generations.

These sites are important historic landmarks which enable us to understand our history and culture. Historic graveyards such as Whitefield are reservoirs of information. There is the potential from a genealogical perspective for people worldwide who trace their ancestors to Whitefield to actually visit the grave of their family. This part of Wicklow contains the ancestors of the thousands that left Ireland as part of the Fitzwilliam Estate clearances between 1847 and 1856. Once the project is complete along with preserving such important archaeological sites, we will create an online record where emigrants can search for their family graves. Graveyards such as at Whitefield can provide a spin off for local tourism and increase an awareness for our heritage but only if well maintained and documented.

Whitefield is part of a larger project and follows the template which was adopted at Preban Graveyard under the direction of Yvonne Whitty who is a local archaeologist. The names of 327 people have been transcribed, eight different stone masons were identified with help from Chris Corlett of the NMS and three pieces of Neolithic Rock Art identified. All of this work was completed by a small group who also produced a two-part documentary, exhibition and booklet which has sold just over 200 copies locally. We also produced a podcast series for Heritage Week 2020. The podcast was downloaded over 120k times and was produced by The Irish History Podcast. This public outreach strategy drove people to the site whereby they could engage with our heritage and enjoy and appreciate the open-air art gallery of 18th sculpture on a headstone canvas.

Since 2013 there has been a rapid increase in organized homecomings of the south County Wicklow diaspora. The completeness of the Coollattin records, combined with the online Catholic church records, allow a very complete picture of where and how their ancestors lived. A planned restoration and mapping of headstones in old burial grounds such as Mullinacuff (old), Whitefield and Ballymaghroe would complete the circle of knowledge. In the case of some of the burial grounds in south Wicklow the returning descendants of 19th century emigrants can only view from afar final resting places that have been reclaimed by nature. The restoration of these graveyards and the transcription of information from the gravestones provide advantages over written church records.

Firstly, they go back much further in time. And in most instances, provide links between the generations in any given family. These sites will also enable people to experience archaeology in what is an open-air museum. Whitefield has rich biodiversity and is carpeted in a sea of bluebells in spring.

1.2 Objectives of the Conservation Management Plan

The objectives of the Conservation Management Plan are to:

- Provide an understanding of the historical significance of the monument within the local area and within the wider environment.
- Provide an understanding of the current condition of the site.
- Provide recommendations in relation to access, conservation and management of the graveyard, now and in the future.
- Provide an understanding of the site as a sustainable tourism, educational and community asset.

The Conservation Plan model was developed by James Semple Kerr in the 1980s. At its simplest, a conservation plan is a document which sets out what is significant about a place and what policies should be used to retain and enhance that significance for future use.

The Conservation Management Plan should be seen as a working document with policies and recommendations which may be subject to alteration as the use and understanding of the site may change over time (Kerr, 2013, p. 1).

1.3 Summary of Recommendations

The recommendations in relation to the conservation, management and use of the graveyard are set out in full in Section 8 and individual reports are attached as appendices, however a summary of the recommended works is provided here:

Phase 1- 2022:

- Bat specialist will oversee Phase 1 of works and advise on timing of such works and any additional bat surveys which may be required.
- Remove vegetation (from west wall)/ trees as per arborist and ecologist guidelines.
- Repair west wall of graveyard.
- Repair gate and entrance pillar.

- Complete topographical survey of site to create headstone plan.
- Complete geophysical survey within graveyard to identify possible paths, church footprint more accurately.
- Consideration given to slightly tilt William Higgins headstone, to ensure that the headstone is protected from the elements.
- As the graveyard is in the ownership of Wicklow County Council an ongoing management and maintenance plan for the upkeep of the graveyard should be drawn up based on the recommendations of this report. It may be necessary to add more hardcore to the laneway/parking area.

Phase 2- 2023

- Reconstruction drawings of the graveyard, interpretive signage.
- Graphic designer to create flipbook of graveyard report and findings.
- Collaboration with Fin Dwyer of Irish History Podcast as part of Heritage Week 2023.
- Upload all information to [Our Wicklow Heritage](#).

2 Methodology

The Conservation Management Plan is divided into a number of sections based on the research and site surveys carried out by a multi-disciplinary team involving an archaeologist, arborist, botanist, conservation architect, ecologist, heritage officer and historian. The main body of the report has been completed by Yvonne Whitty, Kevin Lee and Jim Rees. The respective reports are attached as appendices:

The data contained within this report has been compiled from a number of sources:

- Archaeological Survey of Ireland
- 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey historic mapping
- 1842 Coollattin Estate map (12 inches to 1 mile)
- Aerial photographs available at www.osi.ie
- National Inventory of Architectural Heritage at www.buildingsofireland.ie
- Archaeological excavations bulletin at www.excavations.ie
- Previously undertaken archaeological reports
- Draft Wicklow County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Secondary sources (see sources)

- Specialist reports completed by;
 - Charles McCorkell- Tree Survey
 - Dermot Nolan- Chartered Engineer and Historic Buildings Consultant
- Historical research completed by Kevin Lee and Jim Rees
- Archaeological research and report compilation Yvonne Whitty

The report has been prepared in accordance with a number of guideline documents:

- ‘Framework & Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage’ issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht & Islands (1999)
- Guidance for the Care, Conservation and Recording of Historic Graveyards issued by The Heritage Council (2011)
- Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht (2011)
- Conservation Plan – 7th Edition (ICOMOS Australia)’ by James Semple Kerr (2013)

All recommendations set out in this Conservation Management Plan relate to the statutory protection and legislative framework of the National Monuments Acts (1930-2014) and the Heritage Act (2000).

All monuments are protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2014). The group is aware that in order to carry out works in or around the historic graveyard, Wicklow County Council, who own the site, is obliged to give two months written notification to the National Monuments Service in advance of any work. No works requiring notification were carried out during this phase of works.

3 Core Data & Legislative Background

Whitefield Church and graveyard are in the townland of Whitefield, in the parish of Kilcommon and the barony of Ballinacor South, County Wicklow at ITM E705388, N 672942. The site is located in a secluded place at the end of a farm lane 1.7km east of Tinahely.

Site name and location:	Whitefield historic graveyard- Townland- Whitefield
ITM co-ordinates:	E705388, N 672942
RPS ref:	The graveyard has not been entered into the Record of Monuments and Places.
RMP No:	WI038-016 Church and WI038-016001 Graveyard.

<p>Government Publications:</p>	<p>Policy</p> <p>1999 Framework & Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage.</p> <p>2011 Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities</p>
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Table 1: Site details Whitefield.

Comprehensive and systematic legislative provisions for the protection of the architectural, archaeological and natural heritage were introduced by government with the implementation of the Planning & Development Act in 2000 and subsequent amendments

The 2000 Act set out the development plan as the basic policy document of the planning authority in which the overall strategy and specific objectives for sustainable development and proper planning within an area are set out (Grist, 2012, p. 11). The legislation requires that each planning authority renew its development plan every six years. The planning authority has an obligation to create a record of protected structures (RPS) including structures of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest. This record forms part of the planning authority’s development plan.

In addition, the National Monuments Acts (1930-2014) protects monuments of archaeological, historical or architectural interest creating an overlap with the 2000 Act in the protection of structures of special interest.

The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) was established under section 12 (1) of the 1994 National Monuments (Amendment) Act and provides that the Commissioners (now the Minister) shall establish and maintain a record of monuments and places where the Minister believes there are monuments, such records to be comprised of a list of monuments and relevant places and a map or maps showing each monument and relevant place in respect of each county in the state. It is based on the older non-statutory Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and information from county archaeological inventories. It records known upstanding archaeological monuments, the original location of destroyed monuments and the location of possible sites identified through documentary, cartographic, photographic research and field inspections.



Figure 2: RMP sites in vicinity of the graveyard at Whitefield (© Ordnance Survey of Ireland).

A summary of these RMP sites is detailed below, information extracted from www.archaeology.ie

RMP Number: WI038-016

Classification: Church

Details: Situated on a gentle to marked E-facing slope. Square enclosure (dims. 80m x 80m) defined by an earth and stone bank (Wth 1.8m) with drystone facing of identical character to the surrounding field boundaries. There are only about twenty headstones, the earliest dating to the early 19th century. No indication of the 'R.C. Chapel' marked at the W on the 1838 OS 6-inch map

RMP Number: WI038-016001

Classification: Graveyard

Description: Situated on a gentle to marked E-facing slope. Square enclosure (dims. 80m x 80m) defined by an earth and stone bank (With 1.8m) with drystone facing of identical character to the surrounding field boundaries. There are only about twenty headstones, the earliest dating to the early 19th century. No indication of the 'R.C. Chapel' (WI038-016----) marked at the W on the 1838 OS 6-inch map.

Further policies relating to historic burial grounds similar to Whitefield are outlined in The Draft Wicklow County Development Plan 2021-2027 which has specific policies related to historic burial grounds, Objective CPO 8.9:

To protect and promote the conservation of historic burial grounds (those that are generally no longer in use but which may contain sites and features on the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and/or RPS) and support greater public access to these where possible (2021, p. 176).

4 Archaeological & Historical Background- Kevin Lee, Jim Rees and Yvonne Whitty

Whitefield graveyard lies within the townland of Whitefield, civil parish of Kilcommon, barony of Ballinacor South in County Wicklow, 1.7km east of Tinahely. Whitefield church and graveyard were known as 'Old Kilavaney' church prior to the 1820's.

In order to understand why Whitefield was established as a church and burial ground it is necessary to briefly look back in history and the events which would have led to the building of a church at what is today the townland of Whitefield. The parishes of Annacurra and Kilaveney represent the much older parishes of Kilcommon, Kilpipe, with portions of Crosspatrick and Preban (Grattan-Flood, 1916, p. 62). Prior to the 1820s, it would appear that this townland was part of the now neighbouring townland of Killaveny¹. The earliest reference to 'Whitefield' was in the Tithe Applotment Books (NAI) as '*Church Land, Townland of Whitefield in 1826*' (<https://www.logainm.ie>).

¹ It should be noticed that while Killaveney now seems to be the accepted spelling, researchers should be aware of several variants – Killavany, Killavaney, Killaveny, etc. This report uses the various forms as they appear in the sources consulted. While this inconsistency does not lend itself to easy reading, it follows best practice in being faithful to those sources.

In the Wicklow Grand Presentments in 1830 the name had been simplified to Whitefield (Price, p.208). It also appears as Whitefield in Griffith's Valuations, divided into eight plots. As recent as the 1970s, however, Brian Cantwell referred to the cemetery as Old Killaveny (Cantwell, graveyard 96).

Whitefield was first mentioned in 1820 and as has been previously discussed is in the civil parish of Kilcommon. Whitefield townland is described in the Ordnance Survey Name Books as having ' a large Roman Catholick Chapel' in the townland 'bounded on the S. and W by a good road' (p. 349). The present Church of Ireland at Kilcommon, 1.4km southwest of Whitefield was the original parish church where Catholics would have worshiped before the The Dissolution of the Monasteries between 1536 AD and 1541 AD by Henry VIII. Under King Henry's orders all Catholic monasteries, priories, convents and friaries and transferred their lands to those loyal to the king.

When Elizabeth I succeeded to the throne in 1558 AD, she continued the policy of a re-conquest of Ireland that would eventually result in the completion of the Dissolution in Ireland and introduced the Act of Uniformity of 1560, which made all church worship formally Protestant and all churches and lands were now part of the Anglican Church (Noonan, 2015, p. 26).

Church sites such as at Kilcommon were either refurbished or else left in ruins and a new Protestant church built in its place elsewhere or within the grounds of the churchyard. However both Catholics and Protestants continued to bury their dead within the old parish church grounds, as is the case at Kilcommon which is a mixed graveyard.

Kilcommon (St. Coman's Church) was a valuable prebend in the diocese of Ferns till the close of the 16th century. Rev. Nicholas O'Cullen, circa 1575, was the last Catholic pastor under the old regime. He was reported to the Government by Bishop Ram in 1612 (Grattan-Flood, 1916, p. 62).

The main societal division stemmed from the Reformation of the 16th and 17th centuries when the new state-sanctioned Protestant church benefitted economically, while those who remained faithful to Catholicism were punished by a series of draconian legal measures which became known as Penal Laws. These laws were passed following King William of Orange's victory over the Catholic King James at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.

The Penal Laws were an attempt to force Irish Catholics and Protestant dissenters to accept the new Anglican Church. These laws were added to and became particularly stringent in the reigns of William and Mary (1688–1694), William III (1688-1702) and Anne (1702-1707). The reasoning behind these apartheid measures was the belief that Catholics owed allegiance to the pope rather

than to the head of monarch, and were not to be trusted in the event of Catholic France or Spain declaring war on England.

Catholics were not allowed to practice their religion and so this led to Catholic worship taking place in penal churches at Whitefield or 'Old Killavaney' as it was then known²,. Priests said at mass rocks, private houses or Mass Houses. In Wicklow in 1731 the following mass houses are recorded; one each at Bray, Castlemacadam, Glendalough, Newcastle, Threemilewater, and two are recorded at Arklow, Delgany, Rathdrum and Wicklow (Corlett & Hicks, 2018, p. 41).

The aim of the Penal Laws was to eradicate Catholicism from Britain and Ireland, but in reality, what they mainly achieved was the transfer of property from Catholic ownership to Protestant ownership. In fact, many of the laws – such as imprisonment, banishment and even execution of Catholic clergy – proved ineffective, although many atrocities did occur. Also, in times when British troops were stretched to the limit, as during the American Revolution and the French Revolution, legislation was passed to remove some of the more draconian, and unworkable, Penal Laws in the hope that Catholic Irish would join local militia and other corps formed to defend Britain from attack. It was probably during a relaxation of these laws that the '*Old Killavaney*' chapel was built in what is now known as the townland Whitefield.

'Rev. Murtagh Brennan was P.P. of the district from 1687 to 1712. He registered himself, in 1704, as Parish Priest of Kilcommon, Kilpipe, Crosspatrick, Preban, and Carnew, residing at Rosbane. He died in 1712' (Grattan- Flood, 1916, p. 62).

Father Brennan was Parish Priest of the district in 1880 and will be discussed in further detail in the following paragraphs.

It was not until the Catholic Emancipation Act (1829) that the last of the discriminatory laws were repealed and Catholics were free to build churches and schools and plan for the future with confidence.

² 'Old Killavaney' presumably this is to distinguish between the 'New' Killavaney church which was built by Father Hore and consecrated in 1844.

The graveyard at Whitefield/‘Old Kilcommon’ is marked and listed as plot 7 in Griffith’s Valuations, containing 2 acres, 1 rood 7 perches. In the mid-1970s, Brian Cantwell found only seven memorials, but that was mainly due to the very poor state of neglect at that time. Fifteen years later, in 1990, it was described as ‘situated on a gentle to marked E-facing slope. Square enclosure (dims. 80m x 80m) defined by an earth and stone bank (width 1.8m) with drystone stone facing of identical character to the surrounding field boundaries. In 1990 only about twenty headstones were identifiable, the earliest dating to the early nineteenth century’ (Grogan & Kilfeather, 137).

We are not the first group to recognise the significance of Whitefield Graveyard. A local group in 1990 pioneered the clearance of the graveyard under local man Paddy Murphy. An altar and several wooden benches, serving as pews, were erected for open-air Jubilee Mass in 2000, which was celebrated at the site by Fr Ray Gahan, PP, and Fr Thady Doyle, CC.



Plate 1: Stone plaque erected in Jubilee year 2000.



Plate 2: Seats from the Jubilee Mass and memorial stone to Paddy Murphy.

In 2019 a comprehensive record of epitaphs at Whitefield was compiled by Ciarán O'Byrne. He photographed and listed 22 headstones. He has also compiled a list of the individuals named. Following on from Ciarán's work and as part of this phased of works the local CE scheme along with volunteers from the local community cleared the graveyard and Triona Dormer, Jack Lynch and Yvonne Whitty documented and photographed a total of 46 headstones which are detailed in Appendix 3 . The earliest grave dates to 1802 and is in memory of Henry Byrne.

Headstone No. 9	
<p>Erected by Edward Byrne of Muskeagh In memory of his beloved father Edward Byrne who died 20th May 1817 aged 71 years</p> <p>of his mother Sarah Byrne who died 20th June 1857 aged 80 years</p> <p>and his brother Henry Byrne who died 25 Feb 1802 aged 5 years</p>	

Plate 3: Earliest inscribed Table tomb headstone.

Old Killaveny Chapel (now known as Whitefield)

The earliest depiction of Whitefield is on the Jacob Neville Map of 1760 (Figure 3). A chapel is depicted either in or bordering the townland of 'Kill-av-eny'. Kilcommon church is shown as in repair, the present Protestant church, was built upon this site in 1820.

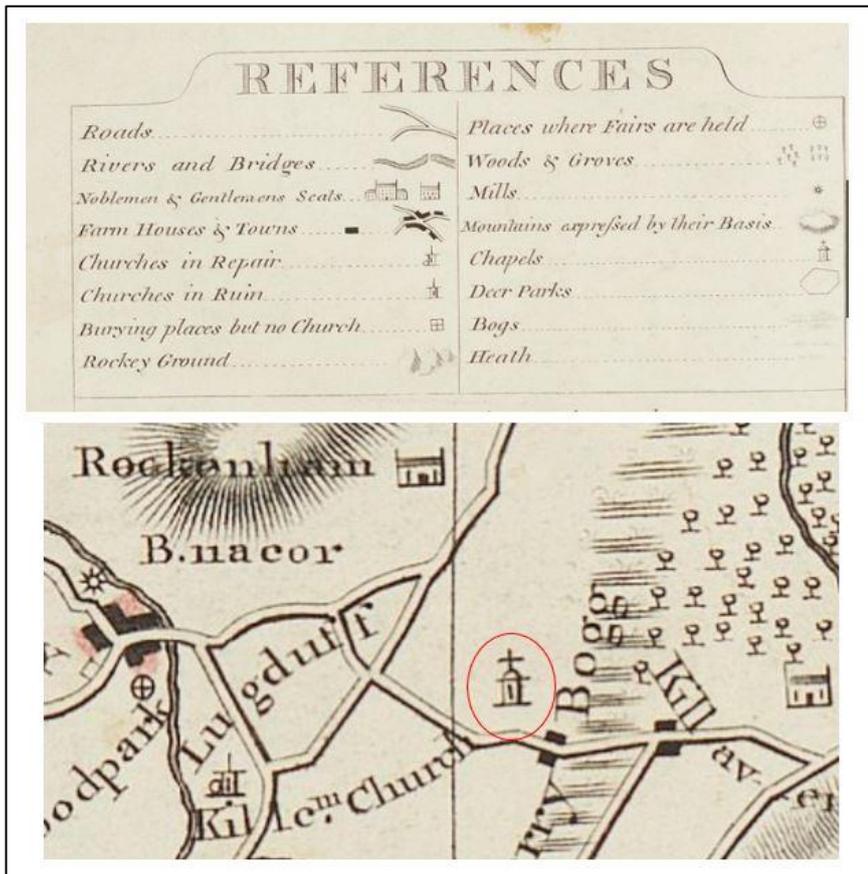


Figure 3: Jacob Nevill Map 1760

(© The Board of Trinity College Dublin).

Source: <https://doi.org/10.48495/4f16c456i>

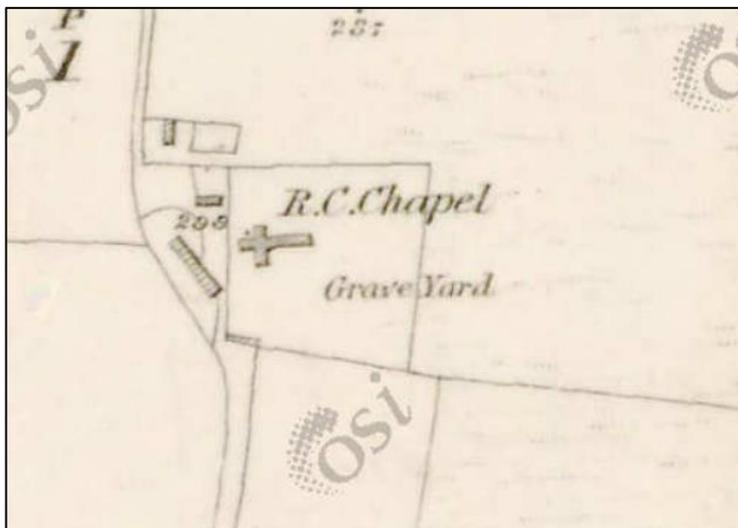


Figure 4: First edition OS map 1838 (© OSI).

The OS map of 1838 also clearly shows a substantial building marked 'R.C. Chapel' in the west side of the graveyard. In 1839 it was described as 'a large Roman Catholick chapel' (Ordnance Survey Namebooks, p.349).



Figure 5: Coolattin Estate Map 1842 (Scale 12 inches to 1 mile).

The Coolattin Estate map shows clearly the outline of the old church which was, prior to 1843, used as a place of worship (Figure 4).

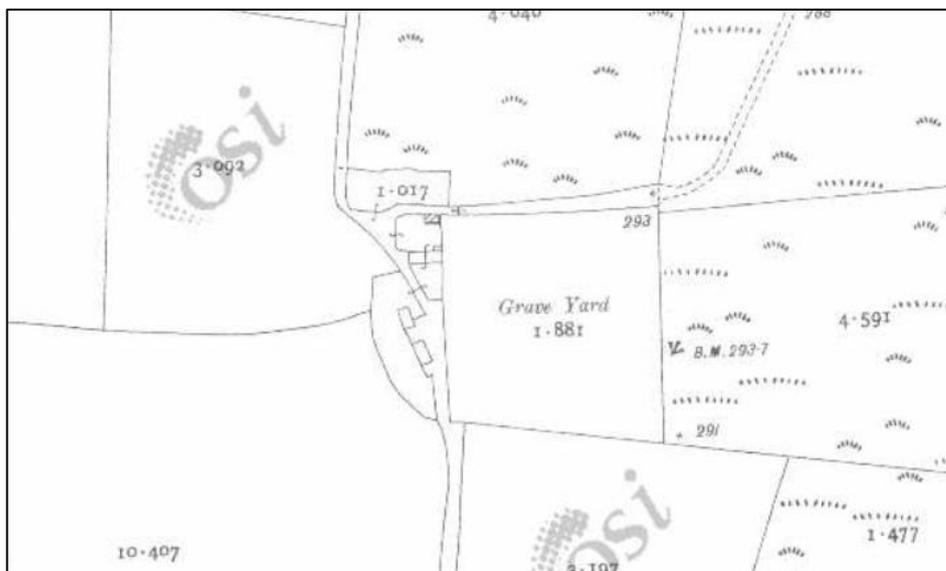


Figure 6: Third edition map 1908-09 (© OSI).

By the time of the third edition map in 1908-09 although the graveyard is labelled there is no depiction of the church (Figure 5).

The ‘old chapel’ at Killavaney (now Whitefield) was one of several within the Catholic parish of Annacurra. Although we do not know exactly when it was built, we know that the last Catholic pastor of Kilcommon which would have been the original parish church before the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16th century by Henry VIII was the. Rev. Nicholas O’Cullen. Cullen was still administering to the needs of his parishioners circa 1575 before he was reported to the Government by Bishop Ram in 1612 (Grattan- Flood, 1916, p. 62). There is no trace of the original parish church at Kilcommon and the present Church of Ireland known as Kilcommon Church which was built in 1820 now occupies the original medieval church site.

It was after 1612 presumably that the penal era church at ‘Old Killavaney’ (today known as Whitefield) was built to provide a place of worship for Catholics living in the town of Tinahely and the surrounding areas.

The next registered Catholic Parish Priest for ‘Old Killavaney’ was Rev. Murtagh Brennan from 1687 until his death in 1712. Father Philip Furlong took over as Parish Priest following the death of Father Brennan until 1734 when Father Michael Kennedy took over. We know that there was a chapel at ‘Old Killavaney’ in 1760 from an examination of Jacob Nevill’s map (Figure 3). Father James Brennan, who appointed the parish priest of Annacurra in 1780 would have served mass in the penal era church at ‘Old Killanavey’. He was a local man who lived with his two sisters Catherine and Ann, in the townland of Tubberpatrick, on a 55-acre farm.



Plate 4: Plaque inside Saint Kevin’s Church Killavaney which details all the Parish Priests from 1687.

The churches at '*Old Killavaney*' (known as Whitefield today) and Annacurra were destroyed by local loyalists in the aftermath of the 1798 Rebellion. The church at Killavaney was burned by the local yeomanry on 11 November, 1798. In September that year the thatched church which Father Brennan had built in Annacurra had suffered the same fate.

The Tinahely area was particularly unsettled during that period.

'There was quasi-Orange organization in Tinahely boasting 151 members who styled themselves the 'True Blues' from which a large supplementary yeomanry corps was raised under the command of local zealot Henry Moreton ... apparently a separate body from the gazette [i.e. 'officially] Tinahely Infantry commanded by his brother James. '(Ó Donnell, 121).

The unofficial status of the Tinahely True Blues meant that they had a free hand to wreak havoc whenever and wherever they wished in the area. They were not trammled by rules of war or military discipline. They were sectarian in origin and in purpose. Ó Donnell adds that they 'gained a reputation for ferocity that resulted in the destruction of the village [of Tinahely] in June 1798.' (Ó Donnell, 121).

While the 1798 rebellion is often described as an attempt to break the political link with England. It was fueled by the success of the American Revolution (1776-1783) and the more recent French Revolution (1789) which overthrew the French aristocracy. However, the high ideals of 'Rights of Man' and Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité were soon lost as old local feuds turned political aspirations into a civil war characterized by religious affiliation – Catholic nationalist and Protestant loyalist.

There is a tradition that Father Brennan never recovered from the shock of having his two churches burned to the ground. Prior to his death Father Brennan had rebuilt the church at '*Old Killavaney*' which is today known as Whitefield. The cost of replacing/restoring the church amounted to almost £200. The money for carrying out the work was raised by public subscription and was augmented by a grant from Earl Fitzwilliam (Plate 5).

When Father Brennan died in 1801, he was buried in the old graveyard of Killavaney (Grattan-62-3), now Whitefield. Local history records that his remains were interred in the centre aisle of the old church. During a clean-up of the graveyard in 2009 the removal of briars, bracken and undergrowth revealed a limestone memorial which was mounted on six granite pillars which local tradition has as the final resting place for Father Brennan (Plate 6).

The chapel having been rebuilt was in use until the 1840s, when Father Thomas Hore was appointed parish priest in 1841, in succession to Father Charles O'Brien. Father Hore set about building the present St. Kevin's church, 0.9km north-east of Whitefield graveyard. On 20 April, 1844, St. Kevin's was consecrated by Bishop Keating and the old chapel was abandoned (Grattan-Flood, 63). No mention is made of the old chapel or its ruins in Griffith's Valuations, although the graveyard is recorded.

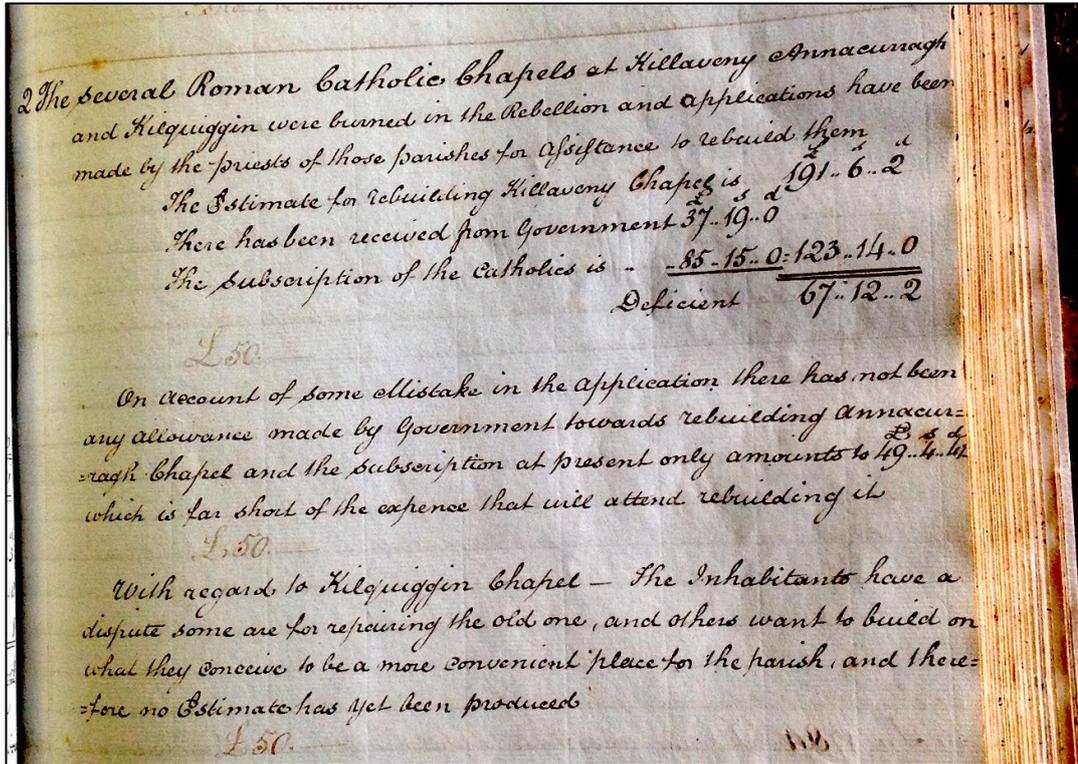


Plate 5: This record from the Coollattin Estate Memorandum books tell us that the cost of rebuilding Whitefield church was £191.6.2. The government contributed £37.19.0, Earl Fitzwilliam gave £50 and the parishioners raised £85.15.0



Plate 6: Possible location of burial place of Fr. Brennan (red arrow).

Father Hore was a charismatic individual who, in 1850, spoke to a crowd estimated in excess of 2,000. He had let it be known in advance that he intended to recruit as many parishioners (and beyond) as possible to accompany him to begin new lives in America. This was in response to the horrific potato famine of the late 1840s, and the people had no reason at that time to believe it would not return. The local police had reason to believe that what he would say would be more likely than not seditious and his speech that day was recorded (Rees, 1994, pp. 51-54). Because of the crowd, the meeting was held outdoors, in a large field in Whitefield immediate opposite St. Kevin's.



Plate 7: Fr. Thomas Hore, parish priest of Killaveney, who replaced the old Whitefield church with St. Kevin's in 1844. He gave an impassioned speech in Whitefield in 1850 in a successful effort to entice hundreds of his parishioners to emigrate to America with him (Rees, 1994) [photo: Jim Rees collection].

Father Hore's speech as extracted from: A farewell to Famine (Arklow, 1994) pp.51-54 by Jim Rees:

Sunday, June 2nd, 1850 was a day of religious observance as all Sundays were in the parish of Killaveny. On this particular Sunday, however, there arrived a congregation such as had never been seen in the tiny parish church before or since. They came from miles around to hear not so much the service as the sermon, for this was the day that Fr. Hore had promised he would address his parishioners on his intentions of taking those who wished to accompany him to America. They used whatever means they had at their disposal to be there on time.

Among those present was David Lynch, a native of Cork. Lynch was a member of the Irish Constabulary, the military-style police force, and it was his job to record the essence of Fr. Hore's sermon and to report it to his superiors who would then pass it on to Dublin Castle, the hub of British rule and administration in Ireland. There the sermon would be examined for anything that smacked of sedition. Fr. Hore did not disappoint them. As Lynch's report is the best - probably the only - account we have of that remarkable occasion, it is reproduced here verbatim. It will be noticed that throughout he spelled the name Hoare. Other unusual spellings are as they appear in the original.

Tinahely, June 3rd 1850.

I beg to state that I attended Divine Service on yesterday at the R.C. Chapel at Whitefield. After Service the Rev. Thomas Hoare P.P. addressed a numerous and mixed congregation who had assembled for the purpose of hearing him explain his views for giving up his parish and emigrating to America and the reasons which induced him to leave this country, etc.

Mr. Hoare commenced by saying that he had promised on a previous occasion to explain to his parishioners his views for leaving this country for America as it might seem strange to them that a man of his age and position in the country should think of doing so. -

He then stated his reasons were chiefly these: - That he commenced his mission in America where he remained many years and therefore was more competent to judge the relative interests and prospects of both countrys. - That he done so as he had the permission of his late Bishop and to encourage younger clergymen as well as the laity of this country to follow his example, believing as he did that the clergy were required more there than here and that the mass of the

people would benefit their condition by going there, as he (Mr. Hoare) saw no hope of their prospects improving by remaining in this country but the certainty of inevitable ruin should they remain.

He then proceeded to dwell in forceable language on the contrast that existed between America and this country stating that the independence, prosperity and comfort which the American people enjoy while in this country there exists misery, degradation and starvation.

[He] Said that he believed the people had in great measure initiated these evils on themselves thro their Party animosity, bigotry and ill-will which they entertained towards each other, that such had been the curse of Ireland, the evil consequences of which left Ireland and Irishmen as they were - 'the bye-word and scorn of all civilised nations' - that Catholic as well as Protestant were alike to blame for keeping alive those feelings of animosity towards each other. That England always fostered it and by which she was able to make use of either party at her will for her own purposes.

He then said that as this was probably the last time he would address them on this subject he would speak to them freely and went on to say that Ireland had to thank England and English legislation for all the miseries and sufferings which this country had endured and under which it still suffered. That he was no Prophet, but that he could see that at no distant day England would suffer for her misgovernment and ill-treatment of Ireland. That it was a notorious fact that England was at present despised and distrusted by nearly every nation in the world and had not scarcely a friendly power in Europe to assist her in the event of a war which every day threatened her. That her Irish subjects were every day flying from the country in thousands and he believed and trusted that the tide of emigration was only commencing to flow - That the time would come when England would want Irishmen to aid her in her battles but would not have them to get; that the downfall of England was certain at no distant day and that Ireland too would sink with her.

He then dwelt for a long time in describing the climate, soil, etc. of America; the comfort and prosperity of its inhabitants, etc - and mentioned as a mark of the growing prosperity of the former emigrants from this country the vast sums they were daily remitting to their friends at home to enable them to join them, and quoted several cases of individuals with whom he said he was personally acquainted, who in a few years became men of independence and fortune, and who, if they (had) remained in this country would never have been anything better than paupers.

That their lands were free soil, no rent, Tithe or tax to pay – save county..(illegible)... - that there was no such thing as bigotry known there, that there every man might worship his God in the form he liked, without incurring the ill-will of his brother man, as was unfortunately too often the case here where man made God and His Scripture the causes of ill-will and hatred instead of love.

He went on to say that he intended leaving this country about the commencement of September next and that he would that day commence to take down a list of the names of such as were willing to accompany him, as by going with him it would be a great saving to them as he intended to charter a vessel if he found he had as many ready to go as would enable him to do so and that he expected each applicant would be ready to deposit the sum of 10 shillings as a guarantee to him and as a portion of their passage money.

[He] Said his place of destination was the State of Ohio remarking that it was one of the best in the Union for climate, soil, etc. – that he intended to purchase land there himself and hoped to be able to form a colony there of his own people.

Mr. Hoare then concluded by exhorting all such as could accompany him to do so if they valued their own and their families future welfare and as he believed there was not the slightest hopes of doing good by remaining in this country but on the contrary inevitable destitution.

About 2,000 persons were present, many of whom came a distance of seven and ten miles. I understand that about one hundred persons gave down their names with the intention of accompanying Mr. Hoare and it is supposed that from six to seven hundred persons will leave the country with him (Outrage Report, NAI).

5 Site Inspection

A number of site inspections were undertaken by various consultants from differing disciplines in order to identify any ecological issues which may arise with future conservation/ other works on the site as discussed below.

The site of this Penal era church was completely overgrown and the headstones and location of the church ruins are consumed by vegetation in 2021. The laneway was filled with potholes and in a poor state of repair. Following the successful CMF grant under Stream 3 2021, and with the help of the Community Employment Scheme in Tinahely the graveyard and access lane were cleared. It was then possible to complete a record of the memorials and to identify the footprint of the church

at Whitefield.



Plate 8: Before and after vegetation clearance Whitefield.

5.1 Archaeological Site inspection- Yvonne Whitty

The graveyard is located on a gentle east facing slope within a square enclosure 80m x 80m. All sides of the enclosure are earth and stone lined by trees and hedgerows which is, 1m high and on average 1.8m wide.

The western part of the enclosure adjacent to the laneway is a dry-stone wall in poor repair and is impacted by tree roots. The southwest corner has been repaired in recent years. The access to the graveyard is through two granite pillars and a wrought iron gateway. This however does not appear to be the original entranceway which may have been at the southwest corner of the site and a low mound may be the remains of a ditch/pathway which defined the entrance path to the church (Plate 12).



Plate 9: Entrance to Whitefield Graveyard.

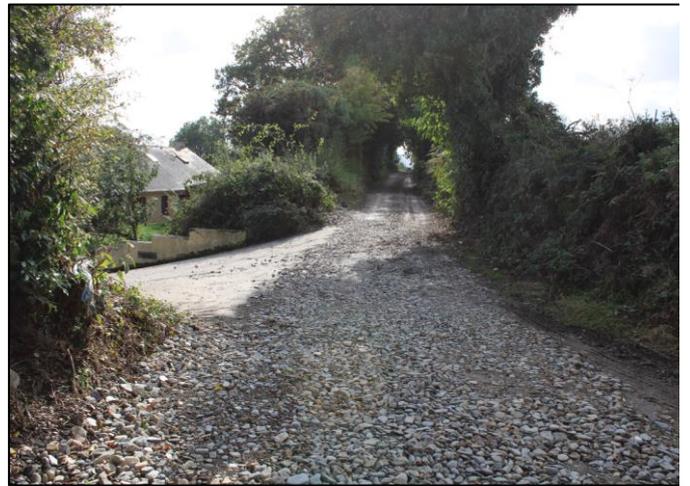


Plate 10: Before and after laneway access, it is now possible to drive and park at the graveyard which is especially important for access for elderly people.



Plate 11: Footprint of T-shaped church facing southeast.



Plate 12: Graveyard view facing northeast, note the low banks (white arrow) which may mark the original entrance to the graveyard.

Once the vegetation was cleared it was possible to identify the footprint of a 'T-shaped' church. The T-shaped church is aligned east-west, 26m in length and with a north and south transept extending off the chancel for a distance of 37m. The width of the nave and transepts are 5.50m. As is the case at Kilmurray the chancel projected slightly to accommodate the altar. The chancel was located in the western part of the building.

Churches in the penal era were generally thatched as is recorded at Annacurra which was built by Father Brennan and burned during the 1798 Rebellion. These thatched chapels were vernacular in style and used locally available materials including stone and mud and comprised a random rubble stone construction. Towards the end of the 18th century when the Penal Laws relaxed the churches were built in two main styles; 'Barn Church' and 'T-Shaped' churches (Noonan, 2015, p. 108).

By the mid-eighteenth century the 'T-shaped' chapel became the preferred design. This style of design originated in Scotland and spread to Ulster where it was popular with Catholic and Presbyterian congregations and quickly spread throughout Ireland (Corlett & Hicks, 2018, p. 45). One of the oldest examples of a surviving T-shaped Irish Catholic chapel is at Kilmurry, County Wicklow. This chapel has been wonderfully documented in recent years (Corlett & Hicks, 2018). The footprint of both Whitefield and Kilmurray as depicted on historic mapping is almost identical. Kilmurray appears to have been constructed in the 1780s or 1790s.

The north and south transept were built to accommodate larger congregations and to provide a better view of the altar (Noonan, 2015, p. 38).

Graveyards often developed beside these churches, as is the case at Whitefield, however the Catholic community continued to use the graveyard associated with the medieval parish church, in this case Kilcommon. A large burial ground surrounds Whitefield, however only 44 headstones were inscribed, the earliest dating to 1802. There are however as many more grave markers and it is interesting to note that there is a concentration of grave markers at the northern corner of the site. This suggests that the graveyard may have developed some years after the chapel itself was constructed given the date of the inscribed headstones which for the most part date to the mid-19th and 20th century and are a mixture of 'table' tombs, ledgers and upright headstones (Plate 13).



Plate 13: Bluebells in Whitefield graveyard facing northeast.



Plate 14: Granite stone cross and note the low grassy mound which may define the original entrance to the graveyard.

A complete record of the memorials is attached as Appendix 4 to this report. A large granite stone cross is located at what may have been the original entrance to the graveyard and low grassy mounds may be the original entrance pathway to the church (Plate 14). The granite cross and does not appear to be a headstone as there is no inscription visible.

Although there are several 19th century headstones carved by unnamed masons and signed examples from later years which are noted on the headstone inscriptions in Appendix 4., there is one headstone which can be assigned to the stonecutter William Higgins, dating to 1816 based on its carving style (Plates 15-18). These stone masons were professional stone cutters whose work and skill were highly sought after as can be seen in the quantity and quality of the headstones in historic graveyards around Wicklow. At Kilcommon there is an abundance of late 18th century finely carved headstones.

The Higgins headstone at Whitefield is similar to that found at Preban. Higgins's work is mainly found across the southern part of the county in graveyards such as Castletimon, Glenealy, Glendalough, Macreddin, Preban, Rosahane and Mullinacuff and now Whitefield (Corlett, 2015, p. 100). His headstone inscriptions usually start with 'Erected by'. At Whitefield the headstone decoration comprises a temple with scrolled capitals frames, containing a naïve figure of Christ whose side is pierced with a spear and a ladder is also depicted within the temple. Two angels are visible at the top of the headstone, holding the keys to the gates of heaven. The temple is flanked by a chalice and eucharist, monstrance, and thurible. All of this is framed by a scroll and the words '*Gloria in Exclsis Deo*' adorn the top of the headstone.



Plate 15: Headstone 42 William Higgins for Thomas Doyle dies 1816.



Plate 16: Close up figure of Christ, headstone 42 William Higgins.

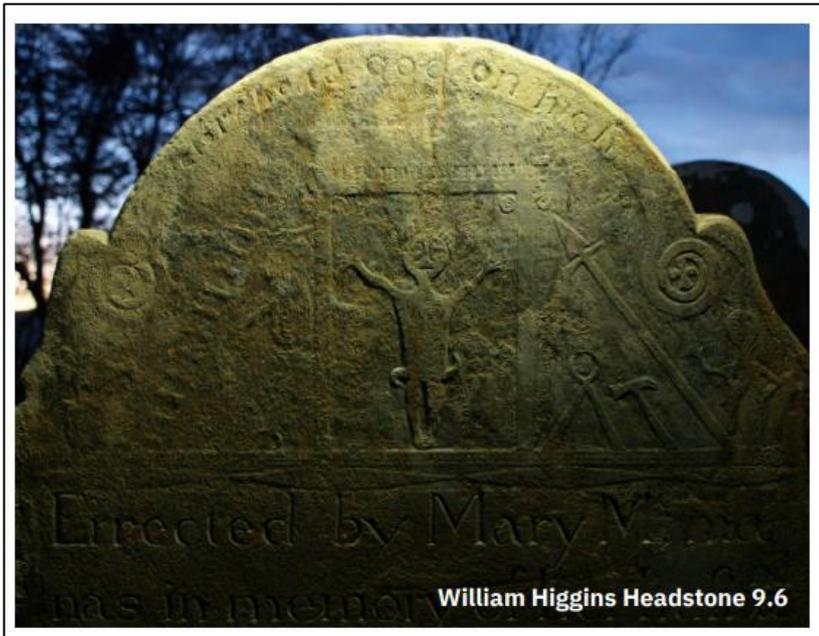


Plate 17: William Higgins headstone Preban, County Wicklow.

Headstone 42

Erected by **Martin Doyle**

in memory of his son **Thomas Doyle**

who departed this life

December the 4th 1816 aged 14 years



Plate 18: Headstone 42 carved by William Higgins, Whitefield, County Wicklow.

5.2 Biodiversity Site Inspection by Dr Tom Curtis- Appendix 1

Dr Tom Curtis has completed a report on the flora and plant biodiversity of Whitefield Graveyard, Tinahely, Co. Wicklow which is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. An extract from this report is detailed below:

'In general, the main habitat on the site is that of Dry-humid acid grassland GS3 and as the name implies grassland is the dominant feature of the graveyard. The headstones, stonework and dry walls can be assigned to Stone walls and other stonework BL1. The boundaries on the north, east and south sides are dominated by trees and hedgerows with earth banks and these can be assigned to the habitats of Hedgerows WL1, Treelines WL2 and Earth banks BL2 respectively. There are also patches of Scrub WS1.

The north-west corner is weedy in nature with Nettles, Ivy, Blackberry and Hogweed very common. There has been removal of Gorse and Ivy here as evidenced by the mounds of cleared material. The main area of the graveyard is grass-dominated and the soil reaction

here is acidic. Throughout are scattered trees of Rowan, Silver birch and Hawthorn.

The western boundary of Treelines WL2 has Ash, Lawson's cypress, Sycamore, Hawthorn and Field rose the latter two making up the Hedgerows WL1. This western side does not have as extensive tree and hedgerow cover as the other boundaries and the elements are widely scattered along it. On the northern side Ash, Rowan with Ivy, Blackthorn, Hawthorn and Sycamore are all common with the non-native Box. Male-fern is common in ditches associated with the Earth banks BL2. In the east side of the side there is a stand of Grey willow close to the boundary with extensive Bracken behind it and both Ash and Rowan occupy the boundary. There are stands of Gorse and Broom -Scrub WS1 found here. The boundary on the south side is mostly of Ash with the shrubs Elder and Hawthorn. Where Gorse scrub has been cleared mostly along the north and north-east sides, Foxgloves have germinated in quantity and Bluebells are common. Hard fern occurs here too. Ash-dieback was noted along all boundaries except that on the east side.

Dry-humid acid grassland GS3 dominates the rest of the area and characteristically Creeping soft-grass is dominant with Sweet vernal-grass, False oat-grass, Common bent and Heath wood-rush. Heath bedstraw is a common herb throughout and in the north-western portion there are mounds of Common haircap moss and lanky moss are found. There is some Broom found here but some had been cut. The rest of the northern side of the meadow has coarser species notably Marsh thistle, Cocksfoot and seedling Birch. Towards the eastern side the flora is more diverse with Common bird's-foot-trefoil, Germander speedwell, Lesser stichwort and scattered Hawthorn.

The south-eastern corner of the site is its most diverse part for flora and common here are Greater bird's-foot-trefoil, Yarrow, Heath cinquefoil, Red clover, Common figwort and Knapweed. The dominant grasses accompanying these are Sweet vernal-grass and Cocksfoot with Red fescue. Square-stalked St John's-wort occurs here and there are extensive stands of Wild raspberry occurring up the mid-east side.

Between here and the gate and in the area occupied by wooden seating, there is a very large colony of Primroses together with Hedge woundwort and Trailing tormentil. The walls on the west side have Ground-ivy, Herb Robert, Cow parsley and Broad-leaved willowherb with the woody species already noted above.

Blackcap, Willow warbler and Chaffinch were noted singing in the wooded areas and Meadow brown butterfly was common in the meadows' (Curtis, 2021).

5.3 Arborist Site Inspection by Charles McCorkell- Appendix 2

Below is a list of the trees identified by arborist Charles McCorkell and his report is attached as Appendix 2.0 and 2.1 to this report;

- Lawson Cypress x 1
- Ash x12
- Hawthorn x 12
- Goats Willow x 3
- Silver Birch x 5
- Rowan/ Mountain Ash x 7
- Elder x 1
- Blackthorn x 2
- Sycamore x 2

The arborist reports contains a list of suitable mitigations for each of the trees identified and is attached as Appendix 2.0 and 2.1. One tree was recommended for felling at ground level T993. In total there were ten trees that require further mitigation as detailed in the attached appendix.

5.4 Chartered Engineer and Historic Buildings Consultant Dermot Nolan- Appendix 3

Dermot Nolan completed a site visit and his Condition and Conservation/Repair Proposals for Whitefield Graveyard and Site of Former Church is attached as Appendix 3. An extract from this report is detailed below:

‘The site boundary on the west side, along the access laneway is a dry stone wall composed of the local Ordovician slate/schist. The wall has been re-made at the south west corner by re-building with cement mortar. The wall is covered in vegetation and its condition could not be ascertained in detail; however it is likely that it is gradually being degraded by invasive roots. There are trees close to the wall at various points along the southern part and these may be undermining the wall in places. A section of the wall, about eight metres long has lost its capping. The northern part of this wall (north of the entrance gate) has been badly damaged by trees which appear to be growing in the line of the wall and have destroyed sections of it. The boundaries on the other three sides (north, east, and south), are earthen mounds with hedgerows and trees growing on them. These were not examined in detail.

The entrance gate is of rather crudely worked wrought iron (probably made by a local

blacksmith). There are two roughly square granite gate posts, the tops of which are pyramid-shaped. The iron gate is fixed to one of the gateposts by drilling through and clamping a fixing plate on the back face of the post. The metal embedded in the granite has corroded and caused cracking in the stone. The gate has simple arrowhead finials (half of them are missing), on the top of the vertical bars and a spiral flourish embellishment on the closer side of the gate.

The graveyard has scattered markers, some of which are leaning or have fallen. There is a small granite cross located in the south-west part of the graveyard and some post-like granite stones that may have been part of a table grave marker.

The graveyard floor is covered in unmown grass and other ground vegetation however, it is possible to identify the sub-surface lines of the former church.' (Nolan, 2021).

6 Issues and Vulnerability

The issues of concern for this historic graveyard are:

- Lack of maintenance – historic graveyards require regular care and attention. Lack of maintenance for even a short time can result in further deterioration.
- Deterioration of grave memorials, grave furniture, iron gate at entrance- the restoration of these graveyards and the transcription of information from the gravestones provide advantages over written church records. Firstly, they go back much further in time. Secondly, the headstone inscriptions, in most instances, provide continuity of links between the generations in any given family and may provide the townland or address where the family came from.
- Lack of knowledge of the graveyard – there is no interpretive signage to tell people of the significant role the graveyard has as one of the few remaining penal era church ruins. A graveyard plan with transcribed graves would greatly assist people tracing their family history.
- The graveyard will become inaccessible if the laneway is not maintained.

7 Community Links & Heritage Tourism- by Kevin Lee

Graveyards such as at Whitefield are genealogical sources for returning Coollattin diaspora. Between circa 1830 and 1855 Earl Fitzwilliam funded an assisted programme of emigration from his extensive, sprawling south Wicklow landed estate. The Wicklow emigrants settled in Ontario in what was then British North America, but was later to become Canada. In earlier years the emigrants sailed from Dublin's Eden Quay. Later, during the famine years, they sailed for Quebec from the south Wexford port of New Ross. Between 1847 and 1855 almost 6,000 Coolattin emigrants were assisted in finding a new home across the Atlantic.

Prior to the assisted programme many middle-class farmers, mainly from the Anglican background and from the south west of County Wicklow, funded themselves in leaving for the New World. Unlike the later emigrants these folk were fleeing, not from hunger, but from fear of vindictive reprisals in the wake of the 1798 Rebellion.

Famine emigration from the Coollattin estate was on a par with the more publicised '*coffin ship*' exodus from counties such as Cork, Kerry, Mayo and Sligo. The Wicklow emigrants were not anonymous beings. They left behind a well-defined paper trail. The estate mapping of 1842 contains details regarding the ownership of every house and every plot of ground. This enables members of the returning diaspora to pinpoint the exact place vacated by the ancestors. Also, prior to emigration details regarding ages of members of each departing family was recorded in the estate 'Emigration Books'.

Since 2013 there has been a rapid increase in organised homecomings of the south Wicklow diaspora. The completeness of the Coollattin records, combined with the online Catholic church records, allow a very complete picture of where and how their ancestors lived. A planned restoration and mapping of headstones in old burial grounds such as Mullinacuff (old), Whitefield and Ballymaghroe would complete the circle of knowledge. In the case of some of the burial grounds in south Wicklow the returning descendants of 19th century emigrants can only view from afar final resting places that have been reclaimed by nature. The restoration of these graveyards and the transcription of information from the gravestones provide advantages over written church records. Firstly, they go back much further in time. For example, in Mullinacuff there is one grave slab dated 1702. Secondly, the headstone inscriptions, in most instances, provide links between the generations in any given family.

A wonderful restoration and cataloguing programme has been carried out at the old graveyard of Preban, near to the village of Annacurra. In time the programme will hopefully extend to the remaining old burial grounds of south Wicklow and include ones such as Yewtree (Shillelagh), Crosspatrick and Kilcommon. In the following sections we identify the origin of the Coollattin diaspora, genealogical information available for the returning diaspora and present two case studies of the contribution that the restoration of the graveyards at Mullinacuff, Whitefield and Ballymaghroe would make to the material available for the growing area of genealogical tourism in south county Wicklow. The Coollattin Canadian Connection initiative is based in Carnew. It was officially launched in 2016. The aim of was to reunite descendants of the famine emigrants with their Wicklow roots. Following intensive promotional campaigns in Ontario, many of our diaspora have found a pathway back to their ancestral homeland. A focal point for the visit of many of the returning Americans and Canadians are the ancient burial grounds which are dotted throughout south County Wicklow. To date over 80 participants have visited the Shillelagh region and graveyards which is a clear testament to the potential of diaspora tourism.

7.1 Extent of the Coollattin Estate

The Coollattin Estate in County Wicklow was established by Thomas Wentworth, the first Earl of Strafford and Lord Deputy of Ireland in 1637. In that year he purchased the estate of Cashaw which more or less equates to the barony of Ballinacor South. In the following year he purchased the adjoining half barony of Shillelagh. These two properties constitute what we describe as the core area of the state. In addition the estate controlled several satellite properties. These included the town of Rathdrum and the surrounding townlands of Corballis, Glasnarget, Ballygannon and Tansey Close. Also under Wentworth Fitzwilliam control was a fertile band of land extending between Rathnew and Wicklow town. An outlying region to the north of Newcastle completed the impressive Wicklow land portfolio. Outside of County Wicklow the estate held 1,532 acres near the town of Naas and the north Wexford townland of Motabower (325 acres).

For the purpose of this report we are concentrating on the core area which extended over almost 76,000 acres and encompassed 150 townlands. These townlands were in turn divided into 14 civil parishes. Included in the core towns were the towns of Carnew and Tinahely, as well as the estate town of Shillelagh which was built in the latter part of the 19th century.

7.2 Extent of the Coollattin Diaspora.

The Coollattin diaspora has its origins in two distinct waves of emigration from south Wicklow to Canada or British North America as it was then known;

- Emigration which took place in the wake of the 1798 Rebellion
- The programme of assisted emigration which was funded by Earl Fitzwilliam. This programme commenced circa 1830 and which accelerated during the years of the Great Famine.

7.3 Post 1798 Rebellion Emigration

Emigration from south Wicklow and north Wexford must be viewed against the backdrop of the 1798 Rebellion—a failed coup that left great eddies of distrust in its wake. This was particularly true in the southwest of Co. Wicklow and the foothills of the Wicklow Mountains, where a large part of the population professed the Protestant religion. A war of mutual atrocities had left the countryside dotted with the charred ruins of farmhouses and cottages, and society with wounds that would take generations to heal.

Recent research has highlighted the magnitude of Protestant migration to eastern Upper Canada which took place during the early decades of the 19th century. While departures before the war of 1812 moved at a mere trickle, the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 accelerated the diaspora by driving the economies of England and Ireland from their long-sustained, debt-based boom into a post-war recession, with whole industries forced to shut down for want of work. Widespread unemployment brought the usual privations, and many families of skilled tradespeople and farmers were forced to look elsewhere for paid work. Canada appealed to many as a reasonable option, and many growing Canadian communities especially those along Canada's border with the United States—were eager for reinforcements. Beyond a pressing need for skilled tradesmen, it was commonly accepted that Protestant Irish loyalists coming to Upper Canada would be willing and capable of defending their adopted land from a possible incursion from across the American border. Accordingly, generous land grants were made to those trained in the use of firearms. Members of the south Wicklow farming class, most of whom had marched and fought with local yeomanry corps during and after the rebellion, were considered ideal reinforcements for the defence of the realm. For their part, the Protestant Irish farmers from Co. Wicklow and Co. Wexford needed steady employment; moreover, they sought escape from the very real risk of retribution from the Catholics they had defeated, and in places annihilated, a decade and a half prior.

The Elly brothers, who operated a shipping firm in the port of New Ross, were ready to exploit the appetites of those who hungered for a new life in a land free from hatred and strife. The Elly's were Quakers who, through the wars with France and Spain, had imported timber from Quebec, especially the strong, tall, flexible white pine favoured by the Royal Navy for the masts of its

warships. With their cargo vessels now idle in port, the Ellys eyed a new market in emigration and took pains to promote its benefits. From 1815 on, Samuel, Joseph and Robert Elly worked hard to convince the Colonial Office that recruits from south Leinster would make ideal colonists for Upper Canada. Eager to have that office subsidise both passage and provisions, the brothers strengthened their case by traversing the countryside to identify families who would cross the pond if assistance were available.

The lists prepared by the Ellys contained the names of 710 Protestant heads of family and 281 Roman Catholic families for a total of 5,502 individuals. Notably, their records identified 1,100 able-bodied Protestants capable of bearing arms. The list also revealed that a high proportion of prospective emigrants resided in south Wicklow. Eager to exploit this demographic fact, the Ellys made their pitch to the Colonial Office, making clear that their New Ross operation was both close to this pool of skilled labour and ready at once to transfer these world-be colonists across the Atlantic. To make their proposal more attractive, they stressed the suitability of Protestants over Catholics, declaring that *'the Protestant families of this list is composed are remarkably sober, industrious and well educated, can procure the satisfactory recommendations and have generally [in] some of their branches members of the yeomanry corps, many of these families possess considerably more property than sufficient to remove them and all fixed in their determination of joining their relatives and families who have so happily settled in Upper Canada upon land granted by the British Government within these last two years ... Most of the men of these families [are] capable of bearing arms [and] in the Rebellion of 1798 were actually employed in the defence of the country.'* In their recommendations for Catholic emigrants, the Ellys were less enthusiastic. *"The Roman Catholic families which compose the list are generally, respectable farmers, have procured tolerably good recommendations for sobriety, industry and good conduct, but as farmers and workmen they possess the want of order, neatness and economy which generally designates the religious persuasion to which they belong.'*

This blunt preference was likely based on the Elly brother's awareness that Protestant applicants were in a better position to raise the additional funds required beyond any available subsidies to travel to Upper Canada. Protestants were part of the money economy and as such able to accumulate savings. With no incoming cash, subsistence-farming Catholics had small plots of land that produced just (and sometimes not) enough food for the family and none to sell at market. They had no cash reserves. Protestants, unrestricted by the Penal Laws that fettered the social mobility of their Catholic neighbours, lived a different life. They were better fed, better educated and more widely connected with the world. They read the newspapers of the day and knew about the generous land grants and opportunities for employment on the other side of the Atlantic. By the same token

they were in a position to communicate with relatives and friends who had left at an earlier date. And they had money.

Ultimately, the Ellys failed to tease funding from the British government to support emigration, but their campaign had made a palpable impact on those canvassed, who now saw America in general and Canada in particular as a propitious place for a new start. Ongoing sectarian violence following the bitter struggles of 1798 greatly eased the decision to forsake their homeland. Many came to the conclusion that, with or without assistance, the risks of staying in Ireland outweighed those of leaving.

The post rebellion exodus from southwest Co. Wicklow included families such as Hopkins, James, Chamney, Codd (or Code as they became in Canada), Dagg (or Dack) and Woodburn. Through the early decades of the 19th century, they availed themselves of grants of land and established drop-off points where their extended Wicklow kinfolk would, at a later date, find a welcoming portal to their new home in a new land. In their Irish homeland, these families had rarely ventured beyond their close-knit Anglican community, even to find a spouse. These communities would endure long after the voyage, with closely related families such as James, Chamney, Codd and Groves smoothing the emigrant pathway for each other. They continued to intermarry within their own family groupings on the other side of the Atlantic. Given (or Christian) names in these families were often identical and concurrent and, on frequent occasions, people of different families who shared the same surname did intermarry. That practice has frustrated the work of genealogists in our day, who continue to hit so-called '*brick walls*' of ambiguous and unresolvable references.

The James, Hopkins and Codd families serve as telling examples of the process of chain migration in an adopted land. The James' had spread themselves through counties Wicklow, Kilkenny and Carlow. Along the Wicklow-Wexford borderland, members of the family had been actively involved as loyalists during the 1798 Rebellion. In the 1820s three James brothers left the townland of Munaghullin in the parish of Aghowle. William (with his wife Elizabeth Chamney) and also Thomas (with Elizabeth Groves) found a home in Ramsay Township in Lanark County. Nathaniel (with Jane Chamney) and their family settled in Gratton Township in Renfrew County. Sometime afterwards the family of Thomas James moved to Wawanosh Township in Huron County. A fourth brother John James (with Jane Roach) remained at home. John's sons, William and Thomas, with their mother and extended family, emigrated in 1846, settling near their uncle Nathaniel James in Gratton Township.

The descendants of John James and Jane Roach began farming in the pioneer village of Clayton near to the textile town of Almonte, Ontario. Their attachment to the homeland is reflected in the name of their farm 'Cúil Aitinn,' the original Irish spelling of Coollattin. The old wooden sign bearing that name still hangs today at the cottage of this branch of the James family. On that farm they raised Hereford, Angus and Gelbvieh cattle, eventually specialising in the Gelbvieh breed alone.

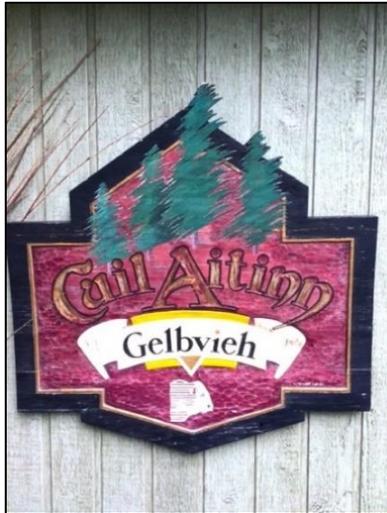


Plate 19: The original roadside house name from the James farm in Almonte, Ontario

Today, David James breeds thoroughbred horses as well; in 2006 his aptly named 'Shillelagh Slew' was the three-year old Horse of the Year in Canada and won both the Canadian Derby and Prince of Wales Stakes while finishing third the Breeders' Stake.



Plate 20: The James bred horse *Shillelagh Slew*, named after the family's native place was Canadian Horse of the Year in 2006.

Research has established a well-defined pattern of chain migration among the Edge and Hopkins families of Coollattin, with close connections to the several Hopkins families who departed from Corndog and adjoining townlands of Askakeagh and Sleaghroe between 1830 and 1855. In Grey

County the Lawrences would once again meet up with their old neighbours, the Hopkins. They had lived side-by-side in the barren uplands of Wicklow, and it is likely that their families had intermarried. Once across the ocean, the families again intermarried. The extended families of three Lawrence brothers John, James and Henry from the townland of Slieveroe emigrated to Ontario in 1848, 1851 and 1854. Four Lawrence families emigrated from the neighbouring townland of Rasheenmore. The four families of James, Thomas, Anthony and Henry from the impoverished neighbouring townland of Rasheenmore during 1848 and 1850. The seven departing Lawrence families were undoubtedly bound together by bonds of kinship.

The family of John and Martha Lawrence was one of the seven Lawrence families assisted in emigrating. John (55), Martha (45) and their nine children, Anne (22), Thomas (20), Samuel (17), John (15), William (13), James (11), Henry (9), George (6) and Martha (5) left behind their little stone-walled cottage and walked down Lawrence's Lane in the parish of Moyne for the last time in mid-May 1848. On 17 May the family sailed for Québec onboard the *Jessie*. From Québec they travelled overland to the Fergus Elora area of Ontario. The following year they moved on to finally settle in Glenelg Township, Grey County, Ontario. Martha, matriarch of the family, had lived through the bitterness of post-1798 Wicklow. She had also lived through the typhus epidemic and famine of 1817. Once again in 1826–27 famine stalked the countryside. When *Black '47* arrived, Martha and her husband were striving to rear nine children on a small farm of badlands in the foothills of the Wicklow Mountains. Having survived the Atlantic crossing aboard the *Jessie*, Martha lived to over 100.

7.4 The Programme of Assisted Emigration

Robert Chaloner replaced William Haigh as agent at Coollattin in 1826. During the first year of his tenure, Chaloner was confronted by the hunger, disease and near starvation of large numbers of Coollattin tenants. By 1831 Chaloner's administration had devised a programme of assisted emigration. Over the next quarter of a century thousands of men, women and children would be shipped across the Atlantic in a relentless effort to ease the problems stemming from overpopulation and overpressure on available land resources. Earl Fitzwilliam was well aware of the endless array of political, sectarian, financial, social and personal issues affecting his tenants as they faced the traumatic process of emigration from the Coollattin estate to better parts of the world. With charity atypical of English landlords in Ireland at the time, Fitzwilliam went to extraordinary lengths to make the indignity of departure less horrid than it might otherwise be and often was elsewhere. The Coollattin approach was methodical. Step one was to catalogue the circumstances in which tenants found themselves to determine what assistance would be most effective. In present-day language,

the Earl and his agent were taking the time to identify their most vulnerable populations in order to prioritise the allocation of their resources.

Information relating to families wishing to apply for assistance to emigrate was collected in small notebooks by the many estate sub officers such as wood rangers, gamekeepers and drivers who daily traversed the highways and byways of the expansive south Wicklow estate. To these employees fell the task of aggregating information on the families who, due to rental arrears or other reasons, were already high on the proposed emigrant lists.

Much of the documentation arriving at the Coollattin office was kept in a raw, undiluted state. A small number of these field books dating from the early 1840s have survived. For subsequent researchers they provide a wonderful insight into how the estate formulated and implemented its emigration policy. The homespun information regarding tenancies, problems encountered by those living on the estate, recommendations relating to assisted emigration and complaints relating to breaches of estate rules was recorded and transmitted to the office at Coollattin. These returns made were used by a professional scribe to compile well-structured manuscript books. The records kept by these sub agents contain phonetic spelling, wobbly grammar and, in many instances, extraneous information bordering on idle gossip. Importantly, unvarnished as they are, they shine a bright light on the criteria used for choosing which tenants would become emigrants, and what sort of assistance they might be offered. It is clear from the notes that emigration was the desired option for many tenants already walking the thin line between survival and surrender to starvation and disease.

Of prime importance seems to have been the age of the house and the number of years the family had been living in it. Some examples will show the pattern. Matt McDaniel, who gave his occupation as a blacksmith, we learn had lived in the same house for ten or twelve years. Of Matt it was stated that he was '*anxious to get his name down in the office*'. In the same townland, Thomas Neal had lived in his house for 24 years. John Lambert, a neighbour, lived with his wife and eight children in the house his family had occupied for '*near fifty years*'. It is revealing and heartening that in many instances, information given by the occupant's wife was recorded with equal weight in the survey being undertaken. In John Sumers' case it was stated that '*the wife says that the landlord will allow the house to be taken down*' Sumers held nine acres from a '*Mr McKenna a son in law of Mrs Edge*'. He had six children aged between 24 and two. Thomas Hutton of Sleaghroe had lived in his house for 18 years. The Huttons had eight children as well as John Boyde '*a boy they had reared*.' John was aged 21 and was a year older than the eldest in the Hutton family. The person conducting the survey intimated that the information had been provided by Hutton's wife Charlotte, who also said

that *'the landlord will allow the house to be taken down.'* In the case of Thomas Keegan, widower, it was the housekeeper, Dolly Goss, who offered that the Keegan family had occupied the house for 40 years and would, if granted assistance, agree to have the house taken down. The role of women in arguing a family's case in the quest for assistance is understandable. The men had a close bond with the land that they farmed. The women tended to be more pragmatic. After all it was the women who were at the cutting edge in the struggle to raise families in what must have seemed to them like a God forsaken land. Information about all these pitiable neighbours was collected during 1846 and 1847, and the following year they were among the first emigrants to bid farewell to their loved ones and make their way to New Ross to board a Graves-owned vessel bound for Québec.

To qualify for estate assistance, each family had to agree to demolish its family home or at least allow someone else to do so. This seemingly callous, even degrading, requirement had a simple, practical logic. A standing house or cabin was a taxable entity against which the landlord would be charged a cess, including the recently invoked labour rates used to fund relief efforts. As these properties would be producing neither rent nor produce, the landlord would be in a losing position every time he helped a family seek a better life. So the houses had to go. There were some exceptions, but in such cases the structures, properties of the estate as they were, could not be re-inhabited by other families nor cannibalised for materials. Whenever finer houses were abandoned by emigrants, the estate would assign *'cabin keepers'* to discourage squatters. One such cabin keeper was Patrick Maguire in Shillelagh. Ironically, Pat himself, was assisted in emigrating in 1852. Together with his wife Mary Fox and their nine children they sailed for Quebec on board the *'Confiance'*.

The poor quickly learned the rules and tried to use them to advantage. The Coollattin logbooks record that Edward Murphy of Molanaskay sought to get a head start on his neighbours; he demolished his own house and took lodgings in the village of Tinahely. In another entry, a request is made *'to let Thomas Neil's house stand as it will make an outhouse for Pat Doyle'*. The powers that be at Coollattin were not prepared to risk of another family taking up residence in the old house and the word *'Deny'* was boldly written after the request. There is a certain irony in the entry for Pat Gahan of Killinure. Pat, it was stated, *'has no house to come down therefore will not be sent'*. One would have thought that the homeless would have had a stronger case for assistance. Every care was taken that the materials from houses *'thrown down'* not be used to erect new domiciles. In June 1842 Richard Barker, an estate driver, was instructed to go to Racott on Thursday week to see the cabins of James Kenny, Doyle and Bryan pulled down. For this, James Kenny was to receive £1, Doyle 10/-, and Bryan the timber and thatch.

The estate employees who traversed the estate recorded, side by side with the cases being made for assisted emigration, cases requiring litigation by the estate on matters of dispute both within individual families and between neighbours on the estate. Many of the cases referred to reflected the Fitzwilliam paternalistic role in dealing with his tenants. In November 1841, '*Cundell of Sleaghroe*' was summoned to attend the office in Coollattin to answer questions relating to '*turning out his father*'. Pat Neill was summoned in "about his son and daughter." In a similar vein Charles Tumpkin was asked to appear in relation to '*the distress of his sister*'. One can only speculate on the popularity, or otherwise, of the official who managed to locate seven tenants who had in their possession '*thorns supposed to be cut on John Jones land*'. Five tenants, Dan Dagg, William Driver, Pat Dolan, Miles Travers and Miles Dillon were given the seemingly impossible task of replacing in situ sods of turf which they had cut and removed. All of the tenants residing in Toberlonagh were asked to appear at Coollattin to answer questions relating to '*the stopping of John Byrne's water*'. There could be no mistake in the identification of the man who had in his possession '*lawn grass*' from Coolboy Hill. He was described as "Matt Breen who had married the widow Fox and lives in Drumingle."

In the spring of 1831 the first consignment of Coollattin emigres left from Dublin's Eden Quay on the first leg of a journey to a new home far away in Ontario. Prior to 1847 James Miley, an American packet agent of Eden Quay, Dublin was contracted to transport the Coollattin emigres to Québec. To a lesser extent the packet agency of Messrs Scott was used. The earliest organised group to receive assistance in emigrating sailed from Dublin in March 1831. The list of those travelled has on it a total of 26 names. Judging by the payments made for passage and provisions, the majority of those travelling were family units, and the payment was made to the heads of these families. Michael Styles, Peter Twamley, William Bunbury who each received £5 and George Codd who received £6 were probably single men. The addresses of the emigrants are not given. However, judging by the surnames such as Driver and Codd, most were from the Coolkenna area in the southwestern corner of the estate.

7.5 Research Resources Available to the Coollattin Diaspora

Those searching for their genealogical roots in what was the Coollattin estate are blessed indeed. The Coollattin Papers are a unique source for Famine historiography.

The records which were kept at the estate and which are now housed in the National Library of Ireland are, arguably, unique both in the extent of material preserved and also its minute detail.

From a genealogical viewpoint the most significant material for researchers is to be found under

three headings

- The Famine Emigration Books
- Lists of Land Occupiers
- The 1842 Estate Maps
- Graveyard memorials

7.5.1 The Famine Emigration Books Ref: Coollattin Papers Mss. 4974/75

Over the past twenty years the Coollattin Famine Emigration Books have become a precious source of material for the many thousands of Canadians who are researching their south Wicklow roots. From the 1830's through to 1846 there was a steady flow of assisted emigrants leaving the estate and sailing for Canada, or British North America as it was then known. The Dublin shipping agent Scott and also the agency of James Miley were, during these years, responsible for organising the passage of the emigrants. From 1847 onwards the flow of assisted emigrants became a deluge. The shipping firm of William Graves & Son of New Ross were then entrusted with transporting the Fitzwilliam tenantry to the promised land across the Atlantic. Graves owned ships such as the *Bridgetown*, the *Glenlyon*, the *Jessie*, and most famously the *Dunbrody* were famed for their quality and their safety record.

Between 1847 and 1856 the names of almost 6,000 men, women and children were entered into the carefully kept emigration books. For each family the names and ages of the parents as well as those of their children were recorded. The criteria used for entering families in these books is unclear. It seems logical to assume that those entered were done so in accordance with the title given to the emigration books, which stated that they were lists of '*applicants for assisted emigration*'. There are instances where families were refused and also cases where the same family crops up in different years.

The emigrant families were provided with wooden chests which were manufactured in the building yard at Coollattin under the supervision of foreman carpenter, John Exley. These chests featured the use of the signature '*rose head*' nails made by the Coollattin nail makers. Examples of these family heirlooms are still to be found in bric-a-brac shops throughout Ontario. Outside of the emigration books there are copious examples of financial assistance given to those emigrating. Many families were also provided with clothing. Compensation was given for possessions such as building stone and even for manure heaps. Carts were hired to provide transport to New Ross for the emigrants and they were accompanied to the port by an estate steward named Lawrenson. The latter paid for porters to load the chests on board the ship. In cases where ships were late sailing

the estate paid lodging money for the emigrants.

During the course of the assisted emigration scheme it is estimated that one third of the population on the Coollattin estate left for Canada. Most of the emigrants occupied what was described as '*cabin and kitchen garden*'. In the majority of cases a condition for receiving assistance to emigrate was that the cabin should be levelled. However, in and around the small towns and villages of south County Wicklow, many of the emigrant occupied houses were of sufficient quality to have endured as residences into the 21st century.



Plate 21: Pre-famine cottage at Tomnafinnogue (photo Kevin Lee)

Illustrated above is a house located at Tomnafinnogue, near Tinahely, which was occupied by Philip Murphy and his wife Bidy (nee Mulhall). The Murphys held the house and 2.5 acres from head tenant Morton. They left for Canada in 1847 with their six children aged between sixteen and nine months. In Canada they travelled 600 miles to Grey County where they were allocated a farm of 100 acres close to the village of Dundalk. Five generations later, the Murphy family still occupy this farm in Ontario.

7.5.2 Lists of Land Occupiers Ref. Coollattin Papers Mss. 3996/99

For Canadians researching their Coollattin roots, or indeed for anyone researching their south Wicklow roots, this well used resource provides a veritable mine of information. These wonderful census substitutes are often erroneously referred to as '*Rental Books*'. These estate surveys were carried out in 1827, 1839, 1848, 1850 and 1868 and list all of the occupiers of land on the estate. The first of these surveys carried was out in 1827 in response to what were famine conditions on the estate. Head tenants were asked to comment on the extent of '*pauperism*' in their areas. The townlands of Ballybeg and Ballycumber were leased to the Symes family. Here it was stated that '*the cases of extreme pauperism are not numerous and for the most part are those who have obtained settlements by the admission of occupying tenants and without the knowledge of the lessee*'.

The information given in the surveys includes the name of the head of the house, his profession, the age of his wife, the number of male children and the number of female children. Most interesting is a column bearing the heading '*Remarks*'. It is here that one finds marvellous nuggets of information. In the case of John Donoghoe from the townland of Ballyrahan we are told that, in 1827, he was aged 84 and had been employed for 54 years as a wood ranger for Earl Fitzwilliam. In describing a row of cottages on Coollattin Road in Carnew it was stated that, in 1868, '*these houses are clean outside but dirty inside*'.

7.5.3 1842 Estate Maps Ref. Coollattin Papers Mss. 22,019 – 22,022

The firm of Hodges & Smith, Merrion Square, Dublin was commissioned to prepare these maps of the estate. The maps were based on the 6 inches to one-mile maps of 1839. However, the scale was increased to 12 inches to one mile. These magnificent maps are contained in five leather bound volumes, each measuring 34 inches by 22 inches. The total cost of their production was £882 which in modern currency would equate to a sum in the region of £80,000. On the maps, which are veritable works of art, holdings are coloured in beautiful watercolour, pastel shades. The footprint of houses and all outbuildings are shown in a delicate shade of cerise pink.

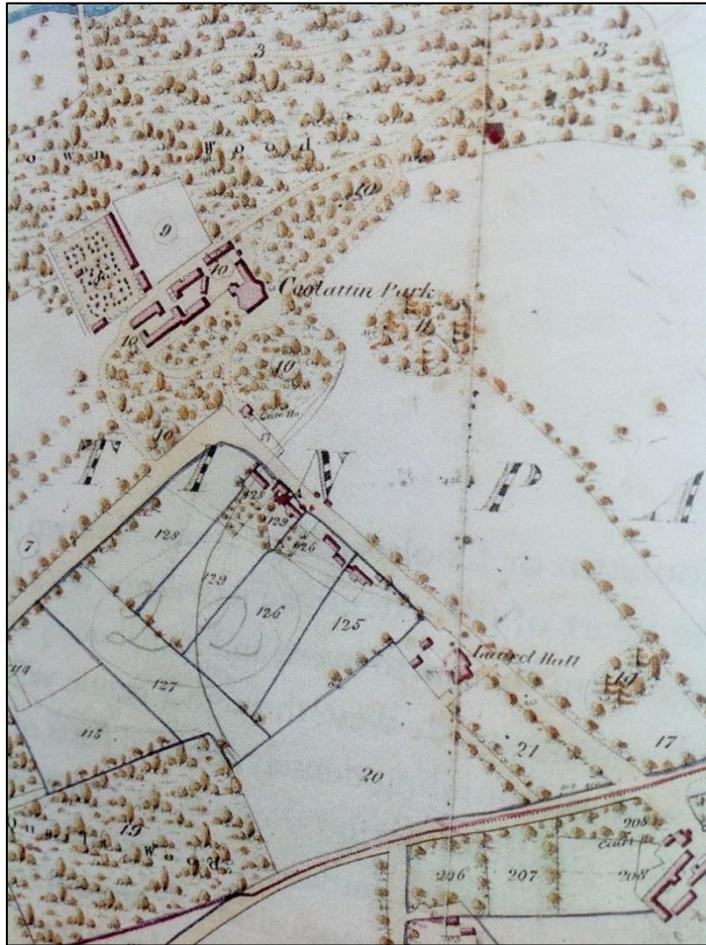


Plate 22: Coollattin Park in 1842 (image courtesy NLI)

From the extract showing Coollattin House and Park in 1842 one gets a clear indication of changes which took place during both the famine years and the subsequent years of the 19th century. The families who occupied the houses and gardens to the south of the big house were either moved to another part of the estate or assisted in emigrating to Canada. These workers houses stood on ground now occupied by the 18th fairway at Coollattin Golf Club. Likewise, the Gate House and the sub agents house, Laurel Hall, were demolished. The walled garden, alongside the house, was demolished and replaced with another one at a distance from the house. All these changes were aimed at facilitating the development and plantation of Coollattin’s *‘Pleasure Ground’*.

7.5.4 Graveyard Memorials:

Since 2013 there has been a rapid increase in organised homecomings of the south Wicklow diaspora. The completeness of the Coollattin records, combined with the online Catholic church records, allow a very complete picture of where and how their ancestors lived. A planned restoration

and mapping of headstones in old burial grounds such as Mullinacuff (old), would complete the circle of knowledge. In the case of some of the burial grounds in south Wicklow the returning descendants of 19th century emigrants can only view from afar final resting places that have been reclaimed by nature. The restoration of these graveyards and the transcription of information from the gravestones provide advantages over written church records. Firstly, they go back much further in time. For example, in Mullinacuff there is one grave slab dated 1702. Secondly, the headstone inscriptions, in most instances, provide links between the generations in any given family. Below are two examples of families that have traced their roots back to the area and have been able to visit the ancestral homes and even gravestone of their ancestors. Graveyards can also provide a spin off for local tourism but only if accessible and documented.

7.6 Case Study: The O’Toole family from Ballyshonog

Patrick O’Toole (Pat Toole), was killed by a falling tree in Ireland and that his widowed spouse, Margaret O’Toole (nee Doyle), was then left to immigrate to Canada on her own with her 5 children, Mary, Thomas, Peter, James and Patrick. All of the children had been baptised in the old church in Whitefield and survived the journey.

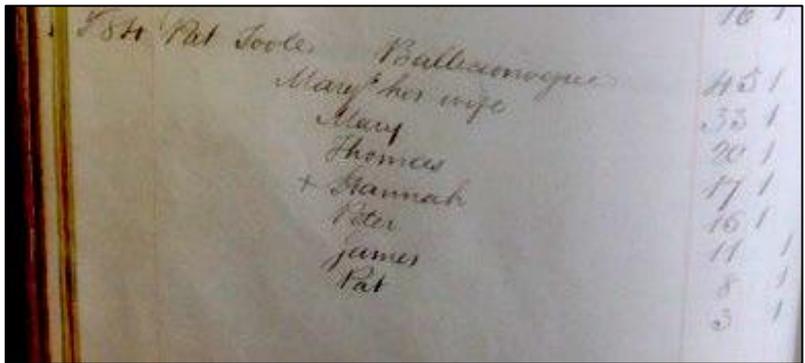


Plate 23: Extract from Fitzwilliam Estate Papers.

The Toole family co-leased land in the townland of Ballyshonog (Ballicionogue in the Fitzwilliam Estate Papers), just outside of Tinahely on the road to Shillelagh (R749). They held a cabin and about 8 ½ acres of land sub-leased from the Bates family that lived in Ballyshonog House. Times were tough in the area and it seemed that the twice yearly rent of 4 pounds 10 shillings was more increasingly being paid in labour. When the Earl Fitzwilliam offered assisted passage to Canada the family signed up.

The family sailed on a famine ship called the ‘Jessie’ which set sail from New Ross Co. Wexford on

17th May 1848 and arrived in Quebec Canada (via Grosse Isle) on the 23rd June 1848 – taking just over 5 weeks.

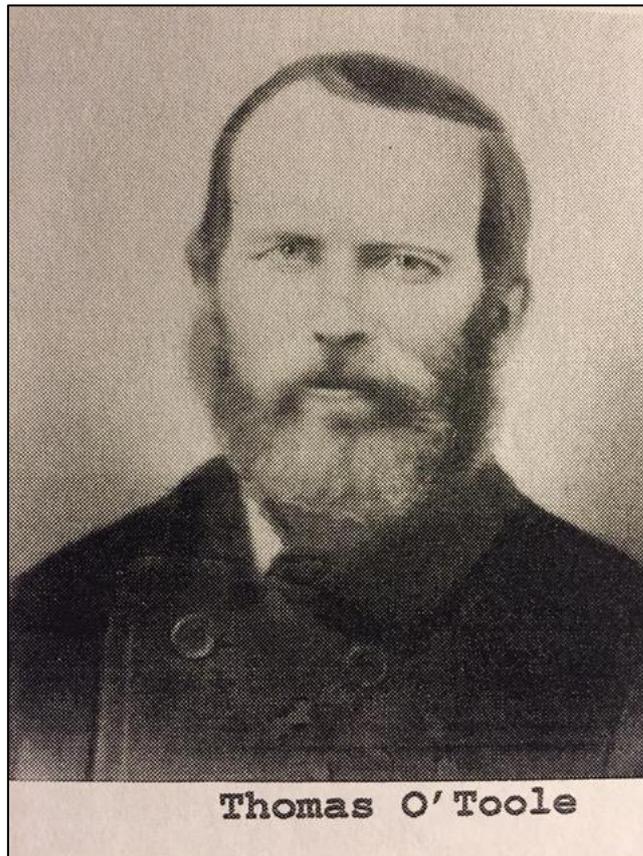


Plate 24: Thomas O'Toole who was a member of the family that emigrated from Tinahely in the spring of 1848

Margaret and her family travelled to Tecumseth Township near the hamlet of Colgan (Northwest of Toronto) for a number of years and later settled in Wellesley Township, Simcoe County, Ontario (West of Kitchener) where she moved in with her daughter Mary. She made a living as a housekeeper and maidservant. The 1871 census recorded her living alone in Macton, Peel Township, Wellington County, near her son Peter and his family. Margaret died on the 8th of February 1877 and was buried at St. Joseph's Cemetery, Macton, Peel Township, Wellington County, Ontario, Canada. Her gravestone states she was 70 years old. This would make her 41 years old in 1848.

Mary was allegedly born on 12 September 1832. She met and Married Thomas Farrell around 1852 and later moved to Wellesley Township, Simcoe County, Ontario. They raised a family of five in a log house in Wellesley Township, Waterloo County, Ontario, having received a crown grant for East

½ of Lot 8, Concession 12, Wellesley West Side 1853.03.03. She died shortly after having her youngest child on 10 December 1863. She is buried at St. Joseph's Cemetery, Macton, Ontario with her mother, Margaret, and her daughter, Elizabeth, who died young (2 years old).

Most of the family moved to Pembina County, Dakota Territory in 1880 where his son Patrick had secured 160 acres for him. He lived and farmed on his land until his death on 15 September 1902. He was buried at St. Patrick's Cemetery in Crystal, Pembina County, North Dakota.

Over the past decade many descendants of this O'Toole family have returned to visit their south Wicklow homeland. The family are planning a family reunion which will take place in Tinahely on the 175th anniversary of the departure of the family for Canada in the spring of 1848.



Plate 25: Pat Sanagan and her daughter Mary from Southampton, Ontario, are descendants of the O'Tooles of Ballyshonog. They are pictured here during a moment of reflection in Whitefield graveyard.

We propose to develop a graveyard trail comprising Preban, Mullinacuff, Whitefield and Ballymaghroe whereby you can see archaeology from Neolithic times, through the early medieval and right up to the late 1700s illustrated by the archaeological remains in our graveyards. As Christiaan Corlett has stated these sites are open air art galleries and museums and are vulnerable to climate change and nature (Corlett, 2015). If we do not preserve these sites now, they will not be accessible for future generations and the script on the headstones which is slowly being eroded by weathering will be lost forever.

8 Recommendations

Whitefield Church and graveyard are important historic landmarks which enable us to understand our history and culture. This conservation plan will enable a clear path to be developed to recover the site from years of neglect and will clearly illustrate the potential history and archaeology which lies dormant in our graveyards.

There is the potential from a genealogical perspective for people worldwide who trace their ancestors to Whitefield to actually visit the grave of their family. This part of Wicklow contains the ancestors of the thousands that left Ireland as part of the Fitzwilliam Estate clearances between 1847 and 1856. Once the project is complete along with preserving such important archaeological sites, we will create an online record where emigrants can search for their family graves.

Furthermore, there is an opportunity for genealogical tourism through our partnership with The Coollattin Canadian Connection initiative based in Carnew. It was officially launched in 2016³. The aim was to reunite descendants of the famine emigrants with their Wicklow roots. Following intensive promotional campaigns in Ontario, many of our diaspora have found a pathway back to their ancestral homeland. A focal point for the visit of many of the returning Americans and Canadians are the ancient burial grounds which are dotted throughout south County Wicklow. To date over 80 participants have visited the Shillelagh region and graveyards which is a clear testament to the potential of diaspora tourism. Indeed one such family the descendants of the O'Tooles from Ballyshonog who are now living in Ontario, are planning a family reunion in Tinahely in 2023 for the 175th anniversary.

Graveyards such as at Whitefield can provide a spin off for local tourism and increase an awareness for our heritage but only if accessible and documented. Furthermore this is an important archaeological site and the ruins of this church is one of the few penal era church sites whose footprint is still visible.

It is recommended that a phased plan of action is introduced with each section forming a discrete element which can be undertaken when funding is available. The recommendations made here follow government-issued advice from the following documents;

³ Kevin Lee has written the historical background for this report.

- 'Guidance for the Care, conservation and Recording of Historic Graveyards' issued by The Heritage Council (2011)
- 'Architectural Heritage Protection – Guidelines for Planning Authorities' issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht (2011).

As the graveyard is a recorded archaeological monument it is protected under the National Monuments Acts (1930-2014). All phases of this plan will therefore require the consent of the National Monuments Service of the Department of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht. This plan must be submitted to the National Monuments Service along with a Method Statement for Works and all works should be monitored under licence by a suitably qualified archaeologist.

The proposed works will have an impact upon bats. Bats and their roosts are protected by Irish and EU law, since all species have declined, and some species are threatened and endangered. There was no bat survey carried out as part of this phase of works. All future works must be carried out under the guidance of an ecologist and bat surveys may be required prior to rebuilding of the wall and the felling of any trees.

Before any works as outlined below commence it is crucial that a site meeting takes place and includes the following people so that a clear path forward can be agreed taking into account the proposals and appropriate mitigation of each discipline:

- Arborist
- Archaeologist
- Chartered Engineer and Historic Buildings Consultant
- Heritage Officer
- Contractor/Mason
- Tree Surgeon
- Ecologist

8.1 Proposed Works 2022 based on successful CMF application.

- Consultation with ecologist in relation to proposed mitigation for bats in order to remove trees and in advance of rebuilding of the boundary wall.
- Carry out any necessary bat surveys as specified by the ecologist.
- Spray vegetation on all parts of the west wall with an approved biocide or trimmed as appropriate and eco-plugs inserted in stumps. This work to be specified by the ecologist.
- Follow recommendations for tree felling as outlined in Tree Survey Report and under

guidance of ecologist.

- Repair western boundary wall. Removal of vegetation, shrubs, and nearby trees subject to appropriate ecological and arborist requirements. Repairs/necessary re-building should then be carried out- as per recommendations in attached report completed by chartered engineer and historic buildings consultant (Appendix 3).
- Iron gate should be removed and repaired by traditional methods by a blacksmith experienced in conservation as per recommendations in attached report completed by chartered engineer and historic buildings consultant (Appendix 3).
- The damaged section of the granite post should be cut away and replaced by a stone graft and the gate should be re-erected as per recommendations in attached report completed by chartered engineer and historic buildings consultant (Appendix 3).
- Consideration given to stabilising leaning markers where this might be considered appropriate especially on the case of the William Higgins headstone, where a slight tilt will ensure that the headstone is protected from the elements (Appendix 3).
- As per recommendations in Botany Report it may be necessary to control gorse but if this is done sensitively no negative effects will accrue. Gorse in large quantities can be invasive but there is still important value in maintaining some of it for biodiversity reasons (Appendix 1).
- To properly manage the grassland as a biodiversity-rich resource, it should not be cut between March and September to allow the species within it to flower and seed. It is recommended that the sward between stones and tombs is left intact. The use of herbicides is not recommended.
- It is recommended that a lichen expert be asked to examine the head and tombstones to assess not only their ages but also the diversity of lichens that they carry.
- Topographical survey to create graveyard plan including church location, headstones and pathways.
- Geophysical survey of site to define the footprint of the church and any pathways that may be present at the site for interpretation panel and to identify if the paths if present are suitable for reinstatement if appropriate.

8.2 Proposed Works 2023 based on successful CMF application

- Graphic designer to create panel for graveyard based on results of geophysical survey and reconstruct what the site may have looked like.
- Following results of the geophysical survey it may be appropriate to re-instate pathways if they are present.

- Graphic designer to create interactive booklet containing details of headstones and historical background of site which will be showcased as part of Heritage Week 2023.
- Podcast for Heritage Week 2023 collaboration with Fin Dwyer Irish History Podcast.
- Display all information on Our Wicklow Heritage website.

One of the most important aspects of graveyard conservation is management. A maintenance plan for the upkeep and management of the graveyard needs to be drawn up with Wicklow County Council to ensure that it is maintained in good order and preserved for future generations. The Botany Report has highlighted the need to properly manage the grassland as a biodiversity-rich resource, it should not be cut between March and September to allow the species within it to flower and seed. In order to manage the hedgerows an appropriate maintenance programme which would involve occasional pruning, removal of unstable trees and local repair should be implemented as part of the maintenance plan for the graveyard.

9 Working within a Historic Graveyard – Do’s and Don’ts

When undertaking work within a historic graveyard there are a number of procedures which should be followed. First it is important to determine the level of work to be carried out. In general maintenance work can be undertaken with lawnmowers or strimmers to keep down high grass growth. However beyond this level of work consent from the National Monuments Service will be required. The Heritage Council has published an advice booklet entitled ‘Guidance for the Care, Conservation and Recording of Historic Graveyards’, which can be downloaded at [Publications & Reports - Heritage Council](#). It is recommended that all persons working with historic graveyards download a copy of this document.

Do’s	Don’t
Contact Wicklow County council or the National Monuments Service for advice before you commence works.	Don’t remove any vegetation from graveyard walls without professional advice. Doing so may affect the structural integrity of the remaining walls and also have ecological implications in terms of birds and bats.
To properly manage the grassland as a biodiversity-rich resource, it should not be cut between March and September to allow the species within	Don’t bring any mechanical excavators or dumpers within the confines of a historic graveyard without professional advice. These machines cause damage to the historic

it to flower and seed.	character of the site.
Check who owns the historic graveyard; sites may be in private or local authority ownership- Mullinacuff is in the ownership of Wicklow County Council.	Don't excavate into the ground for any reason in a historic graveyard.
	Don't cut back hedges within the nesting bird season which runs from 1st March to 31st August. Doing so is illegal under the Wildlife Act.
	Don't remove small stones from the graveyard surface. The stones are burial markers or footstones which indicate the presence of historic graves.
	Don't use weedkiller in graveyards. Weedkiller is not recommended due to the effects it has on the flora, fauna and architecture of the historic graveyard.
	Don't attempt to uncover gravestones; doing so constitutes archaeological excavation and should never be attempted without professional advice. It may also cause damage to stones.
Consult an ecologist and ensure that the works including vegetation removal from ruins, tree felling will not impact upon bats which are strictly protected under both Domestic and European Legislation.	

Work which can be undertaken without Ministerial Consent:

- Lawnmowing

- Strimming
- Weeding

Work which requires Ministerial Consent:

- Removal of vegetation from church ruins and boundary walls
- Installation of new pathways
- Installation of signage
- Excavation for any reason (i.e., drainage, signage, fencing etc.)

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