

Roundwood & District

History & Folklore Journal

No. 7

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(Continued inside back cover)

Roundwood and District Historical and Folklore Society

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From The Chair

It is with pleasure I introduce you to our seventh Historical and Folklore Journal, and hope you will enjoy reading the articles, many of which have been written by members of the Society.

We had a busy year - in May we held a Seminar entitled 'WICKLOW AT WORK' which proved to be a great success, with many participants telling of how work was done in 'times past' and some excellent demonstrations of craft work still being carried out in Wicklow. Our congratulations and thanks to all who took part in the Seminar.

Members of the Society also visited areas of great local historical interest and we also had an enjoyable trip to the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

A special word of thanks must go to our Patrons, without whose support and interest we would not be able to publish these articles and stories which might otherwise be lost for ever. Many thanks to all the shopkeepers who sell the Journal for us.

Finally, just to let you know that the Roundwood Historical and Folklore Society meets on the last Monday of each month at 8.30 p.m. in the Old School in Roundwood and new members are always welcome.

Sean Kavanagh
December 1995

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A special thanks to Helen Dwan for her typing

*And I don't doubt, before the journey's done
You mean to while the time in tales and fun.
Indeed, there's little pleasure for your bones
Riding along and all as dumb as stones.*

Chaucer - Canterbury Tales

The Forge, the Blacksmith and the Ring of the Anvil

For centuries the Ring of the Blacksmith's anvil resounded throughout every townland and Parish in the Country, now it is but a fading memory inexorably passing on to folklore.

For those who can still remember the sharp smell of the 'wetted' coals, the stench of the burning hoof and the sooted face of the leather aproned blacksmith maybe this article will recall fond and nostalgic memories - and for those who are too young I hope it may paint a picture of a time when the horse, the Blacksmith and a way of life were closely related and dependant on each other.

The forge was a focal point in most townlands and the Blacksmith due to his contact with most of the people of the area was usually something of a character, a middleman and a confessor. The forge was a workshop, a manufacturing plant and an assembly line for making and fixing most of the metal utensils and tools used in day to day rural life; from a pair of tongs to a metal couler. Here you got your horse, pony, mule, donkey or jinnet shod. A new set of shoes were measured, made and fitted or maybe a set of 'slippers (used or secondhand shoes) would be the order. Either way, mule and man went away steppin' high and full of whatever local gossip was worth retelling (after it was changed a bit to add a little spice).

The forges played a major part in the social and political history of a townland. Usually they were built on a 'crossing' (near a cross-roads or junction) with a stream or river near the yard to cool the iron. Forge water was supposed to cure warts so maybe we could use a bottle or two of it in these days. The forge in Moneystown took it's water from St. Luan's well which had it's own cure until a traveller washed a horse's fetlock in it and brought bad luck down; the well moved and sprung up many yards from it's original source (and that's Gospel).

Being sited on a crossing was intentional of course, because it increased the catchment area for business and back then as now it was vital for the Blacksmith to have a goodly list of customers. So competition between forges was tough and in those days it was the charisma as well as the skill of the smith which won him a living.

From an essay written in an old school book (Roundwood N.S.) c. 1930 5 forges are named: Peter D'Arcy, John D'Arcy, Patrick Brennan, John Ferguson and Denis McCoy. The forge at home in Moneystown is about 270 years old and was one of the last working forges in the Parish; it closed in 1958 after fighting a losing battle against progress and now only some of the walls remain. The forge on the Fairgreen in Roundwood was owned by my grandfather's brother Jack D'Arcy but it closed a short while before Moneystown. There was another forge between Sean Kavanagh's pub and Doyle's garage, one beside John Brady's on the Annamoe road and yet another on the back road towards the present graveyard. John Ferguson had his forge in

Mullinaveigue and Hawkin's forge was in Annamoe beside where Mick Hawkins now lives.

So in the Parish of Roundwood the forges equalled the pubs in numbers and since smithing was thirsty work you can bet that the smiths kept them open late on many a night, whether they were 'bonified' or not. My own Grandfather had a healthy thirst and he lived to be 97 and my father, who was a Blacksmith in his younger days, lived to be 84. Forges were not healthy workplaces by today's standards what with coal dust and sulphur from the fires being severe on their lungs but I suppose black porter was a good tonic. Blacksmithing was a tradition in our family for many generations but the industrial revolution and the technology of the 20th century ended that way of life for ever.

The forge was a gathering place for the locality whether you were bring a horse to get shod or just passing the time. There was always a crowd around even late into the night. It was in many ways a kind of social club where lads would gather in the evenings to play cards, pitch 'n toss or just talk. I can still remember 20 or 30 young fellas gathered around the corner in Moneystown playing football, hurling or just passing the long Summer evenings and short Winter nights. In early days it would have been a place for passing on information, there wasn't many motors then but a message left in the forge was sure to find it's destination.

There seemed to be more time too. It could take nearly half a day to get a job done at the forge but it may not have been that the smith was busy, time was set aside for it and that was the pace of life; and outing for a chat and see what was going on. I can still picture grown men sitting around the yard spinning yarns and chewing tobacco, nowadays we would say they were wasting time but the truth of it was they were actually being sociable.

The decline of the forge was paralleled with the demise of the small social communities in rural townlands. At that time Moneystown had 3 shops, a forge, a Post Office, and even a butcher's shop. They are all gone. Even the phone box which was a late invention was taken away. The desolation of small rural communities all over the country suffered the same fate from progress. In a few decades what was a thriving community with a strong sense of it's own identity became a desolate and lonely place.

Many factors influenced this quick decline and, I suppose, the most devastating on the forge was the tractor, which replaced the horse, and the welder, which made obsolete the skills of the Blacksmith's trade. Many other modern devices ousted the forge from it's service to the Community and with the forge went the Blacksmith. Not many now would recognise the smell of a burning hoof as the smith slapped on a red hot iron to get a snug fit before tacking it home; if you do and you shed a tear then it's a fond farewell to a trade which none of us will ever witness again.

The tools of the trade, by modern standards, were quite simple. With fire, iron bellows and hammer the Blacksmith could make things of lasting, awesome and practical beauty. It was not the tool but the skill in the smith's hands and his feel for iron which turned out the endless objects to be used from the scullery to the headland.

The Blacksmith made most of his own tools, from paring knife to duck-billed tongs and with these he stamped his own style on the endless everyday jobs he turned out from the forge. There's not a farm or country house that still does not have a working piece of his invention whether it be a gate hinge, a lock or a bit of an oddity.

The bellows itself was a monster of a windblower measuring 8 foot long and with a 6 foot handle. As a young lad I can remember swinging out of it and getting a quick dispatch for 'messaging' with such a fearsome machine. Another mighty dinosaur was the shoeing stone. This was a massive round flat stone with a large hole in the middle used for shoeing drey wheels. The timber frame of the wheel was laid on the stone with the centre hub dropping into the hole, then the smith would heat the iron band to almost a red heat inside the forge and quickly carry it out and put it on the timber rim. As the iron burned to a tight fit on the wood, water would be doused on it causing the metal to contract and grip like a vice.

Apart from making his own tools he had to serve his time from an apprentice to a journeyman until eventually he would become a Master Blacksmith. This could take up to 10 years and only then could he think about getting a forge of his own. (no FAS courses then it seems). My father learned his trade from his father and so it went back for generations. About 25 years ago the then Bord Na gCapall wrote asking if my father would be willing to take on an apprentice - I don't think they realised they were 30 years too late - the horse had bolted long ago. Now no one can train a Blacksmith, the skills are gone and the tools have changed. Now it's a farrier who shoes the horses and an engineer who makes the gate hinges. Modern men don't have ten years to get a feel for the iron or learn the skills of a trade.

Many smiths passed through Moneystown in my memory, from Ned Brackett who came from Waterford to John Martin from Kildare, but the most memorable was Tom Kent a Wexford man. Tom was a horse of a man, big, black as coal and gentle as a giant. He was soft spoken and with a strength of will and body that could subdue the fiercest of hunters or draughts. Tom could make things, he even made me toys.

Every Friday went to work in Bartons of Annamoe. This was a contract which the forge had with the Estate; because there were too many horses to take to the forge, the forge went to the Bartons. My father, as a young man, went to work there too and the Steward of the time, Mr. Kelly, told him (I quote) "Young D'Arcy, if you can call yourself a man, you'll be the ninety second man I'll pay this Friday." Think about that. The I.D.A. find it difficult to raise half that number of jobs on a million pound budget.

The Estates or large houses played an important part in the economy of the Parish and there were many of them in the area: Luggala, Bartons, Castlekevin, Roundwood Park (Sean T's) etc. They employed a lot of men, purchased from local traders and kept a lot of families. Times have indeed changed. It is an interesting aside that this same high employment was not enjoyed to the same extent by other parts of the country due mainly to the high density of Estates, large and small, surrounding the Capital or within the Pale. But whether tenant or landlord the Blacksmith still did his stuff and shod the horses. In fact a slight controversy occurred

when John Millington Synge was on holidays over in Tomriland and his family were staying in Castlekevin during the boycott times on the Frizzell Estate. Apparently J.Ms. pony was sent down to the forge to get shod but my grandfather wouldn't do it. After some negotiating they agreed between them that if a third party brought the pony to the forge it would get shod and nobody would therefore be breaking faith. Synge was a frequent visitor to the forge afterwards and it seems they became friendly because he (Synge) wrote of it afterwards.

My father was the last of our line to be a Blacksmith until he gave up the forge and went to farming. There is still a sign hanging on the shed wall in Moneystown which reads: "No sows kept overnight". If you can interpret that then your roots are definitely in the mountains.

There's an old Moneystown Ballad which makes reference to my grandfather (among many others) as "Young D'Arcy the Knight of the Anvil". Well the Black Knights have passed on and like the cornrake the Ring of the Anvil will never sound again on the corner in Moneystown.

Peter D'Arcy

Freemans Journal 24/3/1819

In consequence of numerous robberies and other outrages which had of been late committed in the area of Roundwood, The inhabitants of the united Parishes of Derrylossary and Glendalough held a meeting on the 1st February at which an association was formed for the purpose of preserving the peace within the Parish. By instituting nightly patrols composed of reputable landholders of the neighbourhood under the direction of the Majistrates and are assisted by the Constables. There was a considerable subscription entered into for the purpose of obtaining private information and for discharging the costs of any prosecutions which might be needed for the carrying into effect the intentions of the association. Measures are also taken for providing the patrols with arms and the Parish was divided into stations with a view towards rendering more easy the sending out of patrols in different directions. The managing committee meet at Roundwood every 2nd Monday and they would take into consideration the proceedings and reports of the several patrols of the preceding fortnight, appoint patrols for the ensuing fortnight, receive private information, all information as to the appearance of suspicious persons in the neighbourhood and other matters affecting the preservation of the public peace. Two patrols are to be sent out and to be capable of acting without the presence of a sworn constable who is to report the different occurrences of every night. It was also resolved that all non resident vagrants are to be sent to the Parish boundaries and if they return they are to be prosecuted. It was also resolved that a Register be set up for a all licensed gun holders in the Parish and all guns in the association.

A Grocer In Years Past

There were four shops in our area, my fathers, Fitzgeralds, about a half a mile down the road opposite the hall, and further down the road my aunt, a sister of my father and lastly in Trooperstown Mrs McHugh. I will give you a few examples of prices in that time: in 1934 a loaf, a pound of bacon and a pound of sugar cost 10p; in 1933 a pound of steak would have cost 6p; in 1928 6 lb. of bacon, a pound of onions and 2 lb. of jam cost 44p; in 1922 a half pound of marg, a pound of bacon and a pound of sugar would have cost 10.5p. In 1931 a gallon of oil would have set you back 6p, which costs 98p in the present day.

My father travelled to Dublin on the St. Kevin's Bus. He would cycle to Roundwood and put his bicycle on the bus. He would then travel around Dublin on the Bicycle ordering his groceries and other things from all the Wholesalers. This would then be collected by lorry, sometimes Captain Thunders of Ashford or Masons of Roundwood who also had a lorry for hire.

My father sold everything from a needle to an anchor as well as the usual groceries, milk stuffs, bicycle parts, machine oil, lamp oil and leather. He also sold picks, forks, animal medicines such as Curox, Coffox, Red Drenches and all disinfectants, though some farmers made up their own drenches with brown sugar, treacle, ginger and sulphur.

I remember when I was very small and too young to serve in the shop the 10 am Sunday Mass mornings when the shop would be very busy. The people walked down the mass path from Trooperstown or came on their bikes and horse and traps. The men used to tie the horses to the Chapel tree. I particularly remember when my sister and I used to sit looking out the window and one of us would count the cigarettes and the other would count the pipes. How innocent!

We used to get sides of bacon delivered to the shop which were called the 'long clear', these were without the head and ham and were boneless of course. This cost so much a pound and you had to sell some of it below cost. This meant you had to be very careful cutting it as you could lose money on it. Needless to say it was a long time before I was allowed near it. My father cut the rashers himself as we had no bacon slicer at that time. He would cut them with a knife and every rasher would be exactly the same. He had it down to a fine art, mind you, the rashers were not as thinly cut as they are now.

People killed their own pigs so as to have bacon for their own use. My father used to sell coarse salt for those who cured their own pigs. They used to buy oaten meal and boil it in a pot with pig's blood to make puddings. A lot of people kept a couple of pigs, not that you would make a whole lot of money on them but it was a way of getting all your money together. I remember my father telling a story about a man who decided to keep an account in a book of what the pigs actually cost him and how much he would make out of them. So he kept an account of everything from the pig rings to the amount of food that they ate but didn't one of the pigs die. So at the

end of it all someone asked him how did he fair out and he said that the dead pig had paid him the best as it had eaten the least amount.

A lot of things came loose and had to be weighed up such as tea, sugar, butter and dripping which came in a zinc bucket which people put their names on and they would buy the bucket when it had been emptied. The loose tea was known as 'your own tea' and we had our own bags made with an ornamental teapot on the front which said, 'C. Timmons the house for tea'. Sometimes people preferred this tea to the packets and they would ask for a pound of 'your own tea'

My father sold leather which was called a 'bend of leather'. It would be on a roll similar to linoleum. He would roll it out on the counter and I would sit on it to keep it flat on the counter. We then would cut it into squares, small for women's shoes and large for the men's. These were sold by weight. He also sold what was called kip leather. This was used for repairing the uppers of boots and shoes. It was also used for repairing bicycle tyres during the War when tyres could not be got. A strip of leather would be wrapped around the tyre and the bicycle would go bumpy bump along the road and it would not last long on the bad roads.

I remember when the Ration books came out my father had a big box of them. He took on the job of cutting out the coupons although I think people were supposed to do it themselves. My sister and I used to have a little round nosed scissors each for cutting the coupons out with. We used to hate to see him coming because the pains in your fingers after cutting out the coupons was terrible.

We had commercial travellers who called to the shop or as we used to call them Travellers. They were always dressed spick and span in lovely suits with gold watches. In that time country people only wore their suits to Mass so it was unusual to see people with their suits on during the week. They were always very mannerly and nice as they were, I suppose, trying to sell their wares. One of them came into the shop one time while there was a man from the area, a bit of a character, standing in the shop and the traveller said to my sister "Good day, Miss Timmons and how are you?" So when the traveller had done his business and left the man said to my sister "Well, I never knew how to address you before" and every time he came into the shop after he always tipped his cap and said "Good Day, Miss Timmons and how are you?"

Then we had what we call Travellers nowadays but what were called tinkers then. They would call to my father looking for buckets to mend, one tinker in particular used to make them for him. My father would give him an order for a few and he would go up the road and make them. He had an anvil that he would drive into the ground and he would make the buckets on this. I remember a woman telling me a story about her mother who had a leaking bucket and was wishing that the tinkers would come around so she could get it mended. When one did call she gave him the bucket and some bread and potatoes as well which was the custom at the time. He came back to her with the bucket some time later and he told her not to put any thing into it for a couple of hours. When she did put some water in it everything was fine for a while until the water started to come out everywhere around the bottom of the

bucket. Seemingly he had put a new bottom on it but had cut it too small so the fold on it did not go up enough around the sides of the bucket. So he had rubbed the cooked potatoes into the seam so that the mending lasted until the potatoes got soft in the water.

We also had tramps who used to call. I remember one, Hairy Jack was his name, who only visited certain houses. As far as I can remember he only ever came into the shop, not into the house. He would visit different houses every day and sit outside with a cup of tea and a sandwich. He would say to my father "Have you any fag ends, Boss, this week?", fag ends being cuts off the bacon. My father would put them in a bag for him. He used to buy an ounce of twist tobacco which was on a roll at that time like a flat rope. My father used to cut it with a knife which I still have at home. The tobacco would be weighed and my father, as with the bacon, would have it off to a tee, but if someone else had been weighing it they might have to cut an extra bit to make up the weight and this was called a 'jockey'. Hairy Jack used to say to my father "I see you have a jockey on it" letting him know he hadn't cut it right. The same man, when he was walking along the road, used to throw his arms up in the air. People used to say, and innocent as we were we used to believe it, that he was in jail one time and bound up in chains and that he still thought the chains were still on his arms.

There was no such thing as white bread then, coarse brown bread was all you could get. Sometimes when my father would go to Dublin he would manage to get a loaf or two of it. I always remembered the white bread sitting on the table and thinking it was a beautiful sight almost like cotton wool. The bread that was delivered to us was brought on a horse drawn bread van which came into the station at Rathdrum and was delivered from there. Sometimes when I would be coming home from school I would see the bread van at Fitzgerald's shop and I used to get a lift home on it. I thought I was up on the moon sitting up on the van. There was a little place for your feet but mine could never reach it.

In those days we had a half day which was compulsory and the rule was strictly adhered to. If anyone came to the shop and was in dire need my father would sometimes open the shop, go in himself, and bring out whatever it was that they needed. There was a question of being summoned if you were caught open on the half day. The Guards used to have to call on occasions to check on lists of people with ration books. I remember Guard McCarthy, who was about six foot four, coming from Ashford and the perspiration would be running down his face as cycling from Ashford to Moneystown meant that you had to walk most of the way. He used to say "I'm going to open this tunic before I die with the heat" and I thought by the way he said it he wasn't supposed to open it and he would always close it before going out. The half day closing was always at 1 PM and my father had a cardboard clock which had roman numerals with just 2 hands and nothing else. On the top it read 'we close today at' and you put the hands to whatever time you would close. My father put another card on the bottom saying 'no tick' so it would read 'Closed today at 1 PM and no tick'!

My father used to buy chickens, rabbits and eggs and I remember one man who used to come up the field with a rabbit to sell and he would come into the shop, throw it on the counter, and say "Kit, the last one in the country". There was another man called Harry who used to come around on a bicycle and he would buy rabbit skins which he used to hang on the handlebars. He disappeared off the scene for a long time but came back to the shop after a long absence. He came in and shook hands with my father and told him he had done well and that he had a van on the road and that he also had a wife. "I got married" he said "and I will bring the wife into you now and introduce her, but would you do me a favour, Kit, and don't tell her I used to buy rabbit skins". He was a gas character really. We used to have eggs on the counter in a basket and at that time there was no grading. He said to my father one day "If I was to ask you for a half a dozen of black hen's eggs would you be able to give them to me?" My father said he wouldn't have a clue, so Harry says "Well, do mind if I pick them?" so my father said not at all and he rooted through the eggs and picked out the six biggest and best eggs in the basket and said "Kit, they are the back hen eggs, always remember that."

During the War and rationing one man in particular could not understand why, if he had the money, couldn't he have what he wanted. He would look for this and that and my father would tell him they were rationed. One day he looked for lamp oil and my father said that you couldn't get it, there was a War on and it was rationed. In that case he said that you better give me a half pound of candles. But my father says we don't have candles either, there was a War on and they were rationed and he replied "Oh my God! surely they are not fighting the War with candles, are they?"

In 1947 Bread and butter was rationed. C.I.E. used to deliver the butter and we would be waiting on the lorry to see if there was going to be any butter because sometimes there would be none. There was a song out at the time called The Bold Fenian Men that had a line in it that went ' We may have great men but we'll never have better' and we used to sing 'We may have great men but we'll never have butter'!

In the big snow of 1947 we had big problems getting our stuff from Dublin. A lot of people had to go on horse back to Ashford or go and meet the bread car and get bread that way. The snow started on Sunday the 26th January with blizzards and drifting with black frost. My father went on Jimmy Kinsella's Ford V8 green lorry on a Friday and came back on a Saturday and got within 2 miles of home when they got stuck in the snow. A lot of people from around tried to dig them out but to no avail. It took 40 Council workers three or four days to cut through this snow and get them out in the end. The lorry had to be left there and they went back to Ashford and up to Ballyduff and through Annamoe to home. On the same Saturday there was a man who came across the hill to the shop on a white horse for his messages and tied it to the Daisy Paraffin Oil sign. Why I know it was on the same day was because my mother was serving in the shop and she would rarely serve if my father was around as she then used to teach in the school and what with having to rear seven children she was too busy. She got his groceries ready and I filled a pint of oil for him in a bottle

and he loaded the whole lot onto the horse and I watched him going home. Another blizzard came that evening and he lost his life. That was around the 17th or 18th February. After that my father called a meeting in Moneystown Hall to try and get the Council to clear the roads. When they eventually came there was about 40 of them and they worked away and that night yet another blizzard came and they were as badly off as ever.

I remember the time the Rural Electrification came around. The E.S.B. had a big form that they wanted everyone, who wanted to get the light in, to fill out. The more names they had the better chance they had of getting it in the area. They referred to it as 'the light' as that was all they would be getting for their electricity. A lot of people were not in favour of it as it would be a terrible waste of money during the Summer when you wouldn't need any light. The Post Man used to bring the form around to people asking them to fill it in. He went to one particular man, who at the time was up on his roof mending the thatch where there was a hole, and the post man asked him if he was coming down to sign the form or if he was interested in getting the light in. The man replied "What would I be filling that in for? Sure it's the light I'm trying to keep out".

In conclusion I would just like to say that it's hard to believe the major changes that have taken place in the grocery trade since my childhood. Four shops including the Post Office were all doing well at the time and none exist today. With them is gone an easygoing quality of life which sadly we will never see again.

John Timmons

Part 111111 - 111111, Co. Dublin.

1111111111

Bought of **C. TIMMONS,**
GROCERY & PROVISION MERCHANT.
Accounts Paid/rd Monthly.

1928		
Feb 26	Box Canned	4 6
	6 Canned	1 0
Jan 25	Paid on watch	
	To W. Hutton	1 3
Feb 15	Goods	6 6
" 18	Goods	1 6 6
" 22	Goods	4 1 6
April 2	7 1/2 sugar	2 0
	1 1/2 tin	2 8
	1/2 tin	1 4
	2 1/2 tin	9 8
	2 1/2 tin	2 0
		11-8-8
Feb 18	My Cash	1 5 1/2
		1 3
Grand total	to tea, 2 1/2 sugar My cash 6/0	10 11 4

The 1933 Snow - 24th February

I remember it well. We had only been living in Knockraheen for 3 years at that time and our only modes of conveyance were the horse and trap and our bicycles. That morning I cycled to Bray to purchase wool to knit a jumper for myself and material to make a skirt to go with it. When I got off the bicycle in Bray my feet and hands were numb, so intense was the cold that day. After a hot cup of tea I did my shopping and headed for home.

It started to snow when I reached Kilmacanogue. First it was real fine, rather like castor sugar and continued so. By the time I reached home it was several inches deep. It snowed all night, then the wind rose. Next a howling blizzard which continued most of the day leaving drifts of 10 - 12 - 15 ft high and in some places bare patches of ground. It was impossible even to get your breath. Late that evening when the wind had abated somewhat my father and brother had to dig tunnels to get to feed the cows and milk them and to feed the other animals with the aid of storm lanterns. The sow had 16 bonhams and I had to climb a partition between her and the calves to feed her and she would nearly eat me as well. The next day when I was feeding the calves we had thunder and lightning, one flash in particular seemed to envelop the milk buckets and frightened the life out of me. That same flash struck and damaged the extreme top of the Wellington monument in the Phoenix Park in Dublin. There were no snow ploughs in those days, so snow on the roads was level with the hedges. No post or papers reached Roundwood for over a week, till Eddie Heatley rode a horse to Greystones and brought it by horse back.

Mr. John Sally, our neighbour, passed away and was 3 or 4 days at home until Travers Nuttall made a sledge and took the coffin to St. Laurence O'Tooles RC Church in Roundwood, a horse drawing the sledge.

There was still drifts and quite an amount of snow about on 17th March, St. Patrick's Day. The sheep farmers suffered untold losses in this snow.

Annie Taylor (nee Ross)

Freemans Journal 22/9/1781

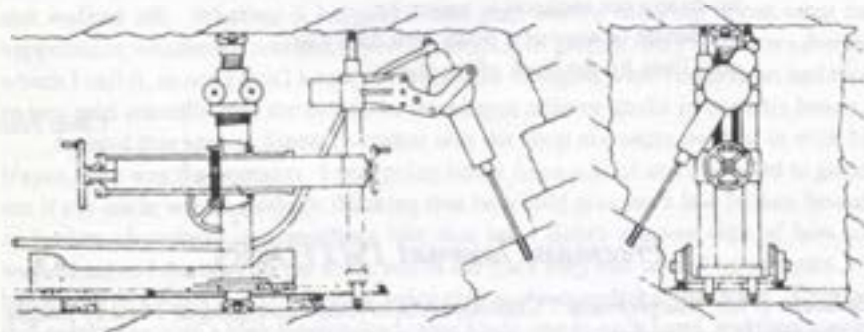
Last week a most daring robbery was committed on Mr. Micl. Nowland, an eminent farmer, of 7 Churches by 7 fellows armed with pistols and long knives who broke in the dairy window, secured the servants under guard, while the rest entered Nowland's apartment and with most horrid threats of immediate death demanded all the money in the house. He with great composure opened his drawers and delivered them 18 guineas and a small bag of silver, about £4, which he assured them was all he had after paying his rents. They seemed satisfied and departed double bolting all the doors. He had fortunately lodged about £200 with a friend about 8 days before.

A Forgotten Drill

In 1865 George Low invented and patented (on his 3rd attempt) a new type of percussion drill. This was tested in the Roundwood tunnel being excavated by the Waterworks and was used successfully throughout its construction. The rotation was produced by means of a spiral or 'twisted' bar which entered the rear end of the piston and operated both the valve and rotation of the piston which appears to be the first time such a system was used. The machine was driven by compressed air and operated a chisel for boring holes. This worked at high speed with a reciprocatory motion was forced to rotate slightly between blows. The rotary motion was necessary to keep the jumper free in the hole and to ensure even wear of the drill bit. During operation of the machine a jet of water under high pressure was continually forced into the hole and assisted by the reciprocatory action of the tool the water kept the hole constantly clear of all loose material.

Another important innovation was the spherical trunnion on which the drill was mounted. It allowed universal movement so that the drill could be pointed in any direction. This was a considerable improvement on previous inventions. Unfortunately this invention was barely heard of outside Dublin and so this important development work on drilling machines was largely neglected and was soon forgotten. It took many years before others were to 'discover' many of the basic engineering principles initiated by George Low.

This article is abridged from Handbook of Mining and Tunnelling Machinery by Barbara Stack, 1982, and is an invaluable source on the history and present use of such machinery



George Low drill. - Patented in 1863. Used in Roundwood Tunnel.

The 1930s February *Vartry*

*The following is a song which was sung in Murphy's hotel by a Mr. Jones.
Sing to the air of Robinson Crusoe.*

A Handsome young man, from the top of Lough Dan
which is neither in Spain nor in Tartary,
met a pretty young maid, as one evening he strayed
by the banks of the sweet little Vartry.

Chorus

Oh! The sweet little Vartry,
Oh! the neat little Vartry,
rushing and gushing
pushing and flushing,
Oh! the sweet little Vartry

Now this handsome young man, from the top of Lough Dan
to love he was soon a martyr.
She bid him bon soir near the great reservoir
so he drowned himself in the Vartry

Now another young man from the top of Lough Dan
who by trade he was known as a Carter, he
for a tumbler of toddy uplifted the body
from out of the sweet little Vartry

If any man t'other side of Lough Dan
his hearts not inclined to barter, he
had better beware of a maid with dark hair
who lives by the bank of the Vartry.

Chris Holt

Freemans Journal 19/11/1785

The house of Mr. Murphy near 7 Churches was invested by a gang of 14 or 15 people, but the family being alarmed by the uncommon barking of a large Newfoundland dog had time to prepare and opening the windows on the 2nd floor they gave the villians so warm a welcome that they departed in great haste leaving some of their blood in the Courtyard.

A Shaky Cure

This is a true story and apart from taking me back to my childhood it reminds me of lots of things and one was where some people thought that they had a cure for Parkinson's Disease. The gentleman in question, I knew him well, he was a neighbour of my mother's. His nephew is still alive and I'm sure he won't mind me remembering what happened. There's lots of people alive too who will remember a Father Cannon Butler who lived in Roundwood. He lived where John Keenan lives now and that was the parochial house at the time.

The time I'm talking about is from the middle to late 30s period and it was also a time when people would watch very carefully that they wouldn't upset, offend or annoy the priest. I remember this time well when it was usual for people when they would come out from a Holy hour, a retreat or after Mass to smoke. Everybody seemed to me in those years to smoke either a pipe or cigarettes, usually a pipe for the elderly gentlemen.

It was also the custom after Mass for this Fr. Butler to leave the church in Roundwood, St. Laurence O'Toole's Church, and go with some of the altar boys and they would carry his bag and go down to the parochial house. This gentleman was lighting up his pipe and he didn't see the priest coming and as the priest went by an awful halo of smoke went across on the priest's face and I'm sure the priest stopped and coughed for a while and then he said, "Now that wasn't very nice to blow that smoke into my face," and the gentleman in question didn't like being told off by the priest in front of all the other people.

As it happened that priest had been engaged in some bit of a land dispute down near Ashford, Munduff - if my memory serves me right, and there was some discomfort with the priest and some parishioners there over this land. The gentleman in question who lit the pipe up reminded the priest of that trial (court case) and Fr. Butler said to him "Now you mind yourself so and mind your health, particularly mind your health" and walked off. Whether it happened that man started thinking about what had happened or whether he was already in the process of getting that Parkinson's disease, which I call it, or not I don't know. Whether his thoughts were because he had more or less said something to the priest, he developed a fierce shake in both his hands.

Around that time at Sinnott's corner was the shop my uncle worked in with Mr. Hayes, who was the manager. I was going home from school and I decided to go and see if my uncle was in, perhaps thinking that he would give me a few broken biscuits or broken chocolates or something like that but I didn't see any sign of him so I walked around the back of the shop, and at the back they had started up two cars, one belonging to my uncle and the other belonging to the manager of the store. They had this gentleman with a high tension lead (plug lead), one in each hand, and they revving up the engines of the cars and the gentleman was receiving, I suppose, between 4,000 and 8,000 volts of electricity up his hands, up into his shoulder, into his head and down along his body. The charge was so great that it had him nearly buckled in two

and he was going to sort of half sit down trying to hold onto the wires, the plug leads of the car, and trying to hold on to his sanity, trying to keep himself from being electrocuted.

Of course we know that he couldn't really be electrocuted with direct current, but I got a terrible fright and I thought they were trying to kill him so I went home very fast and I told my mother that my uncle John Ferguson and Mr. Hayes were trying to kill someone. She thought for a while and she possibly decided that there was seldom smoke without a fire so she would go up to the stores, as she called it, for some messages or other to make sure that she would have a reason to go. She went up on her bicycle from Woodbrook, where Colm Galligan now lives, and she was informed that they were just merely trying to cure this man of the shake in his hands and someone had given them the brilliant idea that if he got shocked with the high tension lead of the car it might bring his system back to reality or back to a curable state. But of course all the shocks in the world didn't cure the gentleman and he was still left with this shake in each hand so they brought him then to a doctor in Bray. I even remember the Doctor's name, he was Dr. Rafferty, or Raifferty as some people would call it, and the only conclusion that doctor could come to was to get Mr. Stacy to carry around a hand ball in each hand and squeeze it tight and that appeared to save the thing.

This story was dictated by Sean Kavanagh

Freeman's Journal 30/5/1789

We hear that extraordinary preparations are in the making to celebrate the Festival of St Kevin annually held in the valley of Glandelough near 7 Churches on the 3rd June at this sequestered place situated in the midst of mountains and for many years, little frequented, except by horse or footmen. The difficulties of approach has been lately been obviated by an excellent carriage road. In expectation of a numerous concourse of strangers this year above 500 tents are already erected forming several regular streets which terminate in a handsome square. Wines with every other accommodation are provided in plenty so that those whose curiosity may excite them to partake of this rural Festival and view some of the most remarkable ruins in the kingdom need no fear of disappointment. The diversions of the day are to consist of horse and foot races, wrestling, football, throwing the bar, with peige and other dancing which will render the exhibition the only series of modern Olympic Games celebrated in any nation now existing in the Universe.

A Letter From The Pacific - 1850

Robert Kennedy Nuttall, 1815 - 1881, was the younger brother of John Freeman Nuttall of Tittour, Newtownmountkennedy. He worked as assistant to his brother-in-law who was a doctor in the penal settlement in Van Dieman's land and also in India. He then trained as a doctor in the College of Surgeons, Dublin and returned to Australia. In 1850 he left Sydney as Ship's doctor on the Orator which was bound for San Francisco and the promise of the gold fields of California.

The following vivid extract is from an unfinished letter written to his family at Tittour. He survived the trip, settled in San Francisco and became a respected obstetrician.

Robert Kennedy Nuttall M.D.

Letter written to his family at Tittour, Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow
1 March to 1 April 1850

*Transcribed 1892 by R.K. Nuttall's son G. H. Falkiner Nuttall
Recopied 1992 by R.K. Nuttall's great grandson R.R. Falkiner Nuttall*

"At sea 1st March 1850 Long W.150°0'0' Latitude S.34°4'0'....."

Finally after many disappointments and broken off arrangements, I agreed to proceed in medical charge of the "Orator" William Tayt master and owner, accordingly the 28th of Jan. 1850 we left Sydney on our way for California.

Stress of weather obliged us to go to the south of New Zealand, and we are now, the winds being unpropitious, in the position indicated at the top of the sheet. We have as cabin passengers Captain Tayt and his wife, Mr. McVittie and his wife, a Mr. Thomas Cowper, a Mrs Southers and child and your humble servant. We get on very well together and see no cause to complain. There are about 150 steerage passengers; some very respectable people, but many of the greatest ruffians as yet left unchanged: emancipated convicts, murderers, -- the scum of Sydney! Well these gentlemen act together as one man and the consequence is that they maintain a perpetual reign of terror.....

I was thinking the other day that poor George would have been greatly amused were he to see a lot of great albatrosses I caught and let go again flying about the ship "having been under the doctor's hands" with great bunches of long feathers fastened at the back of their heads -- small bottles with memoranda in them, bits of sheet lead with Long., Lat. etc cut on them. Some of these strange looking birds we see now and then for days. I expect that the doctor will see some of my couriers! I caught some 20 or 30. I had some carried and others grilled, which were pronounced to be excellent, and it was good!.....

On the second day after I begun this letter the second mate overheard some of the ruffians alluded to above speaking together about "taking the ship"; he is unable to identify any of them. I reported this to the captain, having been informed of the fact by the first mate, and having had a conversation with the second, I got all the infernally old ship-pistols, put them in order and loaded them, and arranged with the other two gentlemen with me in the cabin that we would keep a regular watch at night, and indeed during the day likewise. We have four hours each nightly; we are beautifully prepared so if they come they will catch it.

Some days since we caught a shark ten feet long. I had not eaten shark for a long time, we had some dressed -- rather insipid, but not bad -- four of us ate it, the others would not. You will be overjoyed to hear, my dear Lucinda, that I have to do the parson here every Sunday. The stage ought to have been my profession, or at all events a part of my education, for some years; then four years among the Jesuits, and then in an attorney's office. We have had nothing but contrary winds and calms since we left Sydney. I never yet experienced such a continuance of unfavourable weather.

7th MARCH. We passed close to Pitcairn's Island today -- it is regarded with some interest as having been the retreat of the mutineers, and the place where the *Bounty* was burned. We are now fairly in the Trades and dashing along at a fine rate.....

11th MARCH. We have had the most extraordinary weather imaginable for some days -- tremendous thunder storms -- heavy rains -- water spouts and the wind here in the region of the Trades blowing from the N.W. Affairs on board proceed as usual, most unsatisfactorily. It is a curious position for a medical man to find himself in -- attending patients, and on Sundays reading prayers with a couple of double-barrelled pistols and a bowie knife concealed under his vestments! Nevertheless this is the case -- they cannot perceive that I am merely a passenger and not in any way connected with the ship. There is in truth no just cause for complaint and the mass know it, but are silent and leave things to be swayed by a set of young gentlemen who had finished their education at Norfolk Island. The women are as bad as the men and of the same class. One great comfort is, that I feel this is a very excellent preparatory school for "The Diggings" -- Practice makes master and there is nothing like being "vigilant, my dear -- vigilant".....

I am working away at my Spanish and expect to be a great dab at it soon. Under any circumstances I am likely to take a run through some parts of South America before returning to Europe. You would hardly know were you to meet me -- for many months I have spurned that foul instrument of torture, the razor, and consequently am exceedingly hirsute as to the muzzle.

14th MARCH. We discovered that some of the Sydney gentlemen had broken into the hold and had smashed and torn up about 14 chests, abstracting from one 150 dollars -- nothing could be done, they could not be identified -- there can be no mistake as to the parties, but tangible proof there is none. The second mate's watch are privy

to it and it was through their sleeping place the thieves got into the hold. A pleasant state of affairs this truly! Cases of brandy and rum below -- these ruffians down there at night.....

On one was willing to clean the place, no one to keep watch, no one willing to do anything. I am in daily expectation of a fever among them and have warned them, but it is to no purpose. When the robbery came to light yesterday there was a great uproar -- I told them they might thank themselves -- they were all masters and no men -- I had advised and warned them to do different, but that all had been disregarded and that before long they would have more to fear than robbers when fever broke out among them and that it was not until a few bags of cold meat went overboard would they attend to my advise. They are now having a general search -- but it will all end in smoke. I wish sincerely I was safe out of this ship, but as there are no back doors must grin and bear it and keep a sharp lookout.

15th MARCH. Matters appear progressing and I think satisfactorily -- we have no doubt as to the parties -- the principal came aft on the poop yesterday -- would not leave when ordered to; struggled with the captain and was finally pitched out on his back on the quarter-deck. Just after dark news was brought that this same fellow was in the fore-castle speaking with the disaffected watch -- the captain asked me if I would accompany him, so I put the tools in my belt and the old captain took a pistol in his hand -- now this was a detonator and he had never fired one off in his life -- Well forward we went through the crowd -- the ruffian alluded to was passing by, having come up from the fore-castle, when I recognised him and gave him a gentle tap on the back that fairly knocked the breath out of him, desired him to stand -- the infernal roar I let at him resembling the combined melody of a bull, six lions, and a dozen tigers, had the effect of starting the captain and exciting him amazingly, so he asked the gentleman why he dared to go into the fore-castle in opposition to orders and in the way of the assisting his memory knocked him down with the pistol -- The game stood so, I standing behind the captain with my eye on a set of Norfolk Island boys, when the captain put the pistol to the chap's head and told him for half a pin he would blow his head off -- Now I mentioned that the captain was a perfect 'winkle' in respect to detonators -- and while the pistol was within a few inches of the fellow's head off it went, Bang! There was a general rush on deck from below, and darting here and there. The chap on his back still roaring like the devil with the tooth-ache -- In about a minute he had let up and darted forward with the speed of the wind and jumped head foremost down the hatch. When I saw that the Captain had missed him and that he was running forward I had a great inclination to take a flying shot at him and "wipe the Captain's eye", but upon considering that he was only a tailor and that they were minute pistols, I thought it better not to dirty them, and besides that it was evident that he was like a scared crow, not worth powder and shot. "Dire was the struggle and out went the light" -- a couple of the passengers and one of the mates were dispatched to bring up the delinquent -- He had escaped uninjured and it was then resolved to put him in irons, in which position he must be kept. I have been

conducting an investigation, receiving evidence, taking affidavits, and as busy as a bee. The respectable portion of the passengers have formed a regular set of watches day and night. The thieves are likely to disagree and "split". I get so little time to write you that I really forget one half of what I do write, and very many amusing things I wish to record. This is St. Patrick's Day -- Sunday -- and I will have to serve them with a dish of religion at 11 o'clock and perhaps with pistol sauce afterwards.....

21st MARCH 1850. It appears that our supply of water bids fair to run short. When the captain spoke yesterday of putting the people on a reduced allowance there was a regular uproar on board. I have therefore urged upon the captain to put in at one of the Marquesas Island; which as the school books have it are a group "consisting of eight principal islands -- North of the dangerous Archipelago"; or as Barny O'Reardon would say "disolute islands inhabited by heathens and cannibals". They are no less so, we are getting our large guns mounted, and putting ourselves in order for any emergency. Our captain is very much to be pitied -- he married a young girl who came up as a steerage passenger in his ship from Melbourne from Sydney, and having no one thing to recommend her. I was not aware the old man was going to make a fool of himself by marrying this girl, whom I saw on board whenever I visited the ship in Sydney, or I certainly would not have come by the ship, knowing by experience what I had to expect.....

1ST APRIL 1850. My dear Lucinda -- I have not been able for some days to add anything to this letter, although on Monday morning the 25th March, we were close in with the land, and as the sun rose we found the nearest island was "Madelina" -- Several others being in view. The land was very high and the rugged, rising in places many hundred feet perpendicularly out of the water -- the surface being covered with a wild grass and the tops of the rocks fringed with a green shrub. As we neared the island we could perceive several streams descending to the water's edge, but no boat could possibly land in these places, the surf being tremendous and the shore composed of rocks. After some time we perceived some canoes coming towards us from the westwards, and in about an hour one came alongside, and one of the three men who were in it came on board -- He could speak a little English, was a very fine looking fellow about 30 years of age, named "Tomma Rock" and by his own account (and truly as we afterward found) a Chief. We gave him some clothes to put on and from further enquiry ascertained from him that water could be supplied us from "his bay" where he stated that some other vessels had been before, producing certificates from captains from whalers who had been there. I may here remark that the natives are of the Zealandic family -- large, powerful men, very much tattooed. Mr. McVittie, a cabin passenger, was enabled to render himself understood by speaking the New Zealand language to them. The young men are very free and open in their manner as were like wise some of the adults -- Many of their women swam off and came on board -- very fine creatures and most of them good looking. We had several of them in the cabin, the ladies giving them several articles of dress they wanted! Artificial

flowers and ribbons delighted them much.

I must now return to my narrative. When I broke off last we were nearing the land, the point to which "Tomma Rock" directed us brought into view a village at the foot of a valley -- surrounded with cocoa-nuts, bread fruit, bananas and other trees. To the right there arose a high cliff like a reef of rocks running far out into the sea. I did not like the aspect of the place as a spot for casting anchor; and viewed with suspicion the anxiety expressed by "Tomma Rock" that we should go near in. Captain Tayt, as I may have mentioned before, is an old man lately married to a young girl -- and far too fond of brandy, all three circumstances little calculated, when in combination, to maintain that decision and vigour of mind so essential in his position.

The first mate had left the ship in a small boat to look for a suitable place to cast anchor in, and had not returned. He is, I believe, a good sailor, but like that, too fond of drink. I saw the captain was making a fool of himself, obeying the orders of the savage and therefore spoke to him, requesting he would not go nearer in -- He had no decision -- He looked to "Tomma Rock" who cried "Nearer in...nearer in" -- "Have the lead heaved Captain Tayt" said I -- it was done and 15 fathoms found -- "We are far enough in -- pray judge for yourself and do not mind what this naked savage says -- You will be on the rocks". -- The man was like a fool -- On we went -- "Tomma Rock" still saying "nearer in" -- I was standing by the captain and with much piety of diction said "damnation let go the anchor". The order was given, the rope cut, but the chain was foul and would not run -- fortunately there was little wind -- On we went "nearer in" and no mistake -- The captain roaring like a mad-man -- at length the chain was got free, down went the anchor -- around she came, and it being a sea-breeze she tailed round towards the rocks -- clear of them it is true but much too near to be agreeable.

Great numbers of canoes came off, and likewise a whale-boat in which was an Englishman, a runaway convict from Sydney. He was recognised on board -- there are several here and I would much prefer trusting my life to the natives. One man, an American, I met here. He had a broad band of tattooing across his face. I asked him why he allowed himself to be thus disfigured -- His reply was "when you are here you must do as they wish or on the fire you go" -- i.e. you are roasted and devoured! The natives went out fishing -- catching large quantities of Bonita which they eat raw -- The flesh is red like beef. I went on shore and walked all about the place -- very beautiful - the little houses nicely made of bamboo and surrounded by beautiful bread fruit trees -- We got some very fine sweet potatoes -- and exquisitely tasting gourds -- also the root of a plant they call "Tare" (Arum Esculentum). While on shore I went to see a dead chief who was laid out in his war accoutrements. The native clergy (taboo-men) are like our own and all other priests, a set of designing knaves who live on the industry of others. No man is admitted to the priesthood until he has killed his man, and I presume eaten him afterwards. When a native dies the priests must have a pig which they kill and eat, all for the good of the dead man. If his relatives desire it the taboo-man can come to their hut on any dark night and make the dead man (no matter how long dead) arise and speak with them, giving directions as

to how his property is to be disposed of. All this can be had for a fat pig. The clergy in all parts of the world, and of all grades are you see fond of the fat things of the earth! They assist at births, deaths and marriages and exact a tribute from the ignorant heath, who it appears believe in miracles -- raising the dead, etc. I am induced to think that some few of the priests believe they do possess powers other men do not, and that they even believe a great part of the nonsense they tell to others. There is no saying what stuff and nonsense we may not be taught to believe if the teaching is commenced when we are young.

I went on shore with the first mate on Tuesday morning the 26th and some of the steerage passengers. With one of these, a Frenchman, I went about a good deal - - about two hours before sundown the mate had to go on board but promised positively to return for me within an hour. The Frenchman and I went to see a countryman of his who had come from one of the adjoining islands that morning to trade for pigs, etc., with the tribe here, with which his tribe were on good terms. We returned to the beach -- The wind was increasing, the surf running tremendous -- the sun going down -- and no sign of a boat. I gave a long coo-ee (native cry of V.D.L. etc.) and gathered about me some six of the steerage passengers -- They seemed certain that the boat would come for me, so as no one wished to venture out in a canoe, I agreed to wait for half an hour and desired them to keep near one another. In order to judge how the people felt disposed towards us, I went up to the Chief's hut (he could speak a little English) and I gave him to understand I wished to stop with him until the boat came for me -- He told me to go into the hut -- I did so, there was a kind of candle composed of nuts strung on a switch which gave some light. His wife or wives and daughters were there and some children. I sat down on the floor composed of big flat stones and took one of the children on my knee ("soft sowder" over the world), gave my neck-handkerchief to one of the ladies, and began to take notes of their looks and to make surmises as to what would be the result. The woman opened the breast of my shirt and seemed satisfied there -- they then pulled up the legs of my trousers and examined my legs, feeling the calves and I daresay thought they would be rare eating. I sent for the chief and said I was very anxious to get off to the ship, etc. , and could I get a canoe -- I was told to wait -- He then brought me into the sleeping place and showed me all the place -- and in the most hospitable manner possible urged me to spend the night there, and offering lest I might be lonely, any one of his wives, to take care of me until the rosy fringed aurora should throw light upon the subject!

I then went down to the beach amidst some hundred of these people. We took no arms. It would have been foolish to do so. They would murder you for them in a moment -- some consultation was then held -- the people were for keeping me, saying, "the boat will surely come for you" -- I wished to get off in a canoe -- At length two of the men, McPherson and Palmer, got a canoe and tried with the assistance of two natives to get through the surf, but after a long struggle were capsized and rescued with some difficulty -- Palmer not knowing how to swim thought it best to desist. I reminded the people that I had come on shore for them twice the night before and volunteered to do the same thing now. I did not know the cause of the delay and

feared some treachery on board. A canoe was got and McPherson, myself, and two natives, to whom we had promised two shirts, got clear of the breakers and gained the ship -- I had taken my coat off the way I would not be recognised in case any mischief had been going on. On going on deck I found the first mate who told me it was not his fault -- he and the captain had had some words, etc. -- I then saw the captain, who was drunk. He said the boat was going to be sent for me and seemed opposed to letting it go on shore -- I said if anything happened to the boat I would pay for it, but the boat I must have to bring off the people. I got two men in the boat with me, and having learned at Madras how to get a boat in to the best advantage told them to pull away -- We were shortly on the top of a breaker and going to the shore like a shot, where we arrived safe. The difficulty then was to prevent a rush on the part of our people for the boat, which we held breast high in the surf rushing every moment many feet above our heads. Having got those who could not swim into the boat and desired them to sit down and hold on like grim death to a black we got two at each side and a few of the natives behind -- and in short got off and on board. The swell was increasing fast, it being about the change of the moon, and the wind blowing hard from the sea.....

I told him I thought that if the wind increased and the swell continued we would be on shore and that it was my opinion that she was drifting. This he did not think to be the case, but after some time took the following wise steps -- let out more chain to the first anchor and then cast the other! The wind veered round a little and came in squalls from the land -- the reef of rocks alluded to before being now at her stern. I had not slept any the night before, and it was not likely that I could do so this night. I went up several times and the more I looked the more convinced I felt that we were in a most dangerous position.

The captain (drunk) had retired to his cabin, the first mate (drunk but not so much so) was in his bed and the second in his. It was subsequently stated that there was a watch kept forward -- some of the sailors and I knew its value. I went to the captain and told him one of his officers ought to be on the poop throughout the night -- there were a great many lives depending on a strict watch being kept -- and that I was positive she had already drifted -- As we went out the captain's wife said to me "go behind him doctor lest he should fall". Well on deck we went; the mates did not like being disturbed -- and one had said to me "he did not care a d... if she went on the rocks". They growled -- and the upshot was his turning upon me and giving all kinds of insolence. I was "drunk or mad" and "had better mind my physic" and I said very little, merely that if I thought he was mad I would pity him, but knowing him to be drunk I despised him -- stating that his conduct throughout had been most disgraceful. He went to his cabin where his wife kept him until morning. I was in and out all night -- the wind fortunately abated somewhat before morning - and when the daylight came the scene was truly fearful -- There we were so close to the rocks that I could have thrown a biscuit shore. The captain came on deck -- The scene before him appeared to bring him somewhat to his senses -- He came to me and said he was very sorry for what had occurred and wished to shake hands, etc. I shook hands with him

and said I wished to hear no more about it, and so this affair ended.

He had been drinking hard, and from excitement and fear at finding the ship in such a position had become quite pale instead of his usual high color. I was called to see the first mate -- Between the effects of drink and sunshine he was ill -- I gave him what was necessary and urged him to come on deck, as there was likely to be bad work, and bad management in getting up the anchors. The captain was on the poop, irresolute, uncertain, stupid, and truly unfit to have charge of the ship. Without much delay he ordered one of the anchors to be lifted, no notice was taken of the state of the sails -- everything in confusion -- ropes astray and the sails tied up -- the second anchor was then ordered to be got in -- The wind was coming in squalls down the valley and so far partly off the land, though we were in part sheltered by the high rocks -- At last he ordered the jib and try-sail to be hoisted and afterwards the foretop -- But this is not the way to explain myself to you -- Instead of getting sail on the ship before heaving the second anchor, he got this up without half enough sail to overcome the swell rolling in. The anchor getting foul suddenly broke and like a giving horse she backed towards the rocks -- Sails were ordered hoisted but they had to be untied -- No sailors were to be had. They do not care a d... how things went -- One was seen opening a cocoa-nut -- the emigrants rushing here and there calling for "one sailor to show them what to do" -- Some few of the passengers knew what to do -- Some few of the sailors assisted them -- No one had been appointed to do anything. I ran aft, cut the lashings and took the helm -- at this time a squall coming on to much consequence -- The squall died away and she backed until I could see no water behind me. I neglected to mention that at the time the anchor gave way we were so near the shore that the shake it communicated to the ship was believed by the captain to be caused by the ship striking and he has accordingly entered in the log that she struck three times -- I refused to sign this as it was not the case -- His two mates and carpenter denied it likewise, but still down it went in the unfortunate log.

When I left you last she was backing on the rocks -- I could see no land behind me; all hopes now seemed at an end, we were under shelter of the rocks; the old man turned round, struck his hands, and exclaimed "Oh God! she is on the rocks". A swell came and it seemed to be the clincher -- I held hard, expecting the impending shake - - At this moment a squall shot round the corner like a ball from an Irishman's gun and catching the sails, bore her out but with great difficulty, and only enabled to do so by the exertions of the passengers -- A cheer was tried to be raised forward when they observed she was moving from the land, but it died upon the lips -- The tongue could not give it utterance -- Nothing could exceed the intrepidity and coolness displayed by the passengers, men and women -- gentlemen and ladies -- Not a cry was heard - - though whenever the eye turned to the shore, where the natives like so many vultures were licking their lips in anticipation of a rare feed, they were withdrawn in horror.

(When transcribing this in 1892, George H. Falkiner Nuttall noted the original was incomplete, ending with the above words.)

Contributed by Eleanor Medlycott

Charles O'Brien

Charles O'Brien was born on the 30th day of November 1898 in Ashtown and baptised according to the rites of the Catholic Church on the 1st of December. He had a fairly chequered career. He started school in Lough Dan in the early part of the century and like many others travelled on 'the bare ones'. The teacher there was a Mrs Doyle. When that school was closed he went to Roundwood and the teacher there was Morgan Curran. He lost his father when he was only 8 in 1906 and his mother died in 1935.

He left school at 14 and went to Murphy's in Shankhill to serve his time as a carpenter. There was no transport in those days so he stayed with his employers. It took him a couple of years to save enough money to buy a bike, which cost £2 in Bray. When he got it he didn't know himself, I remember him telling me. Charlie worked in Shankhill for 8 years and then got a job near home with Dublin Corporation at the waterworks in Roundwood. That lasted two and a half years. After that he did his carpentry work locally including the County Council. In that time things were very tight with them and he told me of being sent to repair a boarded floor with a piece of board 3 foot long on his bike. He also worked on his own little farm.

He joined the Irish Volunteers in 1913. There were posters everywhere telling the people what the Germans would do as soon as they reached Ireland. Charlie continued to drill a team with the Volunteers and was arrested after Easter Week but was released after a short time. Meetings were banned in 1917. There was a meeting fixed for the Town Hall Bray and he went along and made his way to the platform. The Police were there and sometime later he was arrested and charged with supporting an illegal meeting. He was taken to Mountjoy but as things got worse he was moved to Crumlin Road, Belfast. They formed their own groups in the jail and Austin Stack was their Commandant. The jail was surrounded by troops and things were looking gloomy.

People feared that they might all be shot and a priest came along one day and gave them all General Absolution. They were all released after 3 months and he managed to get back to Dublin. He had no way of getting back to Roundwood until he got in touch with Robert Barton. He arranged for a car to take him to Roundwood. It was his first time in a motor car and he always remembered that first drive in 1918.

As a Republican he was involved in an attack on the Royal Hotel in Glendalough and the blowing up of the bridge in Laragh. When the R.I.C. went after the Barracks were burnt the Volunteers did Garda duty, he used to go around to the pubs to see they weren't stretching the licensing laws. After the Treaty Charlie stayed with the Republican side. He never had any taste for being involved in the Civil War believing it to be a great blunder by both sides.

There were plenty of house dances where the people danced the half sets and other Irish dances, a tradition that I think nearly died out, but is back as strong as ever. He also danced in Drumeen Hall as did my father Mick Plunkett.

Charlie used to talk about the economic war and remembered selling 2 cattle at the Fair in Roundwood on the Fairgreen (where the school is now). It was his third time to bring them out and he got £4 each for them. The times then were very bad. He told me of going into a fairly big farmer's house at tea time and they were having their tea but it was only milk and potatoes.

He remembered that it was John Ferguson that got the first radio and told of a neighbour greeting John and saying that it was a lovely day where John replied 'Yes, but its raining in the west' The neighbour hesitated but said nothing and later meeting a friend said 'I think poor Ferguson is going in the head' not knowing of his new gadget.

Charlie was a life long Pioneer. He married Mary Plunkett, my aunt, in 1936 and has one daughter, Shiela Byrne. He lived to the ripe old age of 95 and died March 11 1993.

Christy Plunkett

Tochar Men

On a windwept day in Aughtrim
In the year of '95
Brave Tochar men faced Baltinglass
To beat them they must strive

From hill and glen supporters came
To cheer the men in blue
To win the cup and take it back
Would be our dream come true

The whistle blows, the game is on
And Balto have first blood
But the Tochar men with style and speed
Reply to dam the flood

A Brady shot, a fatal drop
The ball it wriggles in
All Roundwood cheer the dream draws near
This game we now could win

Around midfield big Balto men
Like Danne would rule the day
But Power said no and showed the foe
Tall men he can outplay

The Balto men tried long and hard
the Tochar boys to break
But these boys were men and men who knew
The title was at stake

Liam Cullen kept our net secure
With hands so safe and brave
In front of him our backs marked tight
To stem the Balto wave

The All Star King, O'Brien tried hard
To break all Roundwood hearts
But Nolan's strength he could not beat
And scoreless would depart

Up front with guts and skill
Shay Cullen showed the way
With points from frees and points from play
Their backs were in dismay

Time ticked on, the dream could be
But Balto won a free
Cruel fate decides to sink our dream
They've won a penalty

McHugh steps up, He finds the net
The game has gone their way
The Balto team stamp on our dream a
And try to pull away

But the Tochar men can feel no pain
Their muscles know no ache
To win this game is why they came
Their will, Balto won't break

Not long ago, from hand to toe
MacGillycuddy solos out
Finds Mulligan deep in enemy ground
He kicks, and then they shout

In straight and true - the Boys in blue
Have Balto on the run
One more they add, our hearts are glad
At last our day has come

And then its o'er to cheers galore
Grown men weep tears of joy
These men in blue, our dream come true
Their fame will never die

Bold Miley's here, we'll sing and cheer
And hold it tight and fast
We've won it fair, and we all swear
This time won't be our last

Margaret Bolger - An Tochar Supporter

Clohoge

Clohoge townland is situated in the Civil Parish of Derrylossary and is bound on the east by the Clohoge river, including Lough Tay, on the south by the Inchivore river, on the north by the Sally Gap and on the west by the mountain ridge that divides east and west Wicklow. Its lowest point by Lough Dan is 671' and includes two mountains of Knocknaclohoge at 1,754' and Fancy at 1,856'. To the west of these is a plateau which is bisected by the Military Road. The main access is from the Roundwood to Sally Gap road going through the Luggala Estate or from the Roundwood Carrigeenduff road crossing the Inchivore river.

There are no archaeological remains apart from several undated features: there are hut sites underneath Fancy mountain at about 1,200', a booley site on the Clohoge Brook at about 1,000' and a site on an island on the Inchivore river at about 800'. It is therefore likely that it was uninhabited pre 700AD. A Bronze Age Saddle Quern was found near the Military Road and the Inchivore River which was reported by Richard Barton in the J.R.S.A.I. in the late 1940s. There is no obvious reason for it being there as there is no sign of settlement. There are oral traditions that link the townland to Glendalough and especially St. Kevin though not in the hagiographies. It may be relevant to note that Glendalough also describes the valley topographically. Perhaps like Trooperstown it might have been an attached place of retreat.

Its history in the Medieval period is unknown and it was likely to have been densely forested and inaccessible. Perhaps it was used for hunting and as a summer pasture by the river. It next appears when 4 O'Byrnes give it as an address in a Fiant of James I in the early 1600's. The ownership is reasonably straightforward. Originally part of the Glendalough Monastery lands it became the northern part of the Estate attached to the Archbishop of Dublin when the Dioceses of Glendalough and Dublin were united in 1216. With the development of the Parish system in this period this Estate was the western part of the Derrylossary Parish as defined by the Clohoge/Avonmore rivers and Glenealo river but including Derrybawn and Lugduff to the south. After the demise of the Monastery they were probably let to the O'Byrne clan based in Glenmalure or perhaps a branch of that family based in Lugduff.

After the Protestant Reformation during the reign of Henry VIII these lands would have been confiscated by the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin but it is likely that their claim was only nominal until the fall of the Wicklow clans during the Cromwellian period. From that period it would have been leased by them to various landlords. For details of this see my article on the Hugos and the Glendalough Estate in the Roundwood Historical Journal, No. 3. Clohoge differed in that Thomas Hugo leased the townland to James Shiels in 1763 (Registry of Deeds) and from then on it became part of the Luggala Estate. The LaTouche Family of Belview became involved in leasing parts of the Estate in 1787 and from then built up their interests in the area and by 1791/2 had control of the whole Luggala Estate. The latter part of the 19th century from the late 1850s show a complicated interrelationship between the

LaTouches, Beresfords and Powerscourts with a complicated and bewildering series of transactions based on land as security for debts of up to £16,000. From the 1890s it became part of the Powerscourt lands and then in this century to the Guinness family. The current owner is the Hon. Garech Brown.

The Hearth Money Rolls of 1666 show the first settlement in the area. What is interesting is the family names of Brady and Reilly which are South Ulster names and other surnames from the same area in neighbouring townlands are Crowley, Sheridan and Teevane. It is not clear when or why this migration happened. The links between the Wicklow and Ulster clans is well known dating from the 1500s. They were perhaps a settlement of Galloglasses from the late 1500s, refugees from the Ulster wars or from the post Cromwellian invasion. The early 1600 refugee scenario seems most likely as the area settle in seems too poor and inaccessible for payment and a later date would seem too late as there appears to have been generational spread. The burial of a Fr. McBrady, as noted by Fr. Nevin in his Roundwood Parish History, may be connected, this took place in the late 1600s in Glendalough. It is also interesting to note that the Hearth Money Rolls do not show Bradys or Reillys in any other area of the county which indicates that the current spread has Clohoge as a point of origin.

The period of the late 1600s must have been the period when the forests were finally cleared either from timber or charcoal making perhaps to supply the Iron Works which was in existence in Furnace in the Townland of Knockrath. A William Salt, originally from the Glen of the Downs area was murdered by raparees in 1688 according to the Delgany parish Registers where his wife Martha, nee Tapless, from the same area stayed on the Poor list until her death in 1745. He could have been an employee in the forestry clearances.

In the 1700s the townland does not appear much in history. In 1716 a Proclamation was issued against a John Byrne, son of Gregory, (both labourers) for unspecified felonies. The document in the National Archives also warns that anyone discovered aiding him would be equally punished without benefit of clergy. In 1798 the valley appears to have been a place of refuge for rebels and various skirmishes are known to have happened nearby between it and Roundwood. The yeomanry are known to have set fire to many of the houses. It was probably for this reason, that in conjunction with the building of the Military Road, that a Police Barracks was built overlooking the townland on the southern entrance to Luggala. This does not appear on official documentation so it was probably funded privately by the LaTouche family. It perhaps acted as a way station to the Military road. It is not known how long it was in operation for but was converted into private housing by 1855 and probably many years before.

The first list of tenantry is dated 1822 in a Parish Cess census of heads of Households in the Derrylossary Vestry minute books. 16 people are listed here: Henry Nowlan, Chas. Nowlan, James Nowlan Snr. & Jnr., Peter Nowlan, John McDonald, Thos Brady, James Brady, Owen Nowlan, Ambrose Travers, Peter Nowlan, Hugh Doyle, Chas Coughlin, Widow Cullen and John Nowlan. The Tithe Applotment Book

lists 13 names but with no change in the surnames, dated 1831. The main difference between this period and earlier times is the influx of the Nowlans (later Nolan) who were about 50% of the population. Their origin is unknown but family tradition points to violent evictions and livestock being destroyed.

The Tithe Book shows a typical hierarchy in farm patterns. The Brady family of 2 houses lease about 50% of the land and the rest is divided into smaller and smaller plots and presumably a few labouring households with no land. The land is described as arable, coarse arable and mountain. Mountain would have been held in common and the rights were held in proportion to the amount of arable land. Tithes paid varied from £2/16/8 to 7/3. The 1837 6" Ordnance Survey map shows a number of houses or offices for which no ruins survive.

The first census townland analysis of population is in 1841 and the details are in the following table:

Year	1841	1851	1861
Population	148	95	14
Houses	19	15	2

As one can see there was a drop of a third in the population over the Famine period. The Folklore Commission in U.C.D. report in the Schools Survey abstracts that during the Famine the Parish Priest brought supplies in a collapsible boat to Clohoge. This was probably a canvas boat with removable thwarts often used for fishing or duck shooting, but most of the clearance took place in the following decade. In Griffith's Primary Valuation Census, published in 1855, there are 8 houses listed. What is significant is that none of the tenants held any land or commanage rights. The exact date and process of losing their land is unknown. After 1865 there were one or two houses occupied but these were by resident herdsmen. By 1911 the townland became permanently uninhabited. In 1864 a Tithe Apptment Book shows only 2 tenants one of whom was a Mary Nolan who was the last of the surviving traditional tenants.

Where then did every one go? The Parish records give some indication of movement within the Parish. One Nolan family went to Stoneypass where they leased 200 acres in 1844 according to a lease still held by the family. This showed the family as being Patrick, John, James and Patrick, possibly a father and 3 sons. John was married to Frances Rooney. The family of James Nolan and Mary Quinn moved to Brockagh around 1848; the family of John McDaniel and Ann Doyle to Glasnamullen in around 1845; and William Doyle and Ann Brady to Balilasm around 1842 and then to Glenmacnass around 1845. A son of Denis Nolan and Rose Brady, Peter, was in Mullinaveigue in 1857. It is possible that Patrick Nolan and Mary Miley went to England as a daughter, Elizabeth, applied for a registered copy of the 1851 census return for the purpose of getting a pension. She then lived in Frizington in Cumberland and was a spinster. If this is correct then the family left after 1846 and the in-house notes mention that they found a widow, Elizabeth, aged 60, and a granddaughter, Eliza, aged 7; she had mentioned in her application that her grandmother was called Elizabeth. Other families who left for places unknown and

had children in the Townland were James Brady & Mary Gaffney, Thomas Sally & Ellen Kelly, John Kelly and Elizabeth Loughlin, John McGuirke & Martha Byrne, James Nolan & Catherine Darcy, Charles Nowlan and Mary Brady, Thomas Brady & Anne McGuirke, James Reilly & Mary McDermott, though this last family had previously lived in Ballinastoe. The last Baptism was in 1853 (excluding later resident herdsmen). What is interesting is that between 1847 and 1853 there were 9 marriages where the address of the bride is given as Clohoge. In this period addresses were always the Bride's. None of these couples had children or grandchildren born or married in the Parish. Between 1841 and 1852 there were 3 adult baptisms none with names from the Townland as far as one can tell. It is possible there was some migration to Dublin as there were strong links between city and county.

There are three interesting oral traditions relating to the clearances. The first is that Lady Powerscourt ordered the clearance because they interrupted her view. This is unlikely as there is no evidence that she ever lived there and the Powerscourt involvement was after the main clearance. The minute books of the Estate Guardians show that while David LaTouche sold the whole estate around 1858 he leased it back for an as yet unknown period as he maintained hunting rights there. In fact he received a 50% rent rebate due to trespassing and damage caused by an unspecified Nolan which was subject to a civil action around 1860/61.

The second tradition says that two Nolan brothers eloped with two LaTouche daughters and that in anger the family evicted the tenantry. There is no evidence of this but there is a twist to the story in that Robert LaTouche married Elizabeth Nolan in 1835. They had 3 children Mary in 1837, Emily in 1842 and Robert in 1845. In 1842 they lived in Ballinacor, in 1845 in Ballinearn and at a later stage to Tomriland from at least 1858. None of the specific houses are known. In 1858 Robert, described as an Army Captain in the published pedigree, saw his first daughter, Mary, marry Thomas Cullen of Annagowlan and their descendants are still in the area. Emily married Thomas Byrne in 1864, he is described as a clerk living in 2 Pembroke Quay in Dublin. This address turns to be the address of a Pawnbroker family called Nolan who were there over a 40 year period, c.1840-80. One can see how the family connections developed into marriage ties. However, since this marriage predated the clearance by 10-20 years it cannot be seen as the reason.

The third tradition is that it was called the Scotch village. This is curious but there are various surnames in the townland which could be Scottish i.e. George Burthistle, William Dagleesha, James Spence, John Whiston, Michael Smullen though we have no real information on any of them, except that the Burthistle family apparently converted to Catholicism in the late 1840s/early 1850s.

While it has been theorised that the area was cleared for a deer Park it appears that deer did not come into the area until the 1930s when escapees from the Powerscourt deer farm arrived and nowadays they are a common sight. It is likely that the area was cleared for sheep as the Estate in the second part of the last century had major sheep interests. In September 1872 a David Steel sold 4,267 sheep by auction when he gave up his lease, the sheep herd was described as being founded in 1867 with

hoggets from the finest flocks in Scotland. From then the Luggala sheep sale was an annual event selling 650 - 1000 sheep which continued up to at least the first decade of the 1900s. It is possible that a deer park was considered as History of Highland Clearances by Eric Richards states that "In Rosshire in 1857 a sheepwalk that had paid £400 p.a. under sheep was leased for £2,000 p.a. to Mr. LaTouche." The shootings in the uncleared Estate had yielded £200 p.a. and 19 years later in 1870 was worth £3,000 p.a. It is not yet known if and how this Mr. LaTouche is related to the Irish Families.

The settlement, though in ruins now, show that a thriving community lived there who had put an enormous amount of work over 200 years to utilise their resources as best as they could. The majority of field boundaries were in place by the 1830s and what expansion that took place later were on the northern end high up on the mountain side. Vast areas had been cleared of stones and drained with underground culverts from the Commons wall to the river and several air holes survive. Some channels have obviously been diverted for house consumption and for washing clothes. The houses were situated in two main clusters just north of the Clohoge Brook and about midway between the Brook and Lough Dan. There are several out-lying houses at around the 1,000 contour overlooking Lough Dan, one beside the Inchivore river, another about 2 miles further up and a last under Fancy mountain near Lough Tay. The latter 2 do not appear on the Ordnance Survey 6" maps which is curious (dated 1837 & 1911). The one by Lough Tay may have been built later as its style is very crude. Normally the houses are well built following the lobby style plan i.e. 2 roomed, an entrance at the centre and a fireplace in the dividing wall. Some of them have attached small outbuildings while others have separate substantial outbuildings. The first house ('a' on the valuation maps) on the north is a good example of this and has shown signs of building additions, it also has the only sign of a cottage garden. As one might expect the main source of income was from agriculture and potato ridges survive on the northern and southern ends. The other parts may have been used as pasture for cattle or for tillage of oats. Sheep would have been kept on the mountain and a sturdy commons wall separates the commons and arable. This wall is a later addition perhaps built post 1840 as there is evidence that it was built on the previous levelled out bank and also there are small differences between the first and second edition 6" Ordnance Survey maps in terms of its boundary line. Another source of income would be on the Luggala Estate itself as farm labourers and house servants perhaps as game bird beaters. There are indications that the townland was explored for minerals in the 18th and 19th centuries especially since lead was extracted from 2 adits on Carrigeenduff mountain. It was perhaps thought that the lead veins carried on into Knocknaclohoge. Also interesting is that in 1809 Peter LaTouche formed a partnership with Thomas Weaver and Rev. James Symes to develop the lead mines at Laganure which Weaver had exploited since 1807.

Nowadays the area is visited by thousands who walk for pleasure (itself an interesting cultural development) down to Lough Dan. The area has fascinated many people who are curious as to its history and I hope that this article has answered some

of the most common questions. I would like to thank The Hon. Gareth Brown, Tom Clinton, John Nolan, Pat Warner, Terry Doherty, Joan Kavanagh and Brian Donnelly who helped in the researching of this article.

Ian Cantwell

Poem Composed by W.J. Duffy

WJ Duffy, although born in Dublin, was reared near the crosses close to Trooperstown. He served with the British Army during the 1914/18 war and he was told one day by a fellow soldier that there was no place worthy of fame in Co. Wicklow only Avoca and during a lull in the fight perhaps on the Somme, Flanders or Dieppe his mind went back to other beautiful places in Co. Wicklow and he composed these few lines using Tom Moore's theme.

There is not in this wide world a valley so sweet,
So sang famed Tom Moore is his great lyric treat,
But equally charming are scenes I well know,
Elsewhere than Avoca in Co. Wicklow.

What rivals Glenealy or Clara's deep vale,
Glendalough, lovely Lara and sweet Avondale,
Lough Dan in the Mountains near lone Anamoe,
And the banks of the Vartry in lovely Wicklow.

There are Glens, the Downs, the Devils each a deep wooded pass,
Glenmalure, Glenacordia and Glenmacnass,
Ashford a neat village near Ballimacroe,
And carried majestic in Co. Wicklow.

I'll dance at your weddings, condoned at your wakes,
Romp through the bushes that bloom in your brakes.
Dear land of youth follies where ever I go,
Thou art still in my bosom my matchless Wicklow.

As dictated by Sean Kavanagh

Old Folk Remedies

Folk Medicine, as distinct from Official Medicine, has always been popular in Ireland. It is interested in three R's Resistance, Repair and Recovery.

The remedies given here are harmless but can be helpful:

- MOUTH ULCERS:** These small ulcers which occur on the mucous membrane which covers the inside of the mouth, the treatment is to swab them with Vinegar.
- BLACK EYE:** A Black Eye may be treated by putting a piece of raw sheep's liver over the bruise and keeping it there with a bandage.
- COMPLEXION:** To maintain a clear complexion eat Watercress regularly - or - ash your face in Dew on the first day of May and you will have a good complexion - which should help you find a husband.
- MIGRAINE HEADACHE:** Two teaspoons of Honey taken at the end of each meal will prevent an attack of Migraine.
- PNEUMONIA:** Cover the chest with a poultice made from Cow Dung.
- CORNS:** An Ivy Leaf tied around soft corn is said to cure it.
- FESTERED FINGER:** To cure a gathered or festered finger - make a paste of soap and sugar and paint this on to the affected part.
- TOOTHACHE:** The sufferer of the Toothache should fill his mouth with Cold Spring Water and sit himself at the fire until the water boils.
- STY ON THE EYE:** Make the Sign of the Cross on the sty with the marriage ring of the patient's mother. It is necessary to repeat this daily for nine days.
- DANDRUFF:** Dandruff can be treated by applying Lemon Juice to the Scalp.
- SINUS:** Blocked sinus are treated by chewing Bee's Wax - or - Steep a jugful of Lavender in boiling water and inhale.
- WHOOPIING COUGH:** Make a mixture of equal parts of White of egg and of Honey, this will soothe the cough.
- SORE THROAT:** Make a cup of Blackcurrant Tea - make by pouring Boiling Water over Blackcurrant Jam.

HANGOVER: To avoid paying the morning after price for having had a few drinks too many, spread a slice of toast with a thick helping of ordinary Honey and eat this before you go to bed.

TIRED FEET: If your feet feel tired after a hard day, you can give them a "Walking Massage" by placing a layer of dried beans in your slippers. Put on the slippers and walk around for a few minutes and let the beans knead and massage your feet.

Joe Timmons

The following poem was written by W.J. Duffy - year unknown. He loved Derrybawn as well as other places in Co. Wicklow.

I've rambled where the valleys fair are decked with evergreens,
I've toiled and planned in Dwyers land renowned for pretty scenes,
But God be praised, I've seldom gazed more charming scenes upon
And of them all there's none at all to rival Derrybawn.

Oh Derrybawn, oh Derrybawn on history's pages thou deserve a place,
An honoured place far from thy sheltering brow.
Each ruin and rock in Glendalough, O'Dwyer oft gazed among,
For he found rest upon the breast of genial Derrybawn.

It's fine oak wood I'm certain could make shafts for pikehead still,
Had we the men to come again and use them with a will.
Oh gladly I the battle cry would sound our morning dawn,
Did I but know I'd strick a blow for rebel Derrybawn.

Oh why should I, a Wicklow man be proud to think and sing,
Of scene's so grand as Dwyer's land where Soldiers of the King
Were made to feel what Irish steel could do when things went wrong,
When Saxon laws oppressed the cause round rebel Derrybawn.

With scenes like these I'd live at ease I'd proudly walk each pass,
Conversing on the days long gone with some sweet colleen deas,
Whose honest heart could also start with patriotism strong,
As I'd narrate of '98 round hallowed Derrybawn.

(W.J. Duffy was involved in the Holt Memorial Meetings in Annamoe, Togher and Laragh in 1906. Ed.)

As dictated by Sean Kavanagh

Paying Under Protest

In addition to their normal duties of enforcing the Law, one of the sundry duties carried out by the Royal Irish Constabulary was that of testing and inspecting weighing scales and certifying them correct in accordance with the legislation in force.

In 1889, John Byrne of Roundwood, held the position of 'Market Authority' and had under his control a weighbridge on which cattle could be weighed. Mr. Byrne was required under the Law to have the weighbridge tested and certified as correct from time to time by the Inspector of Weights and measures but neglected to do this as the weighbridge was not used.

On December 17th 1889, Sgt. Robbin of the R.I.C. in his capacity as inspector visited Mr. Byrne, tested the weighbridge and found it was weighing correctly. When Mr. Byrne was presented by Sgt. Byrne with his bill for expenses of £2 for undertaking the tests, he refused to pay and this resulted with his appearance at the Saturday December 28th sitting of the Newtown Petty Sessions before Capt. Sergrave, Gordon E. Toombe and J. Meade.

This was a rare case to come before the county Justices and the formal charge against Mr. Byrne was 'that on the 17th of December 1889 at Roundwood the defendant, being the Market Authority, did demand and receive tolls in respect to cattle offered for sale contrary to law, he having refused to pay the costs and expenses incurred by the complainant in testing the accuracy of the weighbridge in his possession'.

Mr. Byrne's grounds for refusing to pay the cost and expenses of Sgt. Robbin's testing were that they were excessive and exorbitant. In Court it was stated that he was a very highly respected man and the reason why he never bothered to have the weighbridge tested was due to the fact that it was never used for weighing cattle at the Fairs held in Roundwood.

However it was pointed out to Mr. Byrne that his refusal to pay the £2 could expose him to a maximum penalty of £5 and costs so being a practical man he indicated to the Court that he was prepared to pay the £2 and since an offence had been committed the Magistrates imposed a fine of 1/- and 1/- costs and this ended the matter.

Today the office of Inspector of Weights and Measures is undertaken by members of An Garda Síochána whose expenses incurred in testing appliances must be paid by the owner of the apparatus being tested.

James Scannell

Freemans Journal 2/7/1785

It is reported that there are bonfires on the hills on the eves of St. John and St. Peter.

Knockatemple Conversations

A most enjoyable evening spent in the home of Peter and Sara Byrne of Knockatemple, reminiscing about old times. When Sara married Peter in 1939 and came to live in Roundwood there were 3 houses in the townland with a population of about 14. The Corcorans were their immediate neighbours. Half a mile down the road lived the Dawsons, Cecilia with her 6 brothers Tommy, Willie, Ned (who later left Knockatemple), John, James and Larry and sister Mary. Cecilia married Terry Kavanagh and moved to Knockraheen. The Dawson's house still stands and like the Byrne house is over 200 years old.

Sara did most of shopping locally. The drapery shop at the time was owned by Mr. and Mrs Healy, parents of the late Sheila Holt, During the War she left her ration book in Keenans (now the Coach House) who sold groceries and animal feed as well as being a Public House. She baked her own bread in a pot oven from wheat that was ground down at the Waterworks by Superintendent Fitzsimons who had a small grinder and at the age of 81 still bakes her own bread and a very tasty apple tart. She also made her own butter in an end over end churn.

Peter went to school in the Old School House in Oldtown (now a private residence). There was only one school room and two teachers both from Kerry; Miss Stack who taught infants, 1st and 2nd class and Peter Redmond who taught 3rd to 6th year. These two later married and moved on. Before them were Morgan Curran and Miss Sullivan also from Kerry.

Peter also recalled the days when he would draw 10 to 12 cwt potatoes in a horse and cart to Jane Cartons and Harry Stewarts in Bray. He would leave at 7 O Clock in the morning and the journey would take about 3 hours. He has fond memories of his ploughing days with the late Willy Murphy. Just a few of the many certificates he won adorn the walls of the house. Once when he was at a ploughing match in Knocktopher in Kilkenny in the 1970s he met and chatted with Paddy Hillary, President of Ireland at the time.

Peter does remember when the Knockatemple road was a rough one, the stones were so sharp they would cut the tyres of his bicycle, no tarmacadam then. There are now 8 houses but otherwise this quiet townland had not changed much since 1939.

Betty Flynn

Clonbur Church of Ireland Graveyard, Co. Galway.

Richard Kelly/ born at Ballinastoe/ Co. Wicklow 26 June 1831/ died at Ballykine 23 March 1879/ Erected to his memory by/ Sir Arthur Guinness Bart./ of Ashford/ whom he served long/ and faithfully.

Laurence Murphy Roundwood's Fenian Leader

There is a large, but otherwise unremarkable gravestone near the Priest's House in Glendalough. It is dedicated to the memory of the Murphy family of Roundwood. Although it lists a number of people, several of whom died relatively young, nothing on it reveals that this is the final resting place of two members of the local Ladies' Land League and of Roundwood's leading Fenian.

The imprisonment of Parnell and many other members of the Land League led to the first political organisation of Irish women in 1881. Although the Ladies' Land League was effective, Parnell speedily dismissed these radical women after his release from Kilmainham Jail in May 1882.

Few records of the Ladies' Land League have survived, so Roundwood is particularly fortunate. The energetic and outspoken secretary of the Roundwood branch was Mary Murphy of Togher House. Her sister Fannie (later Mrs. Graydon) also served on this committee. During the months of the Roundwood Ladies' Land League, the Murphy's 16 year old brother, Laurence, emerged as an enthusiastic supporter. He joined the local branch of the Boys' Land League and his actions were noted by the constabulary.

In 1884 Michael Cusack founded the Gaelic Athletic Association in Thurles. Dedicated to the revival of Irish games, it attracted a great number of I.R.B. members. The Irish Republican Brotherhood had been founded in 1858 and had drastically declined in numbers after the unsuccessful rising of 1867. Nevertheless, small groups of dedicated followers continued a holding operation, while many had supported the Land League and were ardent admirers of Charles Stewart Parnell. During the Parnell split they tended to back the beleaguered Chief.

By the 1890s many I.R.B. men felt that no effective attempt at an overthrow of British rule was likely during their life time. Britain was at the zenith of its power as a colonial empire and the I.R.B. concentrated its efforts on keeping the national spirit alive in such organisations as the G.A.A., the Young Ireland Literary Society and in local bands.

This was the case in Roundwood, where Laurence Murphy emerged as the local leader. In 1896 he again attracted police notice and Dublin Castle requested a confidential report, in which he is described as 5 ft. 6 in. in height, 30 years old and of stout build, weighing 11 1/2 stone. He had dark hair, blue eyes and a small, dark moustache.

The Bray sergeant collating information on subversives also noted that Murphy was a farmer, publican's son, rate collector and relieving officer for the Rathdrum Poor Law Union. He was "an extreme Fenian", who strongly supported the G.A.A. in Co. Wicklow and was "the leader of the Roundwood Fenian Society." This comprised members of the local band and the G.A.A.

Larry Murphy went to Dublin once a fortnight and spent the night there, as he

was a member of the Old Guard Benevolent Society, which ran savings schemes for its members. Most of the members were, however, old Fenians, who enjoyed rubbing shoulders with each other at these meetings.

Dublin Castle was well aware of the I.R.B.'s recruiting methods. It was standard practice to talk about patriots, such as Robert Emmet, to a potential member. If he seemed to approve of Emmet, he was asked would he like to follow him? All going well, the new man was sworn into the organisation in a quiet, and often unromantic spot, such as the yard behind a pub.

While there was a small core of dedicated leaders, the I.R.B. in the late 19th century went through phases of demoralisation. In a poor country like Ireland the constabulary knew that money could tempt information out of some men. Some revolutionary meetings produced little result besides a greater consumption of liquid refreshment. The I.R.B. leadership therefore decided that all new members should be carefully scrutinised. They should be of good character, possess a reputation for honesty and sobriety and be able to keep their mouths firmly shut. They should also be disciplined enough to obey orders. As the information gathered by the Royal Irish Constabulary on Laurence Murphy and the Roundwood Fenian Circle shows, secrecy was not always kept.

Laurence Murphy was a relieving officer of the Rathdrum Poor Law Union. The I.R.B. had decided to infiltrate local administration whenever possible in the second half of the 19th century. His appointment also demonstrates that the Murphy family must have been of good standing in the area, as the land owners, tenant farmers and business men on the board of guardians could have vetoed him.

The local constabulary learned that Larry Murphy was on pleasant terms with publican William McGuinness of Preston, Lancashire. McGuinness was a member of the I.R.B. Supreme Council in 1891. Although police files do not mention contacts between Bray and Roundwood Fenians, J.J.Grennan of Bray was also a friend of McGuinness. Both Murphy and Grennan, Bray's leading Fenian, were strong supporters of the Irish National Alliance. This was a Fenian splinter group.

During the 1880s Irish-American bombers had caused panic in Britain. On 20 January 1883, an O'Donovan Rossa inspired bombing team blew up part of Glasgow's gas works and a shed on the Caledonian Railway. Further attacks occurred in London some weeks later.

About a year later it emerged that three of Rossa's "skirmishers" had trained some Glasgow ribbon men in the use of explosives. Two of them were already in jail, but J.F. Kearney had managed to escape to the U.S., while abandoning his family. Rossa ordered him back to Glasgow, where his wife and child had died in the meantime. John Francis Kearney eventually returned to the continent on his way back to America.

While in Rotterdam and Antwerp, he ran out of funds and felt trapped by British secret service agents. Kearney turned informer and while the other Irish Americans and the Glasgow men involved in the bombings served long jail sentences, Kearney went back to America with money in his pockets. The constabulary knew that he was a cousin of the Murphy family and entered it on Laurence's file.

So far no further information on Larry Murphy has come to light in the Crime Branch Special files in the National Archives. During 1896 the county's two Fenian groups had 330 members and were to be found in Bray and Roundwood. The I.R.B. revived considerably during the 1798 centenary two years later, when 10 Fenian circles with 1,046 members were recorded. Desmond FitzGerald, who was to organise the Irish Volunteers in Co. Wicklow, was, however, not impressed with their revolutionary ardour or effectiveness. As FitzGerald kept his remarks general, it is impossible to draw any certain conclusions.

It is however known that Laurence Murphy was arrested and sent to Kilmainham Jail during the war of independence. By this time most boards of guardians outside Ulster supported the Dail Local Government Board, rather than the Dublin Castle version. This is illustrated by the unusual tolerance of the Rathdrum Board, which continued to give Laurence Murphy "leave of absence" while he was imprisoned. Previous conservative boards would have been less tolerant. Unfortunately, Kilmainham Jail records for the period have not survived.

The Murphy family seems to have been very well off by the early years of this century. The Wicklow News-Letter mentions a motoring accident, in which Laurence's car was involved. Even in rural parts of Germany, only very few families owned cars during the 1920s. Laurence Murphy must have been one of the earliest Irish automobile owners. He was by then married to Margaret, but they had no children. While his wife ran Togher House, Larry was Department for Agriculture agent for the area. He continued to be very much involved in local affairs and remained an indefatigable attender of meetings.

Eva O Cathaoir

Note: Further information on the Murphy family, Fannie Graydon and any Roundwood Fenians would be welcome.

Bibliography:

CBS file 381s 17122 in Nat. Archives;

Eva O Cathaoir, "Roundwood Ladies' Land League" in Roundwood Journal No. 5; "Revolutionary Undercurrents in Wicklow and South Dublin 1867 - 1916" in Bray Historical Record No. 5;

The Memoirs of Desmond FitzGerald, 1913-1916 (London, 1968);

K.R.M. Short, The Dynamite War (New Jersey, 1979).

Freemans Journal 26/2/1791

Police Notice: House of Luke Toole of Annamoe was broken into about 2 O'C by 5 or 6 men armed with pistols and faces blackened (none came on horse back) and robbed house of upwards £200 in cash and banknotes, one National note of £50, one silver spoon (marked R.M.F.), 5 tin spoons (marked L.T.) and a draft horse.

A Mountjoy Ditty

Air - "Alive, Alive O"

I'll sing you a ditty of Dublin's fair city,
And a place called Mountjoy which all of you know;
'Twas there of all places, the boys cut the traces
And got out of prison Alive, ALive O.

The first was bold Barton when he was departin',
Left a note for the "Boss" his politeness to show;
An' a "dummy" in order to fool the poor warder
But Barton had "hopped" it Alive, Alive O"

J.J. Walsh and Pierce Beasley, the trick did quite easily,
Some pro-German devil a ladder did throw;
Them "some" twenty Sinn Feiners like acrobat trainers,
Scaled the wall and got free all Alive, Alive O.

They're thinking to-morrow, to call it "Mount Sorrow",
It's made of John Bull such a terrible show;
His prison no longer have bolts any stronger,
To hold in Sinn Feiners Alive, Alive O.

I'll finish my rhyme now, and think its near time now,
The people are laughing wherever you go;
It caused great elation in this ancient nation,
Sinn Feiners, Pro-Irish Alive Alive O.

Mrs Barton gave us this, it was written by her husband, Robert.

Freemans Journal 18/6/1785 and 21/6/1785

These 2 articles briefly relate the adventures of a Dr. Potain, a balloonist, who on attempting to land in the vicinity of the Dargle river and Powerscourt got entangled in the cords of the balloon. Since he was not able to speak English the watching people could not understand what he wanted or that he had a problem never having seen such a contraption before. As a result he was dragged for nearly 2 miles within a 'freight of earth and reed'. Though he was hurt he managed to cut himself free of the ropes whereupon the balloon ascended into the air and finally came to rest in Co. Wexford. He was entertained and treated with every hospitality by Mrs. Price, the daughter of Mr. Rathborne, merchant.

Was this near Mullinaveigue?

Famine Times

This short article quotes from The Freemans Journal several articles highlighting Famine and Politics in the local community.

24/7/1839: Rev. J. Johnston of Glendalough Parish sends £10 in donations, made up of shillings and a pound for the Precursor Society. He is quoted as: "I am now far advanced in life, I have been Parish Priest for nearly 40 years and I have never witnessed more spirit among my flock than at present. However, I must remark, that there appears a very great inertness in the neighbouring Parishes and for my part I feel that Ireland at present requires a most decided demonstration of her energy and strength and I trust that my flock shall be ever found willing to contribute to every object circulated to promote the regeneration of our Native Land and to shield us from tyranny and oppression."

24/7/1841: Report of Orange Celebrations after the victory of Col. Acton in the Parliamentary Elections when he defeated James Grattan with processions and bonfires. The Catholic clergy kept their Parishioners under control by ordering them to stay at home.

4/6/1842: Fr. Mathew, The Temperance Apostle, gives the Pledge to 10,000 at Seven Churches.

14/11/1845: Rev Gowan, Famine report: "The potato crops are in a bad way, while digging out it did not appear to be a great loss but in every case where they have been pitted for some time rot is quite evident. On third are lost and what portion of the rest can be saved is not known, price is 4/6 per barrel for the best. Mr. Barton is going to buy up all the oats in the neighbourhood at market prices and in the Spring and Summer return to those who may want it at cost price. Our oat crop was more than average.

17/3/1846: E.H. Harding M.D., Dispensary report: "A good deal of low fever prevalent, latterly a species of dysentery becoming prevalent in some instances caused by use of diseased potatoes. Diseases of skin and stomach are much more prevalent and attributed to the kind of food uses. I suggest giving Outdoor Relief as maybe suggested by Medical Attendants.

6/6/1846: Fr. Mathew blesses the Foundation Stone for the new church at Glendalough.

25/3/1847: Public Works Report: All men employed on the Public Works in Cronybyrne have been dismissed by Government Order on the 19th March. The poor men acted on this trying occasion with the greatest patience and resignation. The

Government has not yet made any provision to supply the people dismissed with food.

18/12/1847: O'Connell Monument, Parish Report: "This romantic Parish not less celebrated for it's religiousness than patriotic recollections have favoured through it's respective P.P., whose energetic co-operation has always been accorded to an appeal to his patriotism, on the part of his co-religious congregation has sent from this remote Parish £6/16/4".

13/7/1848: J.D. M'Gee arrested in Dublin for seditious speeches in Roundwood. The Co. Wicklow Grand Jury ignored Bills of Indictment because of lack of evidence.

28/5/1849 Considerable numbers of Parishioners and Parish Priest of Glendalough sign a memorial for the release of State Prisoners.

1/1/1850: A letter from 10 old Repealers of Trooperstown send 10/- to the Repeal Fund.



'Dancing At The Crossroads' Glendalough, Co. Wicklow. (Dark Island Collection No 119)

Father John Gowan: 1817 - 1897

A Short Account of his Life and Works

At the close of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century the economy of Ireland was undergoing much change as well as rapid growth in certain fields. This resulted from the setting up and development of industries under Grattan's Parliament; the growth of farming to meet the rapidly increasing demands of Britain's industrial expansion; as well as the phenomenal growth in the Irish population. In regard to the latter it was estimated that it had reached 5 million in 1800, grew to 7 million by 1820, and was as high as 9 million when the Potato Blight struck late in 1845.

It should not be forgotten that, at the same time, the Irish Catholics were still suffering under the grinding harshness and oppression of the Penal Laws. Furthermore, the vast majority of the peasantry were living at or below the bare subsistence level because of the unjust and cruel manner in which the Laws and Regulations governing land tenure were being enforced.

Despite these harsh overall conditions, some parts of Ireland and their general economies were relatively much better off than most which were far less fortunate. The former was particularly the case on parts of the East Coast, mainly the areas stretching North and South of Dublin. It should not be forgotten that, at that time, Dublin was the second largest city after London within the great world wide controlled British Empire.

It may be surprising to learn that many Irish Catholic families on the East Coast succeeded in avoiding much of the excessive restrictions and harshness of the Penal Laws. They did so by developing activities in fishing, shipping and trading to meet the rapidly growing economic demands of Britain as well as of Ireland. The shipping and fishing ports of Skerries in Fingal and North County Dublin, with Ringsend at the mouth of Dublin, as well as Arklow, County Wicklow further South, were the three principal ports of Ireland's East Coast and its growing trade.

The Gowan family into which John was born on 9 April 1817, was one such reasonably prosperous family in Skerries. They ran a thriving business in fishing, trading and shipping with their own vessels. This activity and tradition was carried on by successive generations of the Gowan or MacGowan family into the early part of this present century. John's father was James Gowan or Mac Gowan and his mother was Margaret Ellis of the respected Ellis family who were equally prosperous in agricultural farming. John was the firth of eight children - he had four brothers and three sisters.

May I mention here that a nephew of Father Gowan, called Captain John Gowan, who carried on the family tradition, had his own ship the Brigantine "Reaper" trading out of the ports of Skerries and Ringsend, with Britain and Canada. Unfortunately he with ship and crew of eight, were lost off the Coast of Anglesey on 7 October 1878. Captain Gowan was my mother's grandfather, that means that I am

a great, great grand nephew of Fr. Gowan.

The Gowan family were imbued with a love of Ireland and all things Irish, especially its Catholic faith. This great love was passed on to John, his brothers and sisters. John was also greatly influenced by Father Henry Young, Curate in Skerries who was renowned for his goodness, humility and holiness. As John at an early age expressed the intention to enter the priesthood, Fr. Young encouraged him and also spoke to his mother on the matter. John was then sent to a well known classical school in Templemore. After a short time it was decided by John's father to transfer him to a newly opened classical school run by a great scholar, Dr. Doyle on Usher's Quay, Dublin.

After three years of intensive study and at the young age of 17 years, John entered Maynooth College Seminary. Though quite a good student, he was not brilliant. He made up for this shortcoming, by his determination, tenacity and hard work. He liked games and was very active, even though he was not very tall or particularly robust. On entering Maynooth he couldn't sing a note. Realizing how important singing was in the church's ceremonies, he decided to do all possible to develop his voice. His determination and strength of will are shown by the fact that he not only learned to sing but became one of the Choir Leaders and eventually Choir Master of the college.

After three years Theology and almost seven years at Maynooth, he was ordained some days after his 24th birthday 1840, by Bishop Dr. Murray in his private oratory in Mountjoy Square, Dublin. A week after his first mass in Skerries, he was appointed to the Parish of Clondalkin in Palmerstown, Dublin. Before he could take up this post, however, he became quite ill. Years later he always said that this was an example of God and his Holy Mother watching over and guiding him in his life. When he recovered from his illness the Clondalkin post was already filled, and so he was appointed to the District of Glendalough where the Parish priest was Father Clarke, with whom he developed a wonderful rapport and friendship. This appointment thrilled him. He was delighted with the County of Wicklow and its farming people. He loved Glendalough, with its many ruins and its centuries old history of Holiness. He quickly developed very close and warm relations with his Parishioners - the kind, generous, open hearted and hard working small farmers of Wicklow. Even to this day, descendants of those parishioners, speak with great affection of Fr. Gowan's great work and piety.

Within six years of his taking up his ministry in Wicklow, came the shattering and unforgettable changes with the catastrophic disaster of the Great Famine. His experiences during those terrible years of the Great Hunger had a momentous influence on his whole life, and left an indelible mark on his innermost soul and mind. Never ever afterwards could he forget the harrowing scenes which he witnessed, and the frightening events which he experience. Some forty years later, when giving a lecture on the subject of the Famine Years before Archbishop Walsh in Dublin, he spoke with great emotion of those never to be forgotten years. He explained how he was completely amazed at the terrible shock and utter consternation which seized the

people and seemed to paralyse them from any action or movement. They were entirely dumbfounded to see their main or only food supply turn rotten before their eyes, leaving them starving. He went on to tell of their astounding, deepseated and innate honesty which meant that although there was plenty of food all around them they nevertheless starved rather than touch another person's goods. He described their unbelievable resignation and acquiescence to starvation and death, which they accepted as the Will of God. As an example of the appalling overall conditions governing the supply of food, he spoke of Fr. Clarke and himself existing on one meal a day consisting of porridge with a little rice. In his talk he also gave credit and praise to those more fortunate people who tried to help by their good works and contributions of money. One such person was David Charles de la Touche with whom he formed a committee, which collected money to help the starving and arranged that they could buy meal at a quarter or half the selling prices.

In his talk he gave many harrowing examples of the events which he witnessed, and of the frustrations he experienced at believing that despite his untiring efforts he could achieve so little towards altering or lessening the disaster, which was devastating the whole country. It is therefore not surprising to learn that, after almost ten years work in Wicklow among the people he loved, he realized that he himself required more spiritual strength and power. He was, therefore, convinced that he was called to a more intensive religious life.

In 1849 he left his beloved Glendalough and Roundwood which had so completely influenced his whole career to join the Vincentians - The Sons of St. Vincent de Paul, at their Novitiate in Paris. He spent a year of intensive prayer and then took his vows - Poverty, Chastity and Obedience - vows which he fulfilled most conscientiously and faithfully throughout his life. From Paris he was sent back to the Order's Mission House, St. Peters, Phibsboro, Dublin. With several other members of the Order he was sent travelling throughout Ireland, giving missions in the many growing Parishes and Religious Houses. Typical of the man he was, he threw himself into his work with untiring energy, love and determination. He was particularly active and zealous in developing devotion to the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. He was also a great advocate of devotion to the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and St. Brigid as well as the Angel Guardian all of whom were always foremost in his prayers.

During his travels, especially in the South and West he learned at first hand, and was daily faced with, the increasing proselytizing activities among the Irish poor of the representatives of the Protestant churches and organizations. At that time evictions were greatly increasing. The landlords were turning to ranching and cattle raising. They, therefore, considered it more economic and profitable to evict and get rid of their struggling and poor tenant farmers and to raise to the ground their humble homes. Very many families became destitute and as a consequence were forced to enter the workhouses. This meant that their children were usually handed over to Protestant homes and orphanages. Parentless or orphaned children were automatically placed with the Smileys and other Protestant proselytizing groups.

In 1856 a new episode, and the second great turning point, in Father Gowan's

life began, when he met the dynamic and very pious Margaret Alyward.

The Alywards were a great Catholic Irish Family in Waterford whose house was often the meeting place for such great men as Ignatius Rice, Founder of the Christian Brothers, Daniel O'Connell, The Liberator, Thomas Francis Meagher, William Smith O'Brien and other prominent people. Miss Alyward grew up filled with zeal to do her part to help her country. Fate intervened, however, in that she became very ill, and was sent to Dublin by her family to get medical attention to combat the great severity of the illness. While recovering she became increasingly aware of the activities of proselytizers among the Irish poor and she was determined to do all possible within her power to protect and guide the endangered poor children. In Father Gowan her confessor she met a person who not only directed, guided and encouraged her spiritually but also was most enthusiastic to assist her by every means in her power in her efforts to protect such unfortunate children. Together, and having obtained the approval of Archbishop Dr. Cullen, they set up a house called St. Brigid's Orphanage, Eccles Street. Here they received orphaned and homeless children, fed and clothed them and then placed them to be reared and cared for with Catholic families.

In 1860 Miss Alyward was sentenced for Contempt of Court to imprisonment in the rather notorious Criminal Prison of Grangegorman, because she was unable to hand over to the Courts, or state the whereabouts of, an Orphan who was being reared by a Catholic Family in Belgium. On her release from prison after six months she found that the voluntary help on which she and Father Gowan had relied was completely insufficient and inadequate to sustain the activities of St. Brigid's Home and their vital work for orphans. Encouraged by the enthusiasm of Fr. Gowan and with his very active support and full cooperation, they set up and founded in 1861 a new Sisterhood called the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Faith. Its aim was to combat proselytizing by providing instruction for the youth. The Vincentian Order appointed Fr. Gowan as Spiritual Director of the Sisterhood, a duty which he filled with all his powers up to his death. The base of the Congregation was 46 Eccles Street but with the rapid growth of the Sisterhood a new house was opened at Glasnevin which became the Mother House.

It was customary at that time for children attending the State operated day schools to be enticed to change over to Protestantism by being offered soup, food and money. There were no alternative schools for these poor children. To meet this problem Fr. Gowan and Mother Mary Agatha (as she was now called) opened their first antiproselytizing school in a hall in Crow Street off Dame Street in 1861. This was followed by a second in Great Strand Street and another in Lower Dominic Street. When Crow St. became too small a large school was built in Clarendon Street and opened in 1873. At the same time Cardinal Cullen assisted them to open a boarding school at Glasnevin. Many other convents and schools followed.

During these years while he was fully active in all these important developments, Fr. Gowan was stationed at the Vincentian College Castleknock, where he was Professor of English. Nevertheless, he travelled every day to St. Brigid's

Orphanage and also frequently visited the many convents and schools of the Sisters. Later in the sixties he was transferred to the Vincentian Mission House in Phibsboro. This enabled him to increase his work towards the religious instruction of the Sisters of Holy Faith in the different convents and schools, which her was encouraging them to set up.

One of his great wishes was fulfilled when Mother Mary Agatha supported by a £1,000 donation from his mother's relatives, the Ellis family, opened the Holy Faith Convent and schools in 1873 in his home town Skerries.

It was not surprising that his constant activities and untiring efforts in carrying out his great work affected his health. He was gradually losing his sight, and indeed only an operation in 1871 saved him from total blindness. For many years too he had been constantly suffering from Bronchitis.

In 1878 he was sent to Lisbon, Portugal to recover from a serious attack of the illness. On his return in 1878 his health was still quite weak, nevertheless he threw himself with renewed vigour into his work. He saw this as particularly necessary as his great co-worker the ageing Mother Mary Agatha was seriously ill, worn out by her tireless efforts for Irish children. He attended her constantly and was praying by her bedside when she died on 11 October 1880.

During the eighties and nineties Fr. Gowan was a frequent visitor to the new diocesan college Holy Cross Clonliffe, where he gave religious instruction. Though his health was not strong he worked untiring, visiting the convents and schools of the Holy Faith and carrying out his work as Spiritual Advisor to the Sisters. He took every opportunity to encourage devotion to Mary the Mother of God. He also constantly encouraged everything Irish, the customs, songs, music and especially the language. Himself a fluent Irish speaker, he expressed his conviction that the Irish Language would be revived. Under no circumstances would he allow what he called "his schools to be placed under the direction of the so called National Board of Education". He also insisted on the display of the crucifix, holy pictures and religious statues in "his schools". While carrying out his usual routine of regularly visiting and giving instruction in the Convents and Schools of the Holy Faith, he visited Newtownmountkennedy in his dearly beloved Wicklow on 15 January 1897 and examined the orphans there. On his return to Dublin, he lectured on the subject of Death at a retreat. The following morning he said Mass for the Sisters at Glasnevin. Some hours later of 16 January 1897 he went to his eternal reward. He is buried in the Convent there not far from the grave of Mother M. Agatha.

Fr. Gowan was not only a great priest, but also a great Irishman. He preached the gospel with great zeal but he also lived it with great humility sanctity and with his whole heart and soul.

May I add that Fr. Gowan's love of Ireland influenced many. Not the least of those so influenced was his own great grand nephew also called Jack - who, in 1922, defending his sincere belief in the right to freedom for all in Ireland, was killed in action in the North King Street area of Dublin.

Dr. J. de V. Mansfield

Childhood Memories

My childhood memories of growing up on a farm at Mullinaveigue in the early years of the 20th century.

Work started in the morning around 7.30 am. The fire was lit by lifting red coals out of the ashes which were swept to one side and taken out in a bucket to the manure heap down the yard. The coals were then put together in the centre of the hearth and fresh turf piled around them. In a short time the turf was blazing and the kettle and pots were hung on hooks from a bar across the chimney.

Then work in the yard commenced. My mother and her domestic help went out to feed calves, pigs and fowl. The men fed the cattle hay and pulped turnips. The turnips were picked by hand into large round baskets and carried around the different houses. The horses were fed oats and hay and led out to a stream to drink. They were then groomed and the bedding cleaned out with four grained forks. The cow and the cattle sheds were also cleaned out and fresh bedding put in. Then the cows were milked and by that time the kettle was boiling and the breakfast was ready which usually consisted of porridge, tea, bread, butter, rashers cut from home cured bacon, eggs and, if a pig had recently been killed, there would also be home made black and white pudding. As we grew older we had to help with the milking and feeding calves before going to school.

Just down the road was another farmhouse, Shamrock Lodge, but better known as "The Grocer Murphy's", because as well as the farm there was also a grocery store. It was owned by four brothers, Will, James, Tom and Ned Murphy. They all shared in the farm work but each had his own particular interest. Will looked after all the farm work in general, Tom looked after the horses and machinery and the tilling and sewing, Ned had a beautiful fruit and vegetable garden and James did all the housework, baking and had a spotless dairy where he did the butter making. He also helped with the milking and always sang hymns when he milked the cows. He went to Bray one day each week and brought back a load of provision for the shop in a light type of horse's car which was called a van. Bread was delivered twice each week by Mr. Donnelly, a baker from Rathdrum in a horse-drawn bread van motorised transport changed all, the brothers passed away one by one and the grocers just came to an end. Sadly there is no trace of the house or farm buildings now. In its place are two beautiful new bungalows.

Kathleen Donohoe

The Football Firsts Of Roundwood G.A.A.

First Club: The first football club under the new G.A.A. rules was formed in Roundwood on the 8th of August 1885 by Larry Murphy of Togher House. He was then a student in Dublin and it was there that he first learnt the new rules.

A club had been formed in Ashford a short time previously by Jack Byrne, a friend of Larry's who himself was student in Dublin at that time.

First match: Although formed in 1885 Roundwood did not play their first official match until March of 1886. Their first big try out was against Ashford on St. Patrick's day which that year fell on a Monday.

On Sunday morning a heavy fall of snow covered the pitch on which the Parochial House now stands. Undaunted the local teams and supporters assembled on the field on the Sunday and cleared the pitch with shovels.

Ashford who had the benefit of playing two games prior to this match (against Dalkey and Barndarrig) won the game. It was hardly surprising to find that Larry Murphy and Jack Byrne captained their respective teams as these two had first introduced G.A.A. to the county and were the first 2 counties to affiliate. We don't know the rest of the team who played in Roundwood's first match but it is reasonable to assume that it was much the same line up as played 7 months later in a famous Inter-Club competition between Wicklow and Wexford county teams. It was played before 12,000 spectators (including Michael Cusack) in the grounds of Avondale House on Sunday October 31st 1886 and featured 6 teams from each county.

Roundwood salvaged Wicklow pride that day when they not only became the only Wicklow team to win a match but in the process beat Rosslare, the Wexford champions, by 4 points to nil. The Roundwood team on that occasion was as follows: Larry Murphy (captain), Patrick Keane, Mick Keenan, Jim Murphy, John Murphy, Andy Doyle, Andy Halpin, Pat Murphy, Gerry McDonnell, Charlie Nolan, John Martin, Morgan Byrne, John Redmond, Tom Jones, Dan Redmond, Jim Brady, Jim Meath, John Keane, Jim Mason, Mick Keogh, Jack Mason, and Christy Byrne in goal.

First Delegates: The first convention of the county took place in Wicklow town on the 26th of December and the first delegates from Roundwood were Larry Murphy and James Kennedy.

First Championship match: Roundwood played their first game in the Wicklow Championship at the Willow Grove on the 19th of February 1888. The opposition were Newtown O'Connells and Roundwood were well beaten by a scoreline of 1-7 to 0-1.

First ever title: Roundwood won their first title in 1931 when they beat Ballymanus in the Intermediate Football Final at Rathdrum after a replay by a score of 2-3 to

1-1. 46 years after Larry Murphy had set the ball rolling Roundwood had won a title and we heard that there was no hay made that year! The team that made history and brought the first title to Roundwood wore black jerseys with an amber band and were as follows: Paddy Davis, Matt Davis, Ger McDonald, Ben Clarkson, Billy Hughes, Joe Keenan, Bill McCabe, Mick Meehan, Jack Byrne, Mick Donohoe, Jimmy Timmons, Jack Doyle, Bill Keenan, Joe Malone, Jack Fortune, and Ben Malone.

First Senior Title: Two years after winning the Intermediate Title Roundwood one their first and only Senior Championship in unusual circumstances. Having won their way through they met Ballymanus in the Semi-final. This turned out to be the longest marathon ever recorded in a Wicklow Championship taking 4 games and more than a year to settle. The first game ended in a draw, we don't know what happened in the second game, the third was abandoned due to incidents, but finally on the 14th of April 1934 the Roundwood team had a clear cut victory of 2-4 to 0-3 in Bray. Ballymanus objected after this game and this took some time to sort out before the Leinster Council finally decided that the player concerned was legal to play for Roundwood.

The team were then fixed to play Blessington in the Final towards the end of 1934 but for some unknown reason Blessington failed to field a team and gave a walkover. The team was as follows: Joe Keenan (Captain), T. Doyle, W. McCabe, B. Clarkson, M. Meehan, J. Byrne, J. Timmons, P. Burke, M. Doyle, L. Timmons, D. Carthy, S. Murphy, G. McDonald, T. McGuirk, W. Doran. Subs were M. Davis, J. Doyle, B. Hughes, M. Donohoe.

First All Ireland Medal: The first Roundwood player to win an All Ireland Medal with his native county was Joe Keenan who played in the 1936 Junior campaign. This was the first All Ireland title ever won by Wicklow and came to fruition on September the 13th of that years when they beat Mayo in the final at Croke Park by 3-3 to 2-5.

Martin Timmons

This article has been abridged from our first Journal (1988) in honour of the successes of An Tochar in 1995.

James Browne

(27th October 1894)

James Browne he lost his life
away from all abode
convenient to the croppies grave
upon Kilefin road.

In Roundwood he resided
all things for to explain
in the service of a bakery
James Kennedy by name.

His task was serving customers
through town and countrywide
of which he was respected
for his ability.

Then one night in mild October
has he was homeward bound
a cruel storm it arose
and the lighting it flashed round.

It appears his beast got frightened
and dashed into a gripe
which caused him on that moment
to lose his precious life.

Throughout that dark and dismal night
his body there did lie
unseen by travelling people
that happened to pass by.

Until early next morning
a man from Trooperstown
on his way to St. Kevin's Church
the lifeless body found.

It would melt you heart with pity
that morning to behold
his body by the roadside
all lifeless still and cold.

Contributed by Mike Kenna

Moneystown Dark Tales

Introduction

The people of a locality, a county and even a nation, are shaped and moulded not alone by the past history but by a mutual inheritance they have received through local Folklore and legend. This Folklore or folk tradition has been inbred in the people of a locality and very often was handed down in poetry or ballads, songs and lyrics, folk tales and local customs. Lore and tradition found it's medium mainly in the ever practised custom of story telling around the open fire on cold dark winter evenings. The art of storytelling can be traced back to the early Celts who kept their culture vibrant through the File and the Scealai who themselves were masters of oral story and poetry relating. These people were honoured among the highest ranks of early Irish society and were still revered into the 19th century. Their repertoire of poems, lyrics and stories filled volumes and thanks to these learned men Ireland can boast of a great bank of traditional and native poems, stories and music.

In 1987 the Senior pupils of Moneystown school were asked to collect from their parents, grand parents and other Senior Citizens of the locality as many stories, legends, poems and customs. The returns were excellent and many local stories, legends, cures, tales of crafts and trades, traditions arrived at my desk many of which dated back into the last century. Many of these were printed by Michael Coey in his book 'Finding Folklore' which published by Bray Folklore in 1988.

What these simple stories bring to mind is that here in the Wicklow hills the old tradition of story telling was still strong and practised up until quite recently. The older generation heard these stories probably as young boys and girls. With the coming of radio and television the art diminished or died in the area. Luckily many have survived in the subconscious of the older generation only to be received by the questioning of their grandchildren. Unfortunately many tales have been lost but we are lucky in that some have survived. Further down the pages samples of these fireside tales are included for the reader. The two principal themes of these are ghost and fairy tales. In bygone days people seemed to enjoy these themes above all others. Why is another matter and needs further investigation and study. The Roundwood Historical and Folklore Society would be most thankful to any local person who is conversant with such stories to contact a member so that they can be collected and not lost to posterity.

Setting The Scene

In order to understand the whys and the wherefores of Irish storytelling it is important to cast the imagination back in time to about 1880 or thereabouts. Times were harsh for the ordinary rural people. Life centred around the small immediate locality with very limited contact outside this area. Roads were poor; transport and movement restricted to beast and cart; electricity would not arrive for many years yet and any

form of entertainment for the ordinary populace was self-produced.

Night life was to be found in the homes and not in the centres as it is today. Neighbours visited neighbours, to spread the local news, to gossip and, depending on the company and time of year the stories would be told. The people usually sat on stools in a semi circle around a big open turf or wood fire. An old lamp or a couple of candles cast a shadowy light around the room and both created an eerie atmosphere in the little thatched dwelling. The occupants huddled close together in anticipation. The storyteller could be a local who had the talent or it could be a travelling man (scailpin) who was passing through the district, who was given a night's lodgings, and who would recompense the household with a selection of terrifying or humorous tales delivered from the fireside. The writer Victor O'Power used the travelling woman 'Kitty the Hare' as his vehicle of delivery of some gruesome tales to entertain many generations of school boys and girls in the 'Our Boys' magazine.

The storyteller in order to hold the attention of the avid listeners created and intensified the already charged atmosphere. This was done through the tone of speech and the use of special phrases interspersed throughout the story and depending on the theme or moral the tone played a crucial role. The tone dropped and the words of narration were delivered slowly in almost an inaudible graveside voice. This meant that the listeners had to strain to keep up with the story. Phrases such as 'God bless the hearers', 'God bless us all here tonight', 'May the Lord take pity on his tormented soul', and descriptions like 'poor wretch', or 'A tormented or demented soul' all added to the atmosphere but also drew the listeners into the story itself and now they were no longer an audience but the participants. A good storyteller could through his or her language, descriptive and narrative skills, draw his stunned audience into a type of Twilight Zone which would leave them breathless after the tale had long finished.

When local storytellers delivered the ghost and fairy tales they usually related stories about individuals who once had lived in the area and these people and their histories often centred in the Big House(s) of the locality. For some reason these Manors invariably harboured some dreaded secret which eventually caused the downfall or disintegration of the once powerful dynasty. The Big House always had a special room visited on occasions by a phantom who turned out to be the tormented spirit of a previous occupier. Stories abounded about the tyrannical squire or landlord who abused the surrounding tenants and those who crossed swords with this demon incarnate. The stories often recounted the strange happenings associated with the funerals of these tyrants and how the Powers of Darkness finally claimed the souls of these individuals when they eventually shuffled off their 'mortal coils'. The stories pinpointed lanes, boreens, cross-roads, graveyards, streams, ponds, lakes, hills, hollows and woods where evil or magic were associated and which the listeners were only too familiar. Sometimes when a story had finished aspects of the tale might be debated amongst the listeners. Often tales with a similar theme to the one just narrated would be admitted and recounted by some member of the gathering. In this way different versions of a basic theme circulated in a neighbourhood. One thing was that those

present on the night were very familiar with the basic details of the tale.

Very often a decade of the Rosary was recited as a protective measure for those who had to face the dark road home now that the 'ceili' was over. The prayers were said to ward off any evil lurking in the night and to keep the travellers safe on their homeward journey. Generally after a night around the open fire the visitors left in pairs or other groups which shows what emotional impact these stories had.

The culture of the story telling was an intrinsic part of Irish society for many centuries. It was there when the entire population communicated in the Gaelic language and it made its transition to English as the native language relinquished its place among the native Irish. The story folklore tradition in rural areas remained steadfast until the radio and television became commonplace in most homes and like many other vestiges of our culture has slipped unnoticed into oblivion to be replaced by the audio and visual refinement of the satellite dish!

What follows are random samples of fairy and ghost stories collected in the Moneystown area by the schoolchildren in 1987.

Fairy Tales 1

One summers night a good few years ago a local farmer was returning home to Moneystown after a profitable day down in Glenealy. He was in good spirits as he drove his horse and cart at an easy pace towards the incline at Barnbawn. The night was quiet with no wind and a large moon lighted the winding road ahead of him. Coming up Barnbawn he got down from the cart to lighten the load and to lead his horse to the top of the steep hill. Slowly both man and beast came to a clump of large trees whose branches overshadowed and overhung the grave road. He had passed this spot many times before without incident but this time things were different. He could distinctly hear several high pitched voices high up in the branches of the trees. The voices seemed gibbering and laughing as if enjoying a funny story or tale. Both man and horse stopped dead in their tracks and peered up at the branches above them. Lo and behold, sitting or perched on one of the lower limbs of a large beech sat six small men chatting among themselves almost oblivious of the dumbfounded farmer parked on the track below them. The frightened man did not know what to do, should he speak or just continue on as if he had not noticed this nocturnal apparition?

Without warning the six small individuals dropped almost weightless to the road a few paces from the man and cart. The poor man was now beginning to tremble and a cold sweat erupted. However they gave him a friendly greeting and asked perchance if he was heading in the direction of Parkmore and Moneystown. He mumbled that he was surely. He was politely asked if he would give them a lift. The man agreed although he felt that their combined weight might be too heavy for the old tiring horse. He was still too afraid to refuse them. The six little men leaped into the cart and much to the farmer's surprise the old horse seemed to have no problem moving the crowded dray up the steep incline up to Garryduff Cross-roads.

Turning right at the cross-roads the unfortunate farmer and his 'guests' continued slowly by Parkmore on the left. The moon cast eerie shadows across the

hills and bogland. Still the six small men chatted merrily between themselves in a language which the farmer could not comprehend. They seemed to pay no heed to the farmer or his emotional problem as they progressed along the lonely stretch of road. Eventually when they arrived at Byrne's Bog one of the wee gentlemen motioned to the farmer to stop the horse and cart. He complied immediately wondering what now was in store. Each of the little men jumped down from the cart and thanked the farmer for the lift to the bog. They immediately crossed over a gate and into a field. Dancing their way through ferns and tall grass they wound their way to the old fairy fort and were lost from sight as if swallowed in to the foundations of the raheen.

The farmer remained glued to the spot on the road where the wee folk had alighted from his cart. For him everything was still at a standstill. The golden moon still shone brightly in the summer night and a slight cool breeze sprung up. All was normal for that time of year except for the farmer who had a most strange encounter on the way home from Glenealy.

II

Way back in the time of our great grandparents two Moneystown farmers joined forces to plough a very big field. Both had ploughs and started the ploughing at either side of this large field so that they would eventually meet in the middle. This was the way these neighbours had managed to plough this large expanse in previous years. Located in the centre of the field was a fairy ring.

The two men decided to work all day without a break because signs were that bad weather was on the way and they needed to have the field ploughed before the weather broke. It was late in the evening when exhaustion and hunger overcame the pair who had toiled since sunrise. They were quite close to the fairy fort now which in previous years they had left untouched for fear and respect of the fairies. They repaired to the nearest house for something to eat. They left the horses at one end where they could fodder on the grass verge. In the house they ate a hearty meal and rested awhile. Having regained their strength they returned to the horses to finish the work before the sun went down. The horses and ploughs seemed to be in the places where they had left them but all the remainder of the ploughing had been completed while they were in the house.

The fairies had been at work!

III

One of the most widely known stories regarding fairies in the Moneystown area involves a living person who went missing for a few days as a very young child. Tiny Harvey was 3 years old when she went missing and caused great stir and consternation in Moneystown and Trooperstown. It began one day when she and her two older sisters went walking along Trooperstown. Some say the older sisters told Tiny to return home as the journey would be too strenuous for her while others maintain that she sat down to pick flowers and that the two sisters continued on without her. When she had finished picking the flowers she rose up and called out to her sisters

but got no answer. Not knowing where she was, she roamed here and there in an effort to find the path home but to no avail. Darkness fell and she fell asleep under a tree.

In the meantime the two sisters returned home without her and were mystified that she had not arrived home before them. Fear and panic erupted in the home because darkness was descending fast. Friends and neighbours were contacted and made aware of the situation. The population of the surrounding area immediately set out to locate the missing child. They searched high and low, mountains, woods, fields, bogs, roads, lanes and boreen but neither sight nor trace of the little girl could be found. The whole district of Roundwood, Laragh, Ashford, Rathdrum and Glenealy were all made aware of the missing Harvey girl.

Three days afterwards a farmer travelling on the Cullentragh side of the Avonmore river close to Clara met a little three year old girl alone in the woods. Although alone and so young she did not seem frightened, ill-treated or even hungry. He had heard about the missing child from Moneystown and soon returned her safe to her family. One can only surmise the joy and relief of the family at the safe return of their child. The extraordinary phenomenon was the location of her discovery which was quite some distance from where she was 'lost' by her sisters. The river was quite swollen just at this time and there were no bridges adjacent. It posed the question: How did a three year old child manage to cross the rapids at that point?

The information which the little girl shed on the escapade was also mystifying to the hearers. She said after she lost her way on the first day, that it grew dark quite suddenly and that she fell asleep under a large tree. She later heard sweet music which roused her from her dreams and that she found herself in the company of the fairies. She either joined their company or they brought her with them across the countryside. She felt quite safe in their company as they posed no threat to her. She made no contact with any human until she met the farmer in Clara Vale. To this day the mystery still remains as to what happened during those missing days all those years ago.

IV

Between Garryduff Cross-roads and Cronybyrne lies the small townland of Montiagh. The meaning is the boggy or marshy land. Situated in this remote townland is a fairy ring. Some maintain that if one listens carefully at 4 O Clock each day strange sad music may be heard. This enchanting music seems to come from the fairy ring. Those who have heard the music claim that it is fairy music being played by the good people beneath the raheen.

V

Nowadays no one would admit to believing in fairies. I have never encountered them but I heard of at least one family in the locality who believed in the power, presence and protection. This family was forever mindful of the good people and were always careful not to offend them in any wilful manner. They believed that the

good people passed through their yard every night. The cow shed window was always left open for them to pass through. No matter how cold or windy the night would be, that particular window could not be shut for fear of annoying the fairies. To my knowledge the cow shed was never damaged as a result of leaving the window open.

A fairy fort was nearby on which grew thorny bushes and ferns. No one was allowed to use the wood from it not even the small 'cipseens' needed to light the fire. The last member of this family died in July 1979 aged 96.

An old lady who died in 1922 recalled having seen the fairies cross from Brockagh, under Farringtons of Kilalane, go up the nearby hill and down into Drummin. These were no ordinary fairies - according to this old lady - they were on horse back. Good and bad deeds were attributed to these folk. If they were disturbed or upset in any way they would take revenge on individuals or families and ill luck would visit them. Even people who would not admit to belief in a fairy were afraid to interfere in any way with a fairy fort of lonely fairy bush standing alone in the middle of an open field.

Ghost Stories 1

One winter's evening more than 40 years ago Margaret Byrne of Glenacoria was walking home from work. Presently she arrived at the old Estate gates of Cronybyrne. These gates had been closed and locked for years. She continued a few paces 'til she reached the big tree in the middle of the cross-roads close to the lodge. Suddenly for no apparent reason a great fear seemed to engulf her completely. She could not explain why she felt such anxiety but it remained with her. She stopped and returned her gaze to the old iron gates of the old domain. There in front of the entrance stood a tall gaunt bony man. He was dressed all in white and his colourless white features seemed to reflect the colour of his garments. He just stood there at the closed gates gazing intently at her but never shifted his position. Margaret did not recognise him but believed that she faced a ghost or spectre of some former occupant of Cronybyrne House.

She immediately turned on her heel and walked quickly past the big tree and headed towards Glenacoria. Having travelled a short distance she furtively glanced back but the stranger had vanished completely. The following morning on her way to work she carefully investigated the area where the stranger had stood the night before but there were no tracks or marks on the damp muddy ground where he had appeared the evening before. The gate remained closed and did not seem to have been tampered with. Where had this strange person come from and where did he vanish to on that fateful evening? Margaret remained adamant as to what she had witnessed till the end of her days.

This is only one of the many strange tales in circulation about Cronybyrne House.

II

Cronybyrne Demesne belonged to the Byrne family who were a wealthy Catholic family who had survived the Penal times and lasted right up to the 1970s. The estate boasted of over 300 acres located near Montiagh, Glenwood and Garryduff. On the domain the big house is situated at the end of a long avenue. Today it is in ruins and the lands are owned by Coillte.

The house, stables and avenue are believed to be haunted and very few local people will pay nocturnal visits to the Estate for fear of meeting past members of the Byrne family.

One strange story relates that at the dead of night a carriage and horses travel up the old gravel avenue to the yard and stables. People claim they have seen both the coach and heard the iron-rimmed wheels crunch on the stones. However no wheel marks or tracks have ever been discovered which is rather strange!

In earlier times when the groom at the stables would come out of his quarters to attend the arriving vehicle no carriage could be found despite the clatter of hooves and the noise of wheels! On other nights it has been said that the carriage would speed up the avenue with a headless driver and a headless footman. Castlekevin is another Big House that has witnessed strange encounters. On certain nights the sound of a car is to be heard travelling up the stony avenue to the Georgian residence. On arrival at the house the doors of a car can be heard opening and closing. Then the car pulls away and disappears, the house door opens and closes and footsteps ascend the stairs to the upper storey. Throughout all of this activity nobody or nothing has ever been seen although the noises have been clearly heard by people both inside and outside.

III

Many years ago a local landlord who was supposed to have lived at the Castlekevin Estate died. This man did not believe in the Catholic Faith of most of the local people which they could understand. He, however, ridiculed publicly the people's beliefs and their practices of religion and this they could not forgive easily.

When it was time for the removal of his corpse for burial a horse drawn hearse arrived at the big house and parked opposite the main front hall door. The coffin containing the remains was placed in the large black hearse. When it was time for the funeral cortege to move towards the cemetery the horses refused to take a step forward. No amount of coaxing or force could budge the steadfast animals from their rooted spot. The drivers and coachmen tried everything they knew to dislodge the horses but to no avail. Then in total desperation it was suggested that a priest be called to expedite the departure of the hearse from the Estate. Eventually a priest arrived and carried out some form of exorcism and then blessed the hearse and coffin. Only then did the horses move from the front of the house and the sombre file of coaches wound their way down the hill and on to the local graveyard where the burial took place.

Yet many local people then and for many years questioned the authenticity of the priest who performed the exorcism. Some went so far as to say that the priest was

a warlock disguised and who evoked the powers of evil to move the hearse on that fateful day.

IV

Many years ago a man and his son lived together in a small house near Tomriland Cross-roads. At that time there used to be a kind of Festival and huge numbers of people gathered at Glendalough. These Patterns were infrequent and were infamous for violence and over indulgence in drink. Great hurts were caused at these gatherings and long lasting feuds between families and neighbours often resulted from these faction fights.

The son decided to go and as he set out on his journey from Tomriland to Glendalough, he carried a blackthorn stick as a protection, his father warned him to take care. The young man promised him that he would return that very night and for the older man not to worry.

The day passed quietly for the old man as he worked on his tiny homestead. Later he ate his supper and went to his bed in a small bedroom off the kitchen. It was after midnight when he heard the latch lift on the kitchen door and footsteps enter the house. Suddenly the house seemed instantly to grow perishingly cold although it was not a cold night and there had been a big fire in the hearth all evening. The father shouted down from the room: "Well, you came home anyway". The son replied that he had as he had promised earlier in the morning before he ventured to Glendalough. He also told his father that he would not be staying because he had lost his life in a brawl earlier in the evening. On hearing these words the unfortunate father leaped from his bed and dashed to the kitchen only to find an empty room. He rushed out to the yard and searched the whole vicinity of the house but not a trace of his son could be found. He knew he had not been dreaming or even asleep and that he distinctly heard his own son's voice speak to him from the kitchen and still he could not be found after he delivered the horrific news.

The older man repaired immediately to Glendalough only to receive verification of the earlier message that his son had died earlier in a fracas. It was a case where a young man kept his word to his father!

V

A local woman was said to have died in a mine in the Glendalough area. The body was never found despite an extensive search of the various shafts. Some time afterwards her son was walking past the old mines when suddenly he was alarmed by an almighty howl behind him coming out of one of the shafts. The howling and wailing carried a cry that sounded half human - half animal. He wheeled around and to his terror he stood face to face with his dead mother, she was half human and half dog!

Frank McGillick

Events Of The Year

Last year was another successful year for the society highlighted by the 3rd Roundwood Historical Seminar 'Wicklow at Work' in May. The Seminar was opened by our Chairman, Sean Kavanagh, on Friday evening and the opening lecture was given by Dr. Patrick Wallace, Director of the National Museum, on Craftwork in Ireland through the ages. This was followed by a wine and cheese reception. On Saturday morning Seamus O'Maitiu, Jim Rees, Ian Cantwell, Frank McGillick gave various talks on society in the county during the Famine Period. In the afternoon John Timmons, Danny Rochford, Paddy Cunningham, Jack Fallon and James Murphy talked about their lives and work. At the same time there were craft demonstrations by Patricia Byrne and Kathleen O'Donohoe on Butter making, Claire Sally on lace making, Juliet Belton on Spinning, Joan Hatton on Pan Bread baking in Darcy's forge and Joe Timmons and Ned Hatton on Dry Stone Wall Building. This proved to be very popular with over 100 people attending. On Sunday morning John Glennon gave a talk on Hollywood which was followed by a field trip to the Mines of Luganure led by Ian Cantwell and Robert Carter. Over all we had an attendance of about 250 and we are grateful to Dr. William Nolan, U.C.D. for his assistance and sponsorship. Norah Swords and Catherine Taube contributed with some marvellous catering. We wish also to thank those who supported us in any way. We are now planning the 1996 Seminar.

During the year we had 2 lectures given by Brendan O'Cathaoir on Thomas Davis and the Young Islanders in memory of the 150th anniversary of his death and by Powel Evans on Monsterboice.

During the Summer the society had a variety of field trips. Locally we visited Castlekevin, The Bread and Butter Stone at Trooperstown, and Diamond Hill. In the county we visited Ballyknocken with Seamus O'Maitiu and Hollywood with John Glennon both of who we wish to thank for sharing their knowledge with us. Our Day trip was to Northern Ireland where we visited Belfast and the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

Finally we hope you have enjoyed this Journal and thank you for your support. If you have any articles or information you would like to have published please contact the Editor or any member of the committee.

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