

Roundwood & District

History & Folklore Journal

No. 8

£3

Avondale Chemicals, Rathdrum
Avonmore Credit Union
Avonmore Gun Club, Roundwood
Bank of Ireland, Rathdrum
Brady's, Rambler's Rest, Baker's Corner
The Hon. Garech Browne, Luggala
Butler's Medical Hall, Wicklow
John Byrne, Heating & Plumbing, Moneystown
Byrne's Newsagent, Roundwood
Clara Lara Nurseries
The Coach House, Roundwood
Connolly's Supermarket, Roundwood
Crown Roofing, Roundwood
E. M. Doyle Associates, Bray
Gerry Doyle's Garage, Roundwood
Pat Doyle MCC Newtownmountkennedy
Tony Doyle's Coaches, Enniskerry
Drumbawn Farm
Roger Dwan & Co., Roundwood
Flynn Refrigeration, Roundwood
Colm Galligan, Roundwood
Grove Farm, Ballinastoe
Seamus Healy, Roundwood
His & Hers, Hair Salon, Roundwood

(Continued inside back cover)

*Roundwood and District
Historical and Folklore Society*

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From The Chair

In 1987 the Roundwood and District Historical and Folklore Society was formed, and over the past nine years we have been collecting and publishing articles, stories and poetry relevant to our area. We have also been compiling an archive of local historical material which will be there for future generations of local historians to avail of.

I am now happy to introduce you to our eighth Journal, and wish you happy reading, particularly our readers who live far away from home - we hope some of the articles will bring back happy memories to you.

Our society has had another busy year, with various lectures, field trips and a very successful Seminar held in May on the theme 'Wicklow's Landed Estates'.

I would like to express our appreciation to all our Patrons, those who contribute articles, the shopkeepers who sell the Journal, and our Editor, Ian Cantwell, for his dedicated work.

Finally, a very special thanks to Fr. Conn Breen, who, in 1987 was a founder member of the Society, and whose constant support and encouragement has been instrumental in the continuing success of the Society.

Enjoy the read.

Sean Kavanagh
Chairman

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Gaelic Economy, Society and Expansion

The remarkable survival of the Gaelic tribes in the Wicklow mountains until the time of Cromwell has never been fully explained. In the following article I wish to briefly examine some of the factors which in my opinion not only led to their survival but to their conquest of the region. The physical geography of the Wicklow uplands and of the territory in general contributed to the resurgence of the *Ui Dunlainge* families.

I will attempt to recreate the landscape of medieval Wicklow from descriptions given by contemporaries and from the views of modern historians. To the early Normans highland Wicklow was a land of stunning beauty, danger and fabulous mythology. According to Gerald of Wales the Fitzgeralds discovered a minotaur like creature which was begotten by the people of the mountains through odd sexual practices with cows. However he came to a grizzly end when the Irish murdered it because to them it was an embarrassment. The mountain massif was clothed in dense mixed forests. Liam Price and Alfred Smyth have commented on their diversity. They supported their ideas with studies of the place names of the county such as Newrath (abounding in yews, *An Iubhrach*), Cullenmore (much holly, *Cuilleann Mor*), Glenealy (The glen of the beeches, *Gleann Fhaidhle*), and Bahana (abounding in birch, *Beitheanach*) which illustrate the mixed nature of Wicklow. However the constitution of the forests were predominantly oak. In the higher reaches of the mountains the forests gave way to tracts of sterile granite. The rivers ran from the mountains to the sea through the coastal regions which were fertile though badly drained and swampy. Three ancient passes trisected the *Fortuatha* connecting the coast with the interior. Henry Chrysted, an Englishman who observed Gaelic Wicklow first hand as a prisoner of the Irish during the 1360s described the area to the Historian Froissart in the 1390s: "I must tell you, to give a clearer idea of the campaign, that Ireland is one of the most difficult countries in the world to fight against and subdue, for it is a strange, wild place consisting of tall trees, great stretches of water, bogs and uninhabitable regions."

Within this protecting landscape Gaelic society flourished. The heavily wooded climate became their greatest weapon. In short the landscape allowed the Irish to reject Anglo Norman government and maintain their culture and institutions. During times of war it became their greatest defence as it evened the odds and handed military advantage to the inhabitants. This is graphically illustrated during Richard II's trek in search of Art MacMurchadha and his ally Donnchadha O'Broin throughout the county in 1399. Richard II had realised the danger of the woods and employed 2,500 woodcutters to clear a path for his army. Creton in his account echoed the experiences of the myriads that served on campaigns in Wicklow when he wrote "You must know that it is so deep in many places that, unless you are very careful to observe where you go, you will plunge in up to the middle, or sink in altogether" and "This is their retreat, and therefore no one can catch them".

Government armies never really came to grips with terrain of Wicklow. As late as 1580 Lord Deputy Grey's army was cut to pieces in the great bastion of Gaelic Wicklow and the *Ui Bhroin*, Glenmalure, by the war lord Fiachaidh MacAodha O'Broin. It was

not until the substantial deforestation of the 17th and 18th centuries and the construction of military roads that central Wicklow was extensively opened up to the rule of the English Government at Dublin. Even then government forces suffered at the hands of Hugh Vesty Byrne and Michael Dwyer who waged a guerrilla war campaign in the early 1800s after the defeat of the United Irishmen at Vinegar Hill in 1798. If it was not for the woods and forests of the Fortuatha Laigin Gaelic society would not have survived so long. It was a shelter for the 'ill-disposed' in the eyes of Dublin.

One factor which contributed immensely to the survival of the *Ui Bhroin* and *Ui Thuathail* was their relatively quick adaptation to the conditions of life of their new environment from their respective entries into the mountains which have always been capable of supporting population groups. There probably has been settlement in the area since the Neolithic times. Alfred Smyth, in his book *Celtic Leinster*, suggests that since the early Bronze age the higher reaches of these peaks have supported agriculture. He adds "Vast areas still were under forest which were capable of being turned into farmlands ... this is the only adequate explanation for the flourishing of Gaelic dynasties in the Wicklow Hills". Without doubt the pastoral agriculture practised by the Irish aided them in Wicklow which was one of the staples of their economy. Much of the highlands were only suitable for stock rearing. Their little black cows, sheep, goats and pigs provided them with meat, cheese, butter, leather and wool as well as economic security. They could be driven off to places of safety when armies or raiders approached, while crops were easy prey for the incendiary's firebrand. Cattle among the Irish was the standard monetary unit. Creton, when recalling Art MacMurchadha's descent from a hill to parley with the Earl of Gloucester in 1399, noted that "He had a horse without housing or a saddle which was so fine and good that it cost him, they said, four hundred cows; for their is little money in the country, wherefore their usual is only with cattle".

Yet appearances were deceptive. Many contemporary commentators, both Norman and English, were convinced that the Irish were rooted in pastoralism, in a sense tied to the cow's tail. Their observations probably come from their viewing of the Gaelic practise of booleying. Booleying or transhumance involved the driving of herds in the summer to high pastures within the mountains by their guardians, the *caoruigheachtal*. Later in the autumn they returned to the lower slopes of the valleys. When invading government forces stumbled across large areas of cereal cultivation they were often surprised. Lord Mountjoy was shocked by the sophistication of Irish cereal growing in Offaly during his bloody campaign of 1600. Within the mountains much of the soil was acidic which is suitable for cereal growing. Expansion by the *Ui Bhroin* can be partially understood by a desire for more lands to support an increasing population. In later centuries corn surpluses were often produced. During the final campaign by Ludlow against Bran and Aodh O'Broin in the summer of 1652, Colonel George Cooke, the Governor of Wexford wrote of the agricultural wealth of the *Ui Bhroin*: "In searching the woods and bogs we found great stores of corn which we burnt, also all the houses and cabins we could find, in all of which we found plenty of corn. We continued burning and destroying for four days, in which time we wanted no provision for horse or men to lie in, though we burnt our quarters every morning and continued burning all day". Cooke, amazed added: "He was an idle soldier that had not a fat lamb, veal, pig, poultry or all of them, every night for his

supper". The overall effect can be seen from a further two quotes: "The enemy in these parts chiefly depended on this country for provisions" and "I believe we destroyed as much as would have served some thousands until the next harvest". With their patrimony destroyed and laid open the last Ui Bhroin lords of Gabhal Ranelagh fled the Fortuatha.

Oats seem to have dominated cereal cultivation. Raymond of Perelhos was given a gift of oatcakes by O'Neill in 1397, which was considered a delicacy among the Irish. Wild animals were bountiful in the mountains and the Irish were able to supplement their diet with wild game such as boar and deer along with the exploitation of mountain fisheries. At the height of their power in the 15th century the Wicklow kingdoms were founded on a strong agricultural base.

Despite their firm economic foundation they were not entirely self sufficient. In turn, the Norman settlers and merchants wished to trade with them. This led to peaceable contact and a fusing of their relative economies. The Gaelic would have sold or traded hides, wool, cured pork, furs, timber, hawks and hounds and imported salt, grain, wine, horses, weapons, iron, clothing and jewellery. The introduction of 'hard currency' through this barter strengthened the mountain economy. Wicklow's woods were always an attraction to the government. Throughout the 13th century timber was exploited for construction by the settlers. Thirty oak trees were granted to the Friars of St. Dominic of Dublin from the Royal Forests of Glencree and Newcastle MacKynegan. Trade in timber sprung up between Dublin and the Ui Bhroin and the Ui Thuathail. An account roll (1343-44) of the Priory of Holy Trinity in Dublin records the purchase of timber: "Also in a hundred planks of Wicklow boards bought for the said barn". Although the Ui Bhroin may not have been in direct control of Wicklow town in the 1340s they controlled the forested hinterlands surrounding the port. Wicklow port seems to have been the fulcrum of trade with Dublin. Henry Chrysted said of the Wicklow Irish, who were encroaching on to the coast, that "those who live on the coast opposite England are more like ourselves and are used to trade". Increasing evidence points to a growing sophistication among the Ui Bhroin in relation to trade. In 1393 a Dublin Merchant named Esmond Berle petitioned the Irish Council for permission to accept a barge from Gerailt II as payment for debts saying: "... for as much as Gerald Obyrne, chieftain of his tribe, is bound to him in diverse great sums of money for sundry merchandise by him purchased at the time when he was retained in the service of our Lord the King, for which the said Esmond never shall be paid by the said Obyrne unless he purchase a barge of his".

Permission was granted which shows that by 1393 the Ui Bhroin were firmly in control of the Wicklow coast. The appearance of the barge is significant, if there was one, was there more? This may indicate that the Irish were building their own sea going barges and must have been using a harbour on the coast. A member of the Berle family, or at least a namesake, was Mayor of Dublin twice in the 1380s which indicates strong trading links. Interestingly Gerailt's boat was termed a barge which was designed to carry cargoes, which according to Nicholas Canny, confirms the suspicions that the Irish were exporting grain to other parts of the island from Wicklow. Exportation only occurred in years of bounty which began after the Ui Bhroin consolidated their hold on the Wicklow coast. Furthermore in 1412 Henry IV appointed John Walsh and Thomas Wallace among others to enforce the prohibition of the exportation of grain from the Wicklow coast which

indicates extensive trade. It is likely that the main harbour was Wicklow town, with its valuable trading links with Bristol, as by the early years of the 15th century the *Ui Bhroin* king, Donnchadh I, resided less than three miles from the town. It is almost certain that the townsmen had to pay the 'black rents' (protection money) to the *Ui Bhroin*. The indenture of submission of the clan under Tadhg III in 1542 contains an article which confirms the exhortation: "that the king shall have the town and the castle of Wicklow free and totally exonerated from their impositions".

Trade with the towns was integral to the Gaelic economies and through this trade the Gaelic lords became merchant princes and quite wealthy. Their dependence on trade is confirmed by a complaint of Feidhlimidh O'Tuathail to Richard II in the late 1300s when some of his retainers were driven from the Ballymore Fair in Co. Kildare. He beseeched the king for a royal license to trade in the English towns and quite simply he concludes: "for without buying and selling I just will not be able to carry on".

The settlements of the Wicklow chieftains were deep within the protective layers of the hilly forests where clearings were cut out for agriculture. It was east of the Glanlurkin region, near Aughrim, that the *Ui Broin* first settled. These habitations may have resembled later clachans. All these settlements were sited on land that was easily cultivated and where water was readily available. Medieval Wicklow in a sense must have resembled a mosaic of untouched forest interlaced with settlements. Archaeological evidence from these areas suggest that the dwellings were roughly constructed, small and short lived. Generally the nobility either built raths or occupied older ones such as Ballincor, near Glenmalur which is of Iron Age origin. Evidence suggest that the *Ui Broin* usurped this rath from the *Ua Taidhg*. Harry Long suggests that the twin enclosure along with a description of it during Fiachaidh MacAodha O'Broin's time were circled by high earthen banks with thick plashed hedges on the summits. There was a main entrance at the front and an escape gate at the back. Within stood wooden and daub houses. In the vicinity were related settlements like Knockrath, Kilcommon and Ballykine. From Crusted's account there was at least one crannog in the mountains in the 1360s as he describes Brin Costerac's Herpelin as: "A fortified house and town surrounded by woods and stockades and stagnant waters".

English commentators of the period were full of racial prejudices and cultural stereotyping. An unknown Englishman said that Ireland was "Two races speaking 2 languages; the one speaking bastard English and dwell in good towns, castles and fortresses of the country and seaports; the other are a wild people who speak a strange language and dwell always in the woods and on the mountains of the country, and have many chiefs among themselves, of whom the most powerful go barefoot and without breeches and ride horses without saddles." Froissart reported of Sir William Windsor, a seasoned Irish campaigner, that he "never succeeded in learning the lie of the country or in understanding the mentality of the Irish, who are very dour people, proud and uncouth, slow thinking and hard to get to know or make friends with" and adds "They have no respect for pleasant manners or for any gentlemen, for although their country is ruled by kings of whom there are a large number, they will have nothing to do with courtly behaviour, but cling to rough ways in which they have been brought up".

However the Irish were reluctant to desert their own culture and customs, Chrysted, in trying to introduce 'table manners', reported that "They looked at each other and refused to eat, saying it was a breach of the excellent custom in which they had been brought up. When Richard II wished to knight them during his campaign, they replied that "they were knights already and that should be quite enough". The Leabhar Branach, a poetry book of the Clan MacShane sept of the Gabail Raghnaill, poured derision and contempt on the English.

There was occasional of individual intermixing as when Brin Costerc gave a daughter to a prisoner, Henry Crysted, and was reluctant to exchange Crysted and family in return for his own release because he had become fond of them. Crysted reminisced that "Because the Irish language comes as easily to my tongue as English, for I have always gone on speaking it with my wife and have started my grandchildren on learning it as well as I have been able".

However to many of the English it was a struggle between civilisation and barbarism which culminated with Statutes of Kilkenny in 1366. This cultural gulf lay behind much of the horrors of war and casual bloodshed in the late medieval period. W.R. Jones in his study of cultural stereotypes says "From the time of the Norman conquest forward these tribal, pastoral, politically decentralised and economically marginal society of oat and barley growing, meat eating and milk drinking cattle raiders stood in marked contrast with the agrarian, fuedalised, town and village dwelling, politically consolidated and more affluent society of wheat growing and wine drinking Englishmen". This political struggle ended in the 17th century after the Cromwellian campaigns and life in the Wicklow mountains was changed for ever.

Emmet O'Byrne

Wicklow People - 25th February 1911

Togher Credit Bank association. This institution held their 2nd annual meeting in the Protestant school house in Laragh. The annual report was submitted and committee elected. Robert Barton, President, presided among a large attendance which included Rev. M. Halligan, Rector of Annamoe, Rev. Fr. Keogh, C.C. Glendalough, Michael Keenan, Togher, Geo. Mahon, Ed Dolan, J. Richardson RDC, P. Byrne, Glendalough; J. Windsor, M. Nolan PC, Owen Byrne, Trooperstown; R. Johnson, P. Ward, Kilafeen; Jas. Byrne, Duff; J. Usher, Tomriland; Owen Nolan, J. Moody, Brockagh; Terence Doyle, Martin Kelly, W.J. Duffy, Laragh; Jas Rochford, Killilane; G. Porter, Cloran, J. Jenkinson, Derrybawn; D. Byrne, Cullentra; Jas Farrell, J. Johnson, Ballard. The balance sheet and annual report was considered satisfactory. The capital of the association had shown a substantial increase and the number of loans granted showed a remarkable decrease. The sound financial health of the co-op society was due to the wisdom of the committee and the promptness with which the loans were repaid.

Trooperstown School Fete

Freeman's Journal

29th August 1838

On Wednesday the 15th inst. a rural fete was given by Mr. and Mrs Henry Grattan at their seat, Glenwood, to the pupils of Trooperstown National School to which their parents and friends were also invited. The assemblage together exceeded 300 and the proceedings of the day were extremely interesting. When the children arrived they arranged themselves on the lawn before their esteemed host and hostess who were there to receive them. An address to Mrs Grattan was then read by one of the pupils to which the Lady returned a most kindly answer. A great number of children then received at the hands of Mrs Grattan the premiums awarded them for good conduct, regularity of attendance at school and proficiency in their studies. But previous to this distribution two children, a boy and a girl, selected as peculiar objects of distinction were called forward and hailed as King and Queen of the school receiving at the same time on their youthful brows crowns composed of wreaths of laurel as regal appendages. The premiums consisted of medals bearing the impress of our lovely Sovereign which suspended by ribands were placed on their necks by the fair donor thus combining as it were a stimulus to improvement in learning and to loyalty and affection to their Queen. To these were added books of a choice description calculated to improve their taste. Nor were the old forgotten on this festive occasion. An aged couple, the oldest man and woman on the Estate, were brought forward and furnished with clothing for the ensuing winter.

The Company next sat down to a substantial repast which was laid out on two tables on the lawn. These were decorated overhead by festoons of drapery ever twined with laurel which gave a happy effect to the entire scene. Having partaken of the viands which had been prepared the joyous circle next proceeded to a merry dance previous to which a flowing bowl of punch was produced when the elder portion of the company drank with acclamation the health of our youthful Sovereign which was proposed by the Honourable Member of Meath in his usual energetic style. There followed toasts for prosperity to Ireland, Lord Normanby and the National School. Three hearty and fervent cheers accompanying each toast. Preparations being made, and an excellent musician on hand, genuine Irish humour was soon elicited and the votaries of Terpsichore afforded vast delight to the numerous spectators, the old and young giving there meed of entertainment. Foot races next succeeded and the respective victors received the rewards of their struggles in varied presents and with these sports as the shades of night approaching the festivities were terminated.

The urbanity and attention of Mr. and Mrs Grattan was not only warmly and justly felt and admired, they could not but be pleased with the deportment and conduct of the crowd assembled. The youthful guests on whose special account the entertainment was given with a neatness of attire exhibited demeanour that told well for the mode in which they had been trained up and afforded a gratifying testament to the excellence of the institution and individually to the teacher, Mr. Smyth, who is entrusted with the important charge of instruction of the children.



Trooperstown National School 1915

Left to right - Back Row: Tom McGuirk, George Curly, Poll Johnson, Katie Walsh, Pol Byrne,
Lizzy Murphy, Joe Byrne, Jimmy Hutton, Marsha Winslow, Biddy Murphy.
Second row: Hanna Lynch, Sally Byrne, Nannie Murphy, George Byrne, Teacher Miss Healy,
Owen Byrne, Stella Johnson, Jane Murphy.
Third row: Maggie Winslow, Molly Curley, Maggie Johnson, Nan Byrne, Lil Byrne, Eileen Edge,
Sis McGuirk, Nance Murphy, Lucy Johnson, Bridie Walsh, Mary Byrne, Sarah McGouran.
Front row: Jack Winslow, Lar Doyle, George Byrne, Pat Lynch, Jack Murphy, Bob Hutton,
Jack Lynch, Stephen McGowan.



Trooperstown 1918

Back row: Jane Cullen, Eddie Cullen, Jim Murphy, Pvg Winslow, Jack Lalor, Mary Winslow.
Near row: Jack Murphy, Rickie Cullen, Lizzy Cullen, Nancy Murphy, Kathleen Lalor, Lil Winslow, Lil Byrne.
Front row: Bob Hutton, Pat Byrne, Dannie Johnson, George Byrne, Martha Winslow, Mary Byrne, Mary Cullen,
Maggie Johnson, Teacher Miss McGoldrick

Who that would view such a scene that day exhibited could raise his voice against an institution calculated to produce so much good? Yet efforts were directed at this school. Protestant children were withdrawn from it by influence of some whose motives were unenviable and yet the good sense of the parents prevailed for they sent them back to it thereby acknowledging its excellence. The children mingled in the crowd and received according to their merits rewards, as the others, without distinction on account of their religious proficiency.

Ploughing Match Day

As I remember from the early years of the century ploughing match day was a very important day in Roundwood. It was usually held about the end of February or early March often depending on the weather. Many times it had to be postponed if the selected day became very stormy. The Ploughing match was organised by the Toghher Agricultural and Industries committee which was composed of local farmers and business people of the village. In conjunction with the ploughing competition there were also horse jumping competitions. A lot of work went into the preparation for the day. In the ploughing section a number of committee members had to mark out the field in sections, a plot for each competitor. Sometimes a couple of fields had to be prepared depending on the number of entries in the different classes. There was the Championship class for competitors who had qualified by winning first prize in previous matches; second class and third class for beginners, though up to the 1940s it was all horse ploughing in this area. There were some very prominent ploughmen in the area some of whom went on to compete in World contests. Peter Byrne of Knockatemple was many times a member of the county team to win all Ireland trophies. Others, now deceased, were Hugh Pierce, Jack Halpin and Willie Murphy. The horse jumping competitions were held in the fields at the back of St. Laurence O'Toole's Church where the Parochial House now stands. A lot of preparation went into that also with the building of jumps etc. The jumping was mostly patronised by the Bray Harriers Hunt Club, Mr William Toomey being then the Master of Hounds.

In the evening about 6 o'clock a large crowd gathered outside the village hall for the calling and distribution of prizes. Mr. Toomey usually did the calling which were then presented by Larry Murphy, Toghher House, and chairman of the committee whom Mr. Toomey always referred to as the King of Roundwood. Mr. Toomey's wife always competed at the jumping contests riding side saddle. Another renowned rider was Mrs Magee of Bray with her famous pony 'The Nugget' which won numerous contests including at the R.D.S.

In later years the local branch of the I.C.A. held a show in the hall on the same day for needlework and cookery. In recent years interest has declined, there is no jumping contest, no show in the Hall. The number of competitions in the ploughing, both horse and tractor, is reduced and there is no big gathering in the evening for the calling of prizes.

Kathleen Donohoe

Crime and Outrage

In the last century major there were major changes in the type and frequency of crimes in the general Parish area. From the latter part of the 18th century armed crime was common and there were many reported raids on the houses of well off farmers, merchants and rent collectors, for instance Mr. Nowland (1781) and Mr. Murphy (1785), both of Laragh, were victims of armed gangs. Highway robbery was common and there appears to have been a cordon surrounding rural Dublin where no traveller was safe. In the south this included Shankhill, Loughlinstown and Tallaght and included the old Long Hill from Enniskerry. Such crimes meant that constables, employed by the Wicklow Grand Jury, whose jurisdiction was the Barony were sometimes busy chasing criminals all over Leinster. Joseph Holt describes in his memoirs how, in the 1790s, he chased a Green and caught up with him near Bunclody where he was arrested and lodged in Wickow Goal. The system does not seem to have been very effective as the gentry of the district set up a community alert scheme in 1819. Armed patrols patrolled Derrylossary Parish during the night. They also kept an eye out for beggars who would be escorted to the parish boundary when caught.

English administrative reforms were responsible for the setting up of the Royal Irish Constabulary (R.I.C.). The first station in Roundwood was purpose built around 1830 and was where Vartry House now is. They transferred in 1850 (when the Synges sold the Roundwood Estate through the Encumbered Estate Courts) to where the Credit Union now is until the 1950s when they moved to their present location. There is a police station also marked on the first edition 6" Ordnance Survey Map where the modern entrance to Luggela Estate is but this was possibly privately built after the 1798 Rebellion, during the building of the Military Road, by the La Touches.

When in the 1830s the increase of agrarian crime in the midlands, which was associated with the Tithe wars and the increased politicisation of the farming and cottier classes, began to make an impact the Government started to collect crime figures from each police station around the country. These are found under the Outrage Papers in the National Archives from 1835. The success of this method is unclear as it is unknown how well the various Barracks kept up with the increased paperwork. These papers deal with crimes reported and do not deal with arrests or results of court cases. This system lasted until 1851 but practically ended before the Famine and from 1852 the paperwork is indexed under the general Government files. In comparison with the midland and urban areas this Parish remained fairly peaceful and showed no signs of the organised agrarian crime prevalent elsewhere not withstanding the constant paranoia of the authorities about Ribbon lodges. The memory of 1798 made them imagine hordes of mountain men and miners rising up especially during the collapse of society during the Famine period. In 1844 it was suggested that the army be based in Rathdrum to assist police in case the local miners and disaffected mountain population 'march as they did in the late Rebellion'. The reports themselves show that crime was mostly petty and reflected the social tensions of neighbours as well as the sometimes disastrous landlord tenant relationships. Sectarianism sometimes played a part.

There was a marked reluctance in dealing with the R.I.C., crime victims often refused to report crimes or swear statements. This reluctance maybe due to the traditional distaste for dealing with authority (Police lived in 'Barracks' rather than Stations) even though the constables were Irish. There was also a fear of retaliation and revenge and there is evidence of intimidation of witnesses. In important cases witnesses were provided with police protection, rewarded and sometimes their emigration was financed.

Crimes can be classified as theft, destruction of property as a result of land disputes, and a miscellany of small tragedies. The majority of theft was of sheep especially from the Calary area. The advantage was that it was often weeks before sheep were discovered to be stolen as they often went temporarily missing in the mountains and in bad weather. Some of the many examples are: 1836, 6 ewes and 6 lambs stolen from James Gower of Roundwood Park and in 1838, 6 sheep were stolen from Nicholas Molloy of Ballinastoe. Tree theft and poaching were also common but little reported. Other thefts usually involved breaking and entering. In 1837 Patrick Doyle, a peddler of Laragh, had £9 of Calico stolen but refused either to swear information or identify the goods, if found; Patrick Waters's house in Baltinanima was broken into and clothing stolen from a trunk; Henry Harding's house in Brockagh was broken into and furniture stolen, though in this case it was believed that it had been done by the Divine family as this had been seized in lieu of rent arrears. Even Churches were not immune as in 1839 two brass candlesticks were stolen from Annamoe Church and Derrylossary Church had lead stolen during the renovations of the early 1820s.

In 1845 There were 2 major armed robberies of William Sutton Weekes of Avonmore House and James Barry of Laragh. In the first case 8 men, with blackened faces, broke into the kitchen and got away with £10, sovereigns and guns while helping themselves to bacon and whiskey that was for supper. (It was claimed that Fr. Clark P.P. said they could not be Catholic as none of his parishioners would eat meat or drink whiskey during Lent). The complete police investigation file has survived and is fascinating. First it was a case of round up the usual suspects which was an Andrew Duffy whose relation Mary Tummy worked in the house (other servants were John Stokes and William Bennett). He was quickly released and instituted proceedings for wrongful arrest. Next suspected were George Doyle and John Lawless of Castlekevin who were seen in the area after coming home from the races in Ballinastoe and who had gone to Liverpool the next day to stay with an uncle at 82 Walter St. Constable Rice of Laragh was sent over to execute a search warrant but nothing further was heard so it probably was a coincidence. In the meantime a statement was received from James Christian of Tomdaragh who claimed to have seen John Gaffney, Tomdaragh, Chris Kerfoot and John Coogan, Diamond Hill with blackened faces and also that Chris Mooney saw Edward Gaffney, a brother, James Murphy, brother in law, two William Toole's sons and a son of Andrew Cunniam of Tomdaragh also with blackened faces. The armed raid on Barry's house netted the thieves £17/10/- and a silver watch. James Barry identified James Nalty and James Butler of Derrybawn and James Byrne of Brockagh. Rewards were offered amounting to £130 for any information and finally Patrick Redmond, a tailor of Laragh, came forward and over the next 2 weeks made three statements that gave full information which implicated the above 3 with James Byrne and John Connel of Killelane, Patrick Smith and Patrick 'Dingers' Byrne of

Brockagh and John Butler of Derrybawn. At this stage many other statements were received as to their activities as sheep and tree stealers. They were overhead to say that the Bookey's tea house went up like a tinderbox and they apparently planned to intercept the post boy bringing the miner's wages. A Michael Meegan, former member of the Dublin Metropolitan Police was also implicated. They were all reported to meet at Thomas Doyle's house called a 'ribbon lodge' but more accurately a drinking place for the local 'mafia'. At this time a John Byrne, Edward and Thomas Murphy accosted James Barry jnr. and attempted to plant one of Weekes' pistols in his pocket and then attempted to arrest him only to be arrested themselves. It is not clear when the trial was but 4 received 15 years transportation though four were acquitted because of faulty warrants and Michael Meegan successfully sued Cap. Warbuton, Chief of Police, and was awarded £1. Redmond received £60 and promptly disappeared and was last heard of in Bunclody a year later. Others who received rewards were Peter Byrne, John Rochfort, James Barry Jnr., and Patrick Byrne who each got £10.

In the post Famine period this type of crime disappeared with only petty theft being common. From this period the main source of information is the newspapers. For example In 1852 Michael Egan got 4 years hard labour for stealing brass skillets, a shawl and writing desk from Andrew W. Byrne of Cronybyrne after being caught in the act by servant Peter Golden. In 1862 Hugh Kenny got 12 months for stealing sheep from John Cullen of Cronybyrne. In 1864 a girl called Farrell, aged 14, the eldest and main breadwinner (she worked for the Mining company for 6d per day) for her widowed mother and 5 brothers and sisters, was sentenced to a month for stealing clothes from Catherine Merrigan, she was released as she had spent a month on remand. Poaching and stealing firewood was regularly dealt with in the Rathdrum Petty Sessions.

Crime that arose out of land disputes could be either against landlord or fellow farmer. The Frizzells had this kind of problem, in 1836 74 perches of a bank was thrown down by the tenants and two years later 320 yards of a new made ditch was also destroyed, it is possible that at this time the Castlekevin commons was finally enclosed. The Grattans of Glenwood were also victims and trees from their plantation were uprooted between 1837/8 over a disputed turf bog and the employment of a 'transporter' called Byrne. In the latter case 700 trees, 12-15 years old, were uprooted as well as a number of beehives. Threatening letters were also common. In 1836 Andrew Murray, gamekeeper of the Beresfords of Ballinastoe, received the following: "I warn you forthwith to quit the country before one month or else you will forfeit your life and every bloody game keeper like you and if you do not take notice by this we will have revenge murder and bloodshed you bloody heretic and bloody bailiff and informer and wee will send your bloody infernal Master after you to Hell the bloody Orange dog or if we see you on the ground after this notice wee will your life". In case he missed the point there was drawings of a hanging man, an open coffin and a face with crossed bones encircled with 'remember death'. This didn't work as he got another 6 months later. Even the clergy were not immune, Rev Spencer, curate of Annamoe, who had a impounded trespassing cattle received the following ungrammatical letter in the post in 1837: "Let it be known to you that you have since you have come into the Parish committed a great many errors in respect of Cass (sic.) that you should not you thought to prevent Mass being in the Seven Churches and you want

pass the people going among the road without offending them and since that is wanting in the place and not an opresor of the poor and you now get warning to be out of this as soon as possible or else then will be another means taken to make you". The Rev. West, rector of Derrylossary, underwent considerable harassment from the Bradys of Annamoe in 1844 who apparently believed that he wanted a piece of land they were losing when their lease ran out. He had windows broken, stones thrown while in a carriage from Roundwood, and found it difficult to retain his servants, some of whom were English. He further suggested that a Police station be built in Annamoe as it was too far from either Roundwood and Laragh.

Disputes between farmers were the cause of instances like the attempted arson of James Byrne's house in Knockatemple and the arson of a stack of oats belong to Joseph McDonnell of Glasnamullen, both in 1837. In 1839 a more serious instance occurred when the house and pub of Elija Sutton in Calary was burnt to the ground during the night with the resident family barely getting out alive. This appears to have been because of a dispute between him and James Fegan, John Thomas and Ann Douglas over ploughing rights in the common though there was a sectarian bias here as well. The injury of animals was thankfully uncommon with only 2 instances. In 1836 an ass belonging to John Grogan of Parkmore was found with cuts across its private parts and the following year a milch cow belonging to John Quin of Killilane was houghed. In the latter case the previous tenant had been evicted. In 1846 the house of Catherine Moore of Knockraheen was attacked and furniture destroyed in front of the 9 year old child who's mother was at Mass. This arose over a dispute with the house owner, Patrick McDonnell, over rent arrears and house improvements. While the daughter and others were willing witnesses at first they all refused to testify and the authorities stated that this was because of intimidation. Such cases existed up to the end of the century as can be seen from the case of a premises in Roundwood burnt by R. Cullen who had been evicted in 1895.

Child abandonment also occurred. The Derrylossary Vestry Minutes report 2 infants found and sent to the Dublin Foundling Hospital in 1824 and 1828. In 1837 the body of a child was discovered being eaten by pigs and dogs in the farmyard of Edward Cullen in Cullentragh. Mary Byrne, his servant, was sent to Wicklow goal for concealment of a birth. In 1838 Esther Byrne abandoned a child in Laurence Tyre's farm in Moneystown, she claimed the baby's father was Laurence's son. In 1861 another belonging to Mary Porter, cook to the Gowers of Roundwood Park was discovered in a pump hole covered by a stone. Rarely were the mothers, when found, indicted for murder or manslaughter presumably due to the lack of evidence. One case which was brought to trial concerned an Ellen Long, a miner's widow, in 1876 who had buried an infant in a drain in Glenmacnass and later in a field by the Church in Brockagh. She was acquitted. There was a sad case in 1883 when an unnamed young girl of Roundwood killed her infant with a scissors, this never came to trial and one suspects incarceration in a Lunatic Asylum.

Violent crimes such as murder and rape were uncommon. Manslaughter following drunken arguments happened as in the case of Michael Cullen who was found dead in 1836 in Tomriland. In 1840 Michael & Thomas Healy and John Tummy were arrested for killing John Duffy in Clara when coming home from the Rathdrum Fair. In 1874 the body of a strangled young girl with long yellow hair was found buried on the Wicklow

Gap and was thought to have been dead for 8 years. The only case of rape found was in 1838 when Catherine Byrne accused James Byrne of rape at Ralph Bury's farm in Moneystown, where they were both servants. Seduction was another matter. In 1860 the Phairs got £35 damages and costs against a Cooley for seduction of a daughter. In 1876 Patrick Byrne assaulted Bartle Ellis because Byrne claimed that Ellis had "ruined his daughter and brought misfortune to his house". He was fined a token 1/- due to the magistrate's sympathy.

After the Famine there were refugees from the West who subsisted on the charity of the better off. This was technically against the law and two unfortunates, Patrick Clifford of Valentia and Brian Connor of Creggs, were arrested in Derrybawn on separate occasions. Both only spoke Irish and needed an interpreter provided by an Irish speaking constable. They both stated they were unable to get food at home but were sent to Wicklow goal.

From the 1840s crime sometimes had a political edge; in 1843 William Gilbert of Roundwood had trees torn up for refusing to turn a repealer. In 1882 Patrick Davis was jailed for 2 months for preventing James Rochfort selling his sheep at Roundwood Fair, Laurence Byrne was acquitted for intimidation due to his youth. In an associated case Thomas Ryan got 4 months for assaulting John Frizzell in Roundwood Fair. In Moneystown a police hut was stationed at Benjamin Horan's farm in Moneystown, 1891-4, to protect him from Land Leaguers when he took it over from an evicted tenant.

The courts were now more used to settle matters like rent disputes. The Droughts and the Morans were involved in a case in Ashtown which led to an out of court settlement of £300 to the Morans in 1875 for improvements prior to eviction over who should inherit the lease. Three years earlier Mathew Ward got damages of £187 for improvements to a farm in Boleisland. In 1882 there was a long running case between the Hugos and the tenants of Carrigeenshinnagh and Carrigeenduff over sheep grazing rights. In the same year the Rent Tribunal was being used for the Frizzell Estate in Castlekevin though this was part of a long running saga of arrears, evictions and boycotting in the townland. A debate in the House of Commons refers to the reputation of Frizzells as evicting landlords. Some cases had a lighter note; in 1876 Thomas Geoghegan, labourer of Knockfadda, successfully sued Laurence Keegan for threatening to send Geoghegan's son to Glencree for stealing his cabbages. The Court awarded £5.

In the mining community of Glendalough drunkenness featured large and the Rathdrum Petty sessions were busy dealing with it. In 1862 it was reported that "The Judge grieved to see so many cases of drunkenness and rioting in Laragh" and threatened jail for a month rather than the usual 5/- fine. Constables reported that it had got worse over the previous year. In 1876 the Wicklow Newsletter stated that "The riotous behaviour in the neighbourhood of Laragh was becoming so bad that the Magistrates should adopt strenuous means of suppression" and this was typical for the period though Lent seems to have been respected as in 1877 "The court is gratified that the teachings of the clergy in this solemn season are not neglected". An instance of what the constables had to put up with comes from a police report in 1874 when Const. James Dwyer and Irwin tried to arrest John and Hugh Kenny for fighting in Richard Mahon's pub in Brockagh. Dwyer attempted to separate them and the 2 brothers "commenced to assault every man they

met. They wantonly assaulted two other miners named Patrick Dealin and Cornelius Hopkins. This now lasted for half an hour and on several occasions during that time both Kennys threatened Sub Constable Irwin and I that if we interfered with them they would stretch us for dead on the road. I did not consider it prudent to arrest them as I was too far from my station". The upshot of this was that a detachment of constables from Roundwood would come down every Saturday for pay days. There was a marked decrease in disorderly behaviour while this lasted for 18 months. Mahon's Pub was the scene of much of this type of behaviour not least because Richard Mahon was often fined for being drunk and disorderly himself. He in fact lost his licence for his behaviour in 1876 (the court being supported by his family) but regained it in 1878 as he appeared to have mended his ways and because there was no suitable pub to pay the miners nor for either them or the Dublin tradesmen to drink. Women could be troublesome too, in 1864 Mary Long, Eliza Finn and Mary Lynch, middle aged, were bound over to keep the peace for constantly fighting with shovels, tongs and presumably whatever they could lay their hands on. The names of those in Court for drunkenness, fighting, poaching, petty theft in this period would fill a book. Roundwood, served by the Newtown Petty Sessions, was generally quieter except when there was major building on the Waterworks. In 1862 William Manley was fined £2 for keeping and unlicensed shebeen after a major fracas between 'northerners' and 'southerners' involving John Maguire (a one armed giant with an artificial arm made of wood and a large iron knob), Edward & Michael Byrne, Andy Donovan, Laurence Murphy and a Reilly; the latter 3 being fined 10/- each. At this time a police investigation on illegal arms was undertaken among the 'northerners' who had apparently kept them for protection at a previous job in Ulster. This proved negative.

Sometimes the miners were the victims, for instance in 1874 Mary Neil, James Hatton, John Moorhead of Brockagh and William Mahon and Mary Kavanagh of 7 Churches were fined between 2/6 and 10/- for irregular beams and weights. The "Court spoke in strong terms on the shopkeepers who would thus treat the poor miners by cheating them out of their just rights when purchasing flour, meal etc.". In 1882 two female tramps, Eliza Brogan and Mary Halloran, were described as "Errant priestesses of Fortune who carry roulette wheels with the view of beguiling some of the hard earned shillings from the miners". The pair fell out and Brogan was sentenced to 14 days in Grangegorman for assault.

Rathdrum Petty Sessions had its entertainment's. In 1876 William Mahon, Brockagh, who was up a third time for drunkenness that year said "I am a lone orphan, I have neither mother nor father, I will emigrate to America". He was 40 and fined £1. In 1882 Bryan McDonald, on being told that he faced a fine of £5 or 3 months for cutting young oaks at Brockagh, said "You might as well hang a man at once as that. I would rather be hung now than go to goal for that length". He was fined 7/-. The best were probably the beggar women who plagued the tourists in Glendalough to the extent that the R.I.C. used to patrol in plain clothes. One of the first tried under this crack down, in 1876, was Ellen Doyle who claimed "Oh! your rivirence I am fourscore years I was never in coort before. I was going to Lugduff with a pennyworth of snuff for my mistress, I never begged from any one". When the case was dismissed on the condition she did not offend she said "Give me your hand your rivirence, shure the poor jewel did not know

me". Things got tougher as in 1878 when Catherine Fogarty, Ellen Doyle (now 100 years old & carrying £50), and Sarah Byrne were sentenced to a week. In 1882 three 'nice old ladies' Mary Long, Julia Kavanagh and Elizabeth White were sentenced to a month in Grangegorm for begging in 7 Churches. Long on hearing her sentence "Set up a hideous howl and executed a kind of war dance in Court. It required the united efforts of four constables to remove her".

Ian Cantwell

A Party At Bartons

Wicklow Newsletter - 22nd January 1898

On Friday evening last week Mrs Barton gave a grand dramatic entertainment and waxworks in the hall of Glendalough House. The time announced for the performance to commence was 7.30 but long before that a large audience had collected. The spacious hall which had seating for 250 was filled to the doors. At the end of the hall a platform was erected 2' high which served as a stage for the performance. This was shut off from the body of the hall by a beautiful drapery which served as a curtain. This was drawn and a magnificent sight presented itself. In front was a row of footlights which brought out each of the figures distinctly. First part was Mrs Jarley's waxworks. The following were the waxworks: The Goddess Flora, Miss Childers, The Cannibal, Mr. T.E. Barton, Miss Booker, Miss D. Barton, Jasper Packlerton, Mr. D. Robinson, Mother Siegal, Miss D. Childers, Kathleen, Miss Barton, The late Mr. Jarley, Mr. E. Barton, Mrs Jarley, Mr. R. E. Childers, Peter, Mr. R. C. Childers. Each of the figures was carried forward by Mrs Jarley assisted by her boy Peter and placed in front of the stage. Mrs Jarley explained the history of each and then ordered Peter to wind them up after which they went through a most amusing performance. The late Mr. Jarley's ghost concluded the first part, here Peter explained as Mrs Jarley was so overcome with grief she was obliged to take a seat.

During the interval Miss Allison entertained the company to a nice selection of pianoforte music. Second Part, an Area Belle. This dramatic sketch was capital from commencement to finish. The whole audience being kept in a continual roar of laughter. When the curtain rose there appeared a beautiful housemaid 'Penelope' (Miss D Childers). She was very busy singing and dusting and seemed to have made a mistake in her diary having invited 2 of her sweethearts for the same hour; 'Pitcher', a Dublin Policeman, (Mr. R. C. Barton) and 'Tosser', a soldier (Mr. D. Robinson). The sign that the mistress was out was a pepper bottle in the window but there was a 3rd person 'Chalks', a milkman, (Mr. C. E. Barton) who at the time was an interloper and made a very forcible statement of his honest heart and means and had brought Penelope a fresh egg but she dispatched him without a hearing. After several amusing scenes Chalks appeared and explained to Mrs Croaker his independence having 9 cows which gave 10 quarts a day and had a home of his own and would bestow all on Penelope who consented to accept him.

At the close Mr Coleman called on 3 cheers for Mrs. Barton and the performers. This was vociferously responded to. Mrs Barton entertained all present to a sumptuous tea and cake.

Local Heroes

In the Public Record Office in London there is an index of soldiers who received retirement, mostly because of disability, from the Army, between about 1800 and 1850, and whose records are listed in the War Office. The files lists the relevant Service record which is an abstract of the Regimental records which would probably provide more detail. This is in the process of being indexed by surname (but not yet by place) and the following four were identified.

Patrick Byrne, Annamoe. Born in 1823, joined up in 1841, aged 18, with the 9th and 10th Regt. of Foot and served 10 years in the East Indies. His character is very good and he is in receipt of 2 good conduct medals with pay. He served in the 1848/9 campaigns before M.....? and was prudent in the affair though slightly wounded in the leg. Suffers from swelling of left leg and is rendered unfit for service. He is 5' 6", dark brown hair, grey eyes and a fresh complexion. A labourer he received £3 Bounty on signing up. Discharged 1851.

Edmund Murphy, Vartry Parish. Born in 1801, he joined in 1825 aged 24 and served 11 years and 6 months of which 7 years was in the West Indies. He suffers from Pulmonary disease and muscle wastage contracted from long residence in the Tropics without any reason of neglect, vice, design or intemperance. His conduct has been extremely bad having been much addicted to drink. In 1832 he was sentenced to 30 days jail and deprived of his liquor allowance for 18 months. In 1834 he got 3 months for fighting and had £1 per day deducted from his pay for a year. In 1836 he received 3 sentences one of 14 days, another of 30 days (both Solitary confinement) and the third 6 months Hard Labour. Discharged 1837.

William Byrne, Seven Churches, Born in 1789, joined up in Ceylon in 1819 aged around 30. He served 20 years. Described as 5' 6", dark brown hair, grey eyes and fresh complexion. served in the 51st Foot, 19th Foot and 45th Foot. Good Conduct. Discharged 1839.

Patrick Connor, Roundwood, Joined up in 1840 to the 54th Regt of Foot, served 10 years in Gibraltar, Malta, West Indies and North America. Character and conduct has been indifferent. He has been subject to Court Martial for breach of military discipline in 1840 for going absent without leave. He rejoined and was pardoned. In 1844 he was sentenced to 3 months hard labour. He suffers from pulmonary problems from cold while on duty in Malta. He is 5' 9", grey eyes and fair complexion.

Ian Cantwell

Father John Gowan: 1817 - 1897

On the 100th Anniversary of his Death

This is the continuation on the article published in last year's journal written by Dr. James de Valera Mansfield. It is dedicated to the memory of my beautiful husband, James, who was also a friend of the members of the Roundwood and District Historical and Folklore Society whose meetings and gatherings he had enjoyed so very much.

James was honoured to have inherited the "genes" of his great great grand uncle. He was proud of everything that Fr. John Gowan, a true priest, contributed to the well-being of so many unfortunate people especially during the Famine years (1845-7). For that reason, I was invited to visit the Holy Faith Convent in Glasnevin where I had the pleasure to talk to Sr. Rosemary, Superior General; Sr. Theodore, Head of Archives; and Sr. John. I was allowed to examine all the material in the archives of the Holy Faith Convent on display which is a marvellous and unique collection of Fr. Gowan's personal memorabilia. These include a wonderfully compiled scrap book on his activities during his years in the convent as well as a match box, spectacles, field glasses, snuff box, brush, portable chalice, lining from his vestment, stole worn by him during Mass, soft kerchief, the original Alter at which he performed Mass (prior to the building of the Chapel), and much more.

I was allowed to read his very own manuscripts which include letters written to Sr. Marie Agatha (Margaret Aylward), Founder and Mother Superior of St. Brigit's orphanage and schools of the Sisters of the Holy Faith. Looking at all these humble and yet extraordinary personal effects one is filled with a sense of warmth and closeness to this stern looking man. Though most photos capture him with austere expression one sister, a relative of Fr. Gowan, created a likeness on which he carries a gentle smile.

Fr. Gowan was known for his deep piety; the virtue of simplicity. His ecclesiastical spirit and his power of impressing it on others helped him to do a great deeds during the hard Famine years. He was Sr. Mary Agatha's confessor, he recognised her visions and became her Spiritual guide and supported all her undertakings. They worked together as a management team unified in the conviction that the best service to the poor was education. A sense of communal purpose was the essential ingredient in their work.

By 1865 Glasnevin was established as a training centre for the young sisters. They were also educated in secular subjects to help them deal with daily life and the people's hardships of the Famine years and after. St Brigit's school was opened. The appointment of Fr. Gowan as Spiritual Director was of immense importance to Sr. Agatha's plans and ideas. They opened boarding schools for girls which ran successfully for many years. Like the Sisters the pupils were taught Christian values and the importance of compassion. (A former student being our very own Marie Elizabeth Kavanagh, wife of our President; Marie's aunt Sr. De'Chantalle was also a teacher there). To this day two schools remain in Co. Wicklow, in Greystones and Kilcoole and until recently in Newtown Mount Kennedy. There had been a plan in the last century to open a school in Roundwood but a suitable building could not be found.

Through the foundation of the Ladies of Charity St Brigit's orphanage and the network of schools for the poor we can see how substantial his work was. If we think of the Protestant activities in the Dublin slums and indeed in the greater Wicklow area where starving children were coaxed into proselytising day schools by bribes of food, soup and sometimes money and were taught to deny their Father's Faith we can see how vital their work was. Fr. Gowan did all he could to expose and successfully fight the evil of proselytism for the good of his people. He is said to have drawn a parallel to "Catholic Spain in the struggle against the infidel Moors". He was ever on the side of everything Irish; customs, songs, music, and language and fought hard to retain them. We can only try and imagine how hard his work must have been, how great the suffering of his people, and how much good he brought to the men, women and children of his time.

Many believe he had the power of miracles. Since his death varied favours are reported to have been obtained through his intercession. The Sisters of the Holy Faith Convent honour his deeds with their devotion. The room where he and St. Marie Agatha came together to find ways to help the poor and all the wonderful memorabilia throughout the Convent are cherished with great reverence. I myself had the privilege of seeing all this and to visit his grave in the Convent cemetery which is adorned with a Celtic Cross and fresh mountain flowers. I thought of the many times he climbed the hills and boglands of Wicklow to bring comfort to the dying and was reminded of an incident when he was a curate in Glendalough. He had received a message of an urgent sick call and gravely concerned took a short cut over Lough Dan. His foot slipped and he slid down to a rock above the lake. There, in his moment of great trial, he invoked his Angel Guardian (of whom he was certain) and was brought safely back to the path. It is believed that this belief is the reason why Guardian Angel motifs are common in Roundwood Church. There is a thread of thought that he deserves to be canonised for all his contributions and help during a period of great pain. Maybe this article will contribute to further this idea.

The Sisters of the Holy Faith are busy in preparatory work to mark the 100th anniversary of his death with celebrations and festivities. This is planned for Glendalough which should be of great interest to the Wicklow people and especially the inhabitants of the Parishes of Roundwood and Glendalough who owe much to this priest for the survival of their forefathers. A commemorative plaque is planned for Roundwood Church. I myself will be in attendance at these functions proud to have been married to his great great grand nephew.

Agatha de Valera Mansfield

Waterford Chronicle - 15/6/1844

Monday last being the Feast of St. Comgen or St. Kevin, the patron of Glendalough, was observed with surpassing devotion and solemnity. The respected Pastor of Glendalough, the Rev. Eugene Clarke, and his efficient coadjutor, Rev John Gowan, specially officiated in the Churches assisted by all clergymen of the surrounding district. The weather being preeminently fine the attendance was most numerous and the scene was most surpassingly interesting in the beautiful valley.

Mary Anne Murphy

Obituary Wicklow People

28th October 1911

The death of this esteemed lady which took place on the 18th inst. at Toghher evoked a widespread feeling of regret not only in Co. Wicklow but also in the adjoining counties in which the family for generations enjoyed a great deal of respect. Of a ripe old age she had almost reached her 90th year, her recollections covered a long period of stress and struggle in the latter day history of this country and with many of the stirring episodes of which she personally or a member of her family was prominently associated. Belonging to an old Co. Wicklow family, the Kellys of Knockraheen, who gave many prominent actors to the fearful drama which was being enacted over the fields of Wicklow and Wexford in the year 1798 and brought up in a locality associated with so many of the bloody events of that fateful year she naturally imbibed a love of country which she gave many evidences of during the course of her long and honoured career. Indeed in one way or another she was closely identified with the several epochs of revolutionary activity which are written so large on the history page of our country. In '48 just previous to the Smith O'Brien Rising Darcy McGee and Denis Florence McCarthy had been staying at her house for a visit and immediately after they had taken their departure the premises were searched by an armed Police force. A brother Joseph Kelly had been an active propagandist in the cause of the Revolution was at that time 'wanted' by the Government but after much difficulty succeeded in escaping to the US where his sons today control a large and successful trade in the canned food line. Of the terrible scenes associated with the Famine years she was of course a witness but though she herself spared no effort bringing relief to the starving people where she could at all do so the horrors of that period sank so deep in her mind she only referred to them in conversation in subsequent years with manifest reluctance. At a late period in '67 when another unsuccessful attempt was made to put an end to the English connection the deceased was enabled to succour many of the starving and footsore fugitives who had taken part in the ill starred expedition to Tallaght Hill and had been dispersed by the Forces of the Crown and forced into the snow enveloped fastness of the Wicklow Hills. Then when through the genius and ability of the great Wicklow leader the struggle of National Emancipation was directed into other channels Mrs Murphy was a warm sympathiser with the objects of agrarian agitation just then at its height and which some members of her own family were very active participants. Advancing years did not in any way diminish her interest in the National Struggle and up to the last she displayed an eager interest in its fortunes and a firm confidence in its ultimate success. In her long and useful career a deep charity and benevolence to all were her main characteristics and the unostentatious acts of kindness which her hand presented were legion. Chief mourners were Laurence Murphy (son), Dr Touhy (son-in-law), James Murphy R.D.C., John Murphy, David Murphy, Matthew Murphy R.D.C., John Laurence, Patrick Byrne, Thomas Lawless, Patrick Kelly (cousins).

Robert Childers Barton

A Man of Many Parts

Robert Barton was born 14 March 1881 his parents being Charles William Barton RDL, JP and Rachel Warran Lothrop at Glendalough House. His twin brother Hugh died 3 days later. His parents were the owners of the Glendalough House Estate which comprised of around 30,000 acres. The whole family played an active part in the management of the Estate and were always concerned with the welfare and education of their tenants.

He attended school in Rugby and later was an undergraduate at Christ Church in Oxford. It was there he joined Sinn Fein in 1906 according to a Sunday Press interview in 1971, though before this it was understood that he joined after being converted in 1916 by the demeanour of Republican visitors in Richmond Barracks. He sent £50 to the James Dolan Election fund. Arthur Griffith was very suspicious of the gift asking "Is this a plot for Irish Landlords to infiltrate Sinn Fein?" He campaigned for the Nationalist Candidate in the 1910 Election. In 1910 he was on the Committee of the Irish Agriculture Society and had joined the Irish Volunteers by 1914 after hearing John Redmond's speech in Woodenbridge. He became a secretary to Col. Moore where he dealt with correspondence arising out of the distribution of arms after the landings at Howth and Kilcoole. When World War broke out that year he became convinced that if Ireland was to support England than the English Government would grant Home Rule. On the 4 October 1915 he joined the Inns of Court O.T.C. and on the 24 April 1916 he was given a commission in the 10th Dublin Fusiliers as a temporary second lieutenant. He was posted to the Royal Barracks (now Collins Barracks) because being Irish "He would know how to interact with them" This probably saved his life as his regiment was posted to France and sustained many casualties on the Front. After the 1916 Rising he resigned his commission but it is not clear exactly when this happened. Many books of the period state he became involved in Sinn Fein during his time in the Royal Barracks but he had converted to the Nationalist cause by 1906.

In the 1918 General Election he was elected in Wicklow with Gavin Duffy and Etchingham and in January 1919 he was appointed as Minister of Agriculture in the First Dail. In the 2nd Dail he served as Minister of Economic Affairs. He was committed to the development of Irish Agriculture and Industry. During the 1st Dail he submitted a Land Bond scheme of a quarter of a million pounds whereby applicants would be enabled to borrow three quarters of the price of their holding. He was also interested in harnessing water power, the prevention of flooding on the Shannon and the development of the peat industry. He also devised a scheme by where fresh milk, at a fixed price, would be available in Dublin though this was not accepted by Cosgrave.

During his first campaign his election literature gave his motivation: "Ireland was a society bound together in a spiritual union - by the love of one undivided country, by obedience to one Common Law, and by pride in the history of their fathers" and "Strangers who came as enemies, if they learnt to love Ireland, were taken into National Life". In the

1971 interview he also said that he was influenced by the stories of the Hugo atrocities that he heard from his tenants and employees when he was young. His election agent Tom Fleming, rate collector for Wicklow County Council, was arrested and sentenced to one year for handing out copies of a photo of 'The execution of a leader of the Easter Week Rising at Kilmainham Goal' subtitled 'Are you going to send an Irishman to the English Parliament to swear an Oath of Allegiance to the Government who did this?' At a meeting in Carnew to protest the arrest Barton threatened reprisals if any harm came to Fleming however he himself was arrested for an act calculated to cause sedition amongst the civilian population in contravention to the Defence of the Realm Act. He had included a reference to Dan Breen and his Brigade stealing one cwt. of gelignite in Soloheadbeg where 2 policemen had been murdered.

His fellow cell-mates were William Sears MP for North Wexford and Tom McKitterick of Mayo. Michael Collins set up an escape plan and Richard Mulcahy, in the guise of a solicitor's clerk, brought in a hacksaw, small cold chisel and a tin of boot blacking with a note explaining that he was to leave directly the Phibsboro clock struck 8 on St. Patrick's night. He cut through the bars in his cell and left a dummy in his bed. "I tossed a piece of soap over the wall at a predetermined spot and Rory O'Connor threw over a rope ladder. From the top of the wall I dropped into a blanket. It had only taken a few minutes and I was free shaking hands with Michael Collins".

He left a note for the Governor asking him to "look after his things till I can send for them. I cannot stay any longer as the service is not satisfactory". He is said to be the first man to have escaped from Mountjoy. He had only been in for 7 weeks and the speed that his escape was organised shows his importance to Collins. He spent the next 10 months on the run when he founded the National Land Bank which was to hold the National Loan. Its first Directors were Barton himself, James McNeill (later Governor General of Ireland), Sir Henry Grattan Bellew and Edward Millington Stephens. The Bank was later taken over by the Bank of Ireland.

He had strong beliefs as to the depressed state of Irish Agriculture. He wanted to promote the growth of Irish wheat, complaining that English flour was ground from foreign wheat and suggested taxing these imports. He felt that Ireland was in an unfair position as it had no control over its imports and exports (90% of exports going to England was artificial) and believed that Irish Agriculture was the country's most menaced industry. He also compared Irish wages to the cost of living in that though wages here were the same the cost of living was higher.

In December 1920 he was rearrested by a raiding party looking for another man. In describing his arrest he said "We left the Mansion House, Joe McGrath and I, Between 9 and 10 p.m. and as I stepped into the side walk I was suddenly surrounded by three very large police officials, one told me they had orders to arrest me, and I was hustled into the car and taken for a nights lodging in the Bridewell. A night spent in the Bridewell is not a very pleasant one, dirt, smells and fleas. The cell was a large one the walls covered in obscene drawings and the lavatory in a foul condition, caused me to wonder how such surroundings could be associated with the gentle St Brigid. The following morning a lorry load of outsize Metropolitan Police called me and transferred me to Mountjoy

demonstrating there usual good humour and kindness on the way". He refused to recognise the Court as he stated he was a soldier of the Irish Republic. He was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment though this was reduced to three. He was sent back to Mountjoy and was then transferred to Portland Prison. He worked there in the Carpenters Shop. While there he became ill but his family and friends were not allowed to send in food or warm clothes as the Prison Governor stated they were not needed. The rules stated that any prisoner, provided he obeys the rules and was of good conduct, could receive a letter every 4 months and a visit lasting 20 minutes every 4 months. Michael Collins wrote to Barton's sister asking "to tell Robert I am in all ways thinking of him and send him my fondest love". After 14 months he was charged with leading a prison mutiny and was transferred to Lewes.

After 2 months Peace talks started in July 1921 but De Valera stated he could not attend negotiations with half of his Cabinet in Prison. He and the other members were released with the exception of General Sean Mac Eoin. Barton's first task was to meet with Cope, Under Secretary for Ireland, to demand Mac Eoin's release. De Valera's letter of instruction was to proceed to London with Art O'Brien, if available, go to 10 Downing St. with an enclosed letter, stay as long as requested, arrange with Director of Publicity for a simultaneous publication of a communiqué, he was also instructed not to interpret the letter of which he was the bearer. Was this the letter that was to snatch the General from the death cell in Mountjoy?

A truce was arranged between the Irish Republican forces and the British Army on the 11th July and De Valera once again put his trust in Barton when he sent him and Eamon Duggan over to England to carry out the Irish side of the cease fire bargain with Lloyd George, Col. Brind, General McCreeady and A.W. Cope. Others on the Irish side were De Valera, Austin Stack, Arthur Griffith, Count Plunkett and Erskine Childers. The main talks began on the 9th October and for the next 15 weeks England and Ireland hammered out the Articles of Agreement which is commonly called the Treaty. On the Irish side were Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins, Robert Barton, Gavan Duffy and Eamon Duggan and they were faced by Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, Lord Birkenhead, Chamberlain, Wordington-Evans, Hamar Greenwood and Gordon Hewart. De Valera had chosen Barton because he was a "Strong and stubborn Republican who would not give in too easy".

The English caused a split in the Irish team by negotiating with them separately and although the Treaty was signed on the 6 December the split was never fixed. The last two to sign were Barton and Duffy. Barton saw the Treaty as a betrayal of the Republic but felt he had no alternative as the alternative was the resumption of war which he felt would be a disaster for Ireland. While he was allied to the War party, with his cousin Erskine Childers, he felt he could not drag the Irish people into such a situation without some kind of a mandate. During the Dail debate he said "I say now and hope to make clear the circumstances under which I find myself honour bound to recommend acceptance of the Treaty. I do not seek to shield myself from the charge of having broken my Oath of Allegiance to the Republic - my signature is proof of the fact that the oath was and still is the most sacred bond on Earth. I broke it because it was the lesser of alternative outrages forced upon me and which I was forced to choose". As Griffith, Collins and Duggan had



already signed and Lloyd George, supported by Churchill, were threatening all out war "I did what I had to do".

In Dublin the Treaty was approved by 64 votes to 57 with Barton voting for. Even so he took the Republican side but took no active part in the Civil War though his house was used as a safe house during the period. In 1922 he was interned by the Free State and spent time in Mountjoy, Kilmainham, later being sent to the Curragh Camp 27 March 1923. While there he became ill and as a result of many letters from his family and questions in the Dail he was released on the 13 of December. On the night of 9 October 1922 his cousin Erskine Childers was arrested in Glendalough House and charged with bearing arms against the State which in reality was a small gun given to him as a present by Michael Collins. Childers was executed 23 of November in Beggars Bush Barracks and buried there. Barton described it as one of the saddest days in his life. On the 28 October 1924 he, Dave Robinson (an old family friend) and Fr. Traynor of Glendalough collected the body from Beggars Bush.

He ran again in the General Elections of 1923 as a Republican candidate but was defeated by C. M. Byrne, Clann Na Gael; J. Everett, Labour; and R. Wilson. This defeat coupled with death of his cousin ended his involvement in Irish politics. He however did not give up service to the State and served on the Irish Turf Development Board, 1934-55, the Agricultural Credit Corporation, 1932-54, Hospitals trust till 1953. He was also a director of the Irish Press and was involved with the Co-operative movement. His

continuing commitment to Irish Agriculture is indicated by his resignation speech from the A.C.C. when he said that he hoped that the introduction of mechanisation would result, not in the displacement of workers, or in the spread of the demoralising system of conacre lettings but in the intensification of old and the introduction of new forms of production. He added "I believe that machines are no substitute for hard work, and that to use them with benefit to himself and to the community demands from the farmer greater qualities of intelligence and devotion to his business than ever".

He was the last survivor of the Treaty signatories but though biographies have been published on all the others his life has gone un-researched. This is a sad reflection on the reputation a man who contributed so much to the Nation and is perhaps based on the single fact that he voted for the Treaty but without any appreciation of the times or his other contributions. He had a sense of humility in that he never publicised his work and this is born out by the fact that he left behind so few personal papers.

In Annamoe he ran the Estate employing up to 50 people. He was also involved in the Toghher Credit Society being it's first President in 1911. He was married a niece of Erskine Childers in Cambridge Massachusetts in 1950. His beloved sister Dulcibella, who had a major and unrecognised input to the period and who ran the Estate while he was in prison, died in 1956. He took an active interest in all aspects of Irish life until his death on the 10 August 1975 aged 94. So ended a long and fruitful life, a man who was loved by all that knew him.

Rick Cox



The T.D.s who signed the Treaty left to right:
Griffith, Duggan, Barton & Duffy

Freeman's Journal - 13th June 1786

A tinker was lately found coining and silvering forgeries in an old house under Mt. Sypping near Seven Churches. He escaped without his utensils.

Glendalough Employees

The following list comes from the Barton Papers and is entitled: Employees on Farm and Garden whom I have known. It dates from the 1960s.

Stewards: Robert Baird, Thomas Green, James Dunne, James Cattanaich, James Murphy (Dominic), James Deasy, Michael Kelly, William Sampson, George Clifford.

Farm: Paddy Barrett, guide at 7 Churches, worked in winter, and sons Luke & Patrick. Jim Bohan, Hill keeper and farm, lived in Glenmacnass. Owen Bryan, gardener, became head gardener, his brother known as Bazelay after a famous jockey, and a son. Carstairs at one time drove mail coach to Newtown, lorry driver here, his son Jack, chauffeur & lorry driver for 7 years. Tom Doyle, keeper and handyman, fell out with steward and went to Laragh. Mat McCoy, Laragh, farm. Pat McCoy, Laragh, farm. William Fitzpatrick, an ex policeman, Laragh. Hugh Devitt, Birchwood, farm. Neddy Devitt, lived where John MacDonald lives now. Tom Doyle, 'Long Tom', shepherd, Drummin. Old Tommy Doyle, Horseman, trainer etc., his sons Tommy, carried the post, we called him 'cap over eyes', Patrick, ploughman for many years, Denis, shepherd for many years, and Michael, worked as carter & farm hand. Patrick Byrne, Drummin. Jack Bohan, trapper, lived where Mick Gaffney lives now. Patrick Porter, Rectory Lodge, George Long, stables. Frank Long, Blacksmith. Andrew Farrell, shepherd, furthest house on hill, his son James, garden. Mary Wickham, pigs, and Mary Hawkins, dairy, both lived where Paddy Curley lives. Mick Quin, carter, Shinagh. Denis Quin, local builder, Shinagh. Gissie Quinn, expert drainer, Shinagh. Ned Quinn, trapper, Shinagh. Jack Quinn, farmer, Shinagh. Michael Brady, pigs, Shinagh. William Kinlan, head gardener for years. Kate Kinlan, dairy. Patrick Kinlan, farm & cattle. Patrick Kinlan, boy who worked in garden. Mick Halpin, worked in garden. Mick Gaffney, farm later chickens, his son, shepherd. Dinny Nolan, very old man stoked glasshouses, lived in Annamoe, his son James, garden, went as head gardener to Synges. Jack Smyth, gamekeeper, Oldbridge, his sons: Jack, emigrated to USA, Ned, carpenter, Tommy, stables later motors, Michael, mechanic, Maurice, farm. Patrick Porter, 'The Nut', Shinagh, his daughter Maggie, worked in house. Tommy Gaffney, cattle had row with Sampson. Martin Gaffney, Ploughman, Shinagh, his brother Jack, farm, Shinagh. John Doyle, forester, Oldbridge lodge, his son Denis died early, his wife, laundry. Rose Bryan, laundry. Anne Bryan, laundry. Martin Farrell, drains etc., Moneystown. Christy Murphy, stables. William Murphy, evicted from Castlekevin, given home in Oldbridge, farm hand, his son James, farm. Andrew Bryan, yardman, managed electric plant, Jack Bryan, coachman & ploughman. James Moore, pure-breed cattleman. Thomas Leonard, Carpenter, Raheen, his 2 sons, carpenters. William Heffernan, cattleman, Denis Keogh, ploughman, Tomriland. James Norton, farm. Larry Norton, emigrated to USA became a courier. James Kenny, ploughman, Annamoe, his son Paddy, garden. Samuel Tyndall, farm, emigrated to Canada. William Hawkins, blacksmith, his wife Betty, house, his sons George, blacksmith, Thomas, mechanic, James, tractor. Larry Smyth (son of Jack), motors, his sons Lar, farm, and Jack, farm. William Feeley, garden, Annamoe. William Rochford, gamekeeper, his daughters, Maggie, chickens and Nellie, chickens, and son Danny, gamekeeper. Michael Brennan, horseman, his wife, house, his sons, Jack & George, both emigrated to USA. John McDonald, carpenter, his father, carpenter, his son, Vincent,

garden. Jack Porter, lost an arm, Raheen, general. Charlie Porter, Farm, Raheen. Garrett Curley, trapper, Drumrae, his wife, cook, 2 sons, trappers, his son Paddy, tractors. McGrath, did the blasting, his wife, scrubbing the house. Edward Wolohan, woods, his sons, Denis & Ned, woods, his grandson, Ned, woods, had a row with Sampson. Andrew Kenna, farm, Derrylossary. Jack Pierce, ploughman, Derrylossary. Thomas Kenna, farm, Moneystown. Dennis Kenna, farm. Tim Kenna, farm. Bill Kenna, cattle. Martin Duffy, miller, Annamoe. Paddy Duffy, nightman, chickens. Walker, farm, Tomriland. Thomas Daley, farm, Tomriland, his 2 sons, farm. Harry Sheehan, Butcher. Richard Stacey, farm, Castlekevin. George Bartlett, garden, Annamoe lodge. Lizzie Doyle and Mary Doyle, laundrymaids.

Rick Cox

Wicklow People - 4th February 1911

On Monday last two young men from this district left to seek their fortune in the land of the Thistle. On Saturday a farewell dance and entertainment in honour of the young exiles was held in the house of Mr. Denis McCoy, Glendalough, when upwards of 60 people participated and an excellent programme of song, music and dance was disposed of. Songsters included Pat Kavanagh and Jack O'Neill with duets from Tom & Mrs Kavanagh. A reel by May McCoy, a tiny cailin of 7 years, and Master Jack Kavanagh of Laragh was something which made the adults stare and wonder while Master Jer Foley was presenter and as usual a host in himself. Charles Mallon in the course of a well chosen speech said he had been a participator in many such farewells and was able to say that meetings of this kind had not so melancholy a terminus as a father or mother would expect. The young men of Glendalough had drifted away but their hearts were still true to the dear old land that bore them.

Freeman's Journal - 2nd October 1877

Letter to the Editor. Would you kindly allow me the space to describe a scene witnessed by a small party of us at Glendalough. While examining the ancient ruins there, a Funeral procession advanced within a few feet of us, when some men at once raised a gravestone and a scene utterly disgusting was enacted. After digging a short time bones were freely thrown out and no fewer than 5 skulls. The coffin was then put in the grave and the skulls and bones thrown in. The sound produced by those striking the coffin being horrible. The whole scene was like something one would expect to find in an uncivilised country and if strangers are often in the way of seeing the same thing it is no wonder they speak of us Irish as they do. Surely something could be done to make these burials at least decent. Anon.

Wicklow Newsletter - 16th February 1889

A woman named Margaret Kavanagh died on Wednesday at Sramore, Co. Wicklow, at the remarkable age of 108 years. She had witnessed many scenes during the 98 Rebellion and had herself more than once conveyed provisions to Michael Dwyer in the Wicklow Hills.

The Duel, the Vicar, the Surgeon and the Wine

First the Duel

It was between one Ignatius George d'Arenberg and an unidentified 'man of higher rank' and took place in Paris in 1815. The 'man of higher rank' was killed in the duel and d'Arenberg, a musician in the French Army was forced to flee the country.

He decided to spend his exile in Ireland and settled for a time in Cork where he continued with his day job by becoming a bandmaster, but he changed his name to Abeltshausser, a variation on the name Adelshausser which means 'House of Nobility'. The man obviously had a sense of humour.

Like many a resident of Cork however George looked to the bright lights of the Capital City and by 1826 he had moved to Dublin where he was earning a living by teaching French and German. He enrolled in Trinity College in 1838 and four years later, in 1842, he graduated in Arts and Divinity. In the same year he was appointed a Professor of French and German in Trinity.

Enter the Vicar

The newly appointed Professor Abeltshausser was ordained in the Church of Ireland in 1847 and in the same year married Louisa Jane Thomas, the daughter of a Dublin solicitor. Two years later he received a Law degree and managed to combine his studies and the Trinity Professorship with a number of Church posts, culminating in an appointment as Vicar of Derrylossary Parish in 1859. He preached in the now disused Parish Church. The Professor and his wife lived in the Rectory on the Glebe lands in Annamoe (now the home of the film director John Boorman) and they raised six children there. Sadly the Vicar-Professor died in his rooms at Trinity College on May 14th 1866.

His wife, Louisa Jane, moved to Dublin and in March 1871 decided to change her name and the family name of her children back to d'Arenberg. One of her sons, Frederick Augustus, emigrated to Adelaide in South Australia after graduating from Trinity and it was his daughter, Helena, who was married in 1920 to the Surgeon.

The Surgeon was Frank Osborn, who never practised very much after graduating from Melbourne University, preferring instead to wield a pruning shears in the vineyards of South Australia. He bought the twenty year old Milton Vineyard where he and Helena and their three children settled down to growing grapes and making good wine. When Frank died in 1957, responsibility for the business passed to his son Arry and it was he, more than anybody else, who spread the name and reputation of d'Arenberg wines.

And so to the Wine and the present

Throughout the Sixties d'Arenberg wine began to win awards for quality and came to the notice of international wine writers and this pattern has continued to the present day. In 1990 the family won the top award in the McLaren Vale, a considerable achievement in an area which produces some of Australia's best wines. They have achieved this in a winery which still uses open fermenters and large wooden vats but combines these with modern technology.

Frank Corr

The Golden Years *1900 - 1935*

Roundwood District has been very fortunate in producing athletes of note. The late Jack McDonnell, the Mill, Ballinastoe, who was able to clear over 6' at the lath flourished in the late 1800s and early 1900s. He performed with great success at the D.M.P. sports in Ballsbridge, Roundwood, Ashford etc. and was picked for an American Tour though he declined to go.

Other athletes were brothers Dan, Paddy and Frank Kelly of Montiagh, brothers William and James Turner of Clara and Christy Lawler of Laragh. The Turners excelled in weight throwing as did Gus Malone of Baltinanima. Owen Byrne, Trooperstown, and Jack Malone were runners the latter taking part in the great Bray to Roundwood Marathon finishing 5th against crack athletes without training. Christy Lawler was a sprinter of note. Jack Byrne, Raheen, became prominent in the sporting arena as did Edward, Terence, and Dan Kavanagh of Knockraheen. The former won a 2 mile race in the Leinster Championship. About 1920 the Brennan brothers, Annamoe, and Dick Dawson of Clara began their careers in which they won numerous trophies the latter taking part in a Marathon from Rathnew to Roundwood. Michael O'Rourke of Annamoe was a great athlete winning many trophies including the Leinster Championship 25 mile Marathon around 1915.

James Dawson, Knockatemple, won prizes as a shot putter and slinging the 56 lb. Joe Molloy, Ballinastoe was a successful high jumper of the same period.

A very interesting sports was held in Roundwood in June 1906, Larry Murphy being prominent in organising what proved to be a very successful event. Three of the winners that day were destined to become prominent in after years. Harry Ward and Michael Rooney as cyclists and W.J. (Billy) Byrne, Tomriland, afterwards one of the 1912 senior inter-county football players. At a sports event in Wicklow town in September of the same year a remarkable feature was that the cyclists Harry Ward of Roundwood and E.H. Marks of Dulton in England dead heated for first place in the one mile open and though the Englishman won on the run off it was a fine achievement for the lad from Roundwood.

Peter O'Connor a solicitor from Waterford and Wicklow native was holder of the World record in the long jump for 20 years as well as winning 28 championships.

Joe Timmons

Annamoe Pub

By tradition there was a pub in Annamoe House in the last century which was closed by the Bartons when an individual was discovered by them lying dead drunk across the avenue when they were coming home. 2 advertisements in the Wicklow Newsletter indicates that this would have happened around 1863. On the 26 Jan 1859 The house was up for rent and described as an 8 roomed house with fittings for provision store, a spirit licence, yard and stables. The yearly rental was £40 per annum. On the 17 October 1863 the house is again up for rent with the following proviso 'No publicans need apply'.

Phyllis Bean Ui Ceallaigh

Roundwood Park

The House at Roundwood which was to become the family home of the second President of Ireland and his First Lady was probably built in the early 18th century. The actual date is not recorded but from available records it would seem the house was completed by 1720. It was originally an Estate Managers house belonging to the Temple Family and from the 1750s this was the Hatch family. It became the dower house of the Synges who married in and later owned the Estate. In 1798 the house was attacked by the rebels. A tower, with vertical slits, that was built into the house is said to have been built for defensive purposes and this remains a feature of the house. However the house was one of the Big Houses that remained intact. In 1850 the Estate was sold by the Encumbered Estates Court to the Guinness's and the house became the residence of the Gower family to the early part of this century. At this time the house was remodelled when the new wing containing a ballroom with bedrooms over was added. Later owners included the Sherrans, Fitzpatricks and Browetts, the latter sold the house and some 30 acres to the O'Ceallaighs in 1939.

Phyllis Bean Ui Ceallaigh was born Phyllis Ryan in Tomcool, Co. Wexford, in 1892. She was the youngest of 12 children. One of her brothers, Dr. James Ryan was elected to the 1st Dail and subsequently became Minister for Finance. She was educated at the Convent of Mercy in Gorey and at the National University of Ireland where she graduated with a Masters degree in Science. A quite remarkable woman for her era she was engaged as a Public Analyst working for the Industrial Research Council. She was later responsible for the establishment of a laboratory in Dawson St. which analysed milk samples. She was a founder member of the Irish Association of Chemistry (now called the Institute of Chemistry of Ireland). She was a Council Member, Vice President, and Treasurer and remained actively involved in its activities until the late 1930s. As a young chemist she published 2 significant articles in the Proceedings of the Royal Academy in 1917 and 1919 with Hugh Ryan (no relation).

During her years in University Phyllis became active in politics. She carried messages for Pdraig Pearse from the GPO in 1916. Later, during the War of Independence, she became an Executive member and captain of Cumman na mBan. In 1918 her older sister, Mary Kate, married Sean T. O'Ceallaigh and later in the same year he was elected with a sweeping majority for the College Green constituency to the Westminster Parliament. He refused this seat and became a member of the 1st Dail. Mary Kate died in 1934 and Phyllis married Sean T. in 1936. Three years later they moved to Roundwood Park while he was serving as Tanaiste and Minister for Local Government & Health, later becoming Minister of Finance. On 25 June 1945 he succeeded Douglas Hyde as 2nd President of Ireland and was returned unopposed for a second term in 1952.

When the O'Ceallaighs bought Roundwood Park the great bulk of the Estate did not come with the house but was painstakingly re-established over the years. Because Sean T. concentrated on the political affairs of the Nation and because in truth he was no farmer Phyllis had to look after all of the practical side of the farming. Over the years she built

up a fine herd of cattle on the Estate. She kept her eye on cattle prices and would arrange for cattle to be taken to markets in either Blessington or Dublin when the price was right. In addition to ensuring the cattle went to the market on the right occasion she also kept a neighbourly eye on Fr. Collier's herd. The milk from the cattle was churned on the Estate supplying butter not only for the house but also for Aras an Uachtarain. Her interest in livestock was not confined to cattle, she had two horses for the hay making season called Tom and Molly. She kept an intensive pig rearing unit built on the Estate where she kept about a dozen sows and a pedigree boar with the litters being bred and reared until they went the markets. Practising what Fianna Fail preached while in office she ensured self-sufficiency in terms of bacon, rashers, pork etc. by having selected pigs slaughtered on the Estate for home use and for Aras an Uachtarain

Slaughtering was conducted by a man called John Thomas. John worked for Frank Doyle of Shankhill and Fred Doyle of Roundwood, two brothers and both butchers. Fred had been the family butcher and as the household became more self sufficient John Thomas was engaged for this gory task. The O'Ceallaighs on there way from Dublin to Roundwood would stop in Shankhill to collect him and his gear of killing block and tackle. When the car was loaded up they would drive to Roundwood where a mini abattoir had been created. Sometimes matters of State would put a hitch in these arrangements and on more than one occasion he used to travel with his gear on St. Kevin's Bus.

Phyllis also branched into turkey rearing. She reared about 50-60 of the old brown variety each year. Some of these went to the market but the best birds were killed and dressed on the Estate and were distributed to friends and family as a unique Christmas present.

When they came to Roundwood first eggs were in short supply and remained "hard to get" throughout the war years. As free range eggs were particularly valued she made arrangements with local women to have eggs which were not needed for the individual families collected and brought to one house. These were used on the Estate and later when Sean T. became President this local women's co-operative supplied Aras an Uachtarain for 14 years. It is interesting to speculate who enjoyed a hearty meal made with Roundwood's fresh eggs.

She was an extremely practical woman. The Estate became mechanised at a very early stage and at one time there were 4 tractors. As at the time they were propelled by TVO starting could be very difficult. Petrol was used in the carburettors to start them but this was in short supply at the end of the war and up the early 50s. The men on the Estate tried all sorts of devices to make sure they could start the tractors easily. They were parked at the tops of hills and let roll down until the TVO kicked into life. Phyllis always made sure that there was a drop of petrol available to start them up. The 'drop' was about half a gallon of petrol per tractor. In hard weather the workers, who would otherwise have had to break their backs swinging a starting handle, often had reason to compliment her foresight.

Beehives were also introduced onto the Estate and she kept up to 10 hives. The First Lady on one famous occasion informed the men that a number of bees had swarmed and left the hives. She asked them to keep an eye out for the missing bees and promised a

reward for their safe return. Ned Hatton and Tom Roche on the way home from work one day spotted a swarm that they took to be the missing bees in a hollow tree. Not being familiar with the ways of beekeeping the two intrepid adventurers decided they would single and bare handedly collect the swarm. After some excitement the swarm got away and the 2 men got some severe stings for their trouble. They did not get any reward for their efforts.

The First Lady was a real environmentalist. She was always anxious to preserve as many trees as possible on the Estate. However if Mother Nature or a winter storm bended a tree she made sure it was not wasted. She would ensure it was carefully chopped up and during the wintertime trailer loads of timber would be delivered to each worker's house. She also made arrangements for the men to cut turf on the Sally Gap which was used to heat the great house. When the men were working in the bog she would, whenever possible, visit the spot where the turf was being saved. She would advise them sternly that when they had finished their days work that they should find a clean stream and wash up the cups and plates and make sure they were all brought back.

She had a romantic side too. Shortly after the second steward, Joe O'Sullivan, arrived he was interviewed by her. She enquired whether he was married or whether he had any plans in that direction. She found out from him that, while he wasn't married, he had a childhood sweetheart by in Leix called Greta McEvoy. She encouraged him to return as often as it was practical and gave him the good advise that he should settle down with a wife as soon as possible. The O'Sullivans later suggested that there was a practical side to this as well. She was making sure her steward didn't ramble. When the couple married they lived in the Lodge and continued to live there up to the late 80s. They reared a family of 4 boys (including twins) and one girl there. I personally have a very warm memory from the time the third child was born. As Joe was busy on the farm I was press-ganged into baby-sitting the 2 eldest lads. I recall on a clear warm summer's afternoon the 2 boys playing in a small sandy area which had been created in the front garden of the Lodge for the children. While I was sitting watching, a small figure came across from the big house. It was the President who was in the Library keeping an eye on us. He walked across the yard in his black suit complete with his tall black hat which gave him a bit of height. He came over and asked who I was, I explained that I was baby-sitting for the O'Sullivans and he put his hands in his pocket and took out 2 Peggy Legs and gave them to me for the 2 children. In spite of his high office he loved children and would always remember a small treat for them.

Her interest wasn't confined purely to matters agricultural. She commissioned and had laid out a series of rock gardens, shrubs and lawns in front of and surrounding the house. These remain a feature to this day.

Outside the Estate she established quite extraordinary relations with the people of Roundwood. She travelled from the house every morning for Mass, the papers and a chat. She would be seen virtually every morning leaving Byrnes shop with one or two loaves of bread wrapped in paper. She was a solid supporter of the Church and an active contributor to the Church Restoration Fund. She officiated at the official opening of the Mansion House Sale of Work and struck by the fact that a sale of work could be a money

spinner she suggested to Canon Gallagher, then P.P. of Roundwood, that he should establish a regular sale of work to support the Church Restoration efforts. The annual Christmas Sale is still a feature of village life. She was also interested in local affairs particularly the I.C.A. or indeed any movement in which women were involved. Even after moving back to Dublin she paid occasional visits to the Roundwood ICA guild. One evening during a social half hour of a guild meeting the question was posed 'who would you like to be, who you are not now?' We were all anxious to see who the First Lady would like to be. She surprised us by saying that she would like to be Monica Sheridan a cookery expert who at the time had her own television programme. She said that she would particularly to have the kind of kitchen and all the utensils that Monica had at her disposal. The First Lady was a practical down to earth person.

Life at Roundwood Park wasn't all self sufficiency. The House saw many important visitors. A close friend was Chester Beatty who visited the house once a year. After the disastrous fire, when the house was being rebuilt, he presented the O'Ceallaighs with a magnificent book case which lined the wall in the main lounge as well as a valuable collection of books. Sean McEntee was another regular visitor. Another notable visitor was Cardinal Montini who later became Pope Paul VI. In August 1962 they were visited by President Eisenhower. Then in retirement he had been visited by the O'Ceallaighs in the White House at a State banquet on St. Patrick's Day in 1959. I have reason to remember the Eisenhower visit very clearly. At the time I was within 3 days of the birth of my 2nd daughter. Awaiting for the helicopter to arrive at 8.30 of the morning in question Joe O'Sullivan, who was master of Ceremonies for the occasion, suggested to me that Mrs O'Ceallaigh might not think it appropriate for a lady in my condition to be greeting the President of the United States. Three days later, when my daughter decided to arrive, my husband was working at the Estate. A neighbour was asked to phone to contact him. The neighbour, a German lady, misunderstanding what was required of her didn't phone the estate office but the main house itself and was put through to Mrs O'Ceallaigh who sent the car to take me to the Rotunda.

Throughout the long years in Roundwood Park Sean T. never took any real interest in the farming side of the Estate, that was exclusively her preserve. Whenever they returned from either Aras an Uachtarain or from some trip further afield. she would don a pair of wellington boots or stout shoes and would walk the Estate inquiring into all aspects of the farm. He confined his activities on the land to walking the 2 poodles which were household pets. Everybody who recalls visiting them recalls the extraordinary happiness which they both derived from life in the country. May McGuirk (nee Kenny), a housekeeper for many years, recall that in the evening time the couple would walk together around the Estate and you'd always knew where they were from the peels of laughter which came from one or the other of a very united couple.

In November 1966 Sean T. died aged 84 years. Phyllis lived in Roundwood until 1968 or 1969 when the Estate was sold to the Westons. She lived for the remaining 14 years of her life in Nutley Ave. in Dublin and died 19th November 1983. The Irish Press report of the funeral records that among the mourners were the President and Mrs Hillary. An Taoiseach Dr. Fitzgerald, Leader of the Opposition, Charles J Haughey, former Taoiseach Jack Lynch and the widows of two former Presidents Maureen Bean Uí Dhailaigh



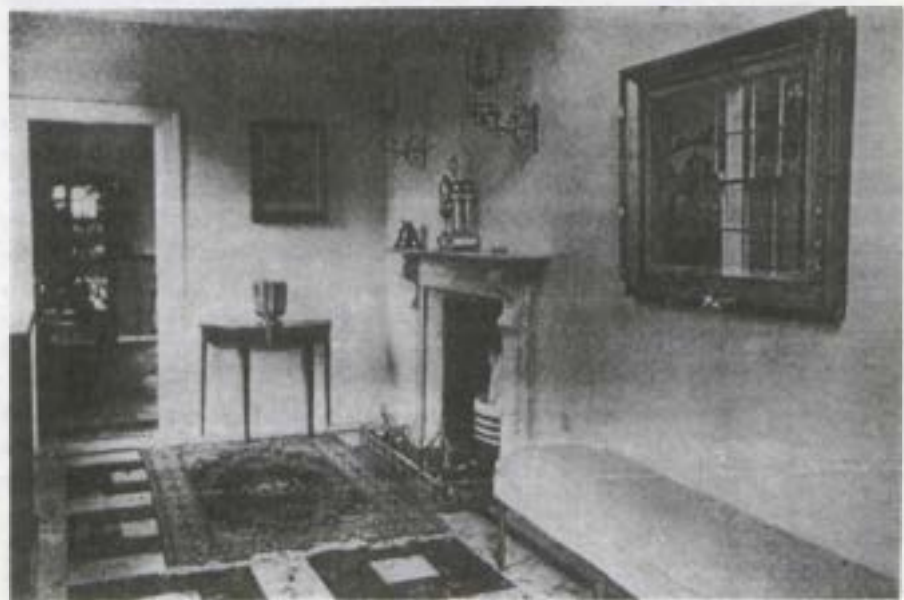
The principal lounge used by their Excellencies containing many of their personal treasures



A magnificent bookcase lines another wall of the principal lounge



A view of the dining room with its exquisite period furniture and deep carpets



Roundwood House Hall. The Rug is the gift of Pandit Nehru.

and Rita Childers. Bishop Joseph O'Carroll, who had been the family Chaplain for 7 years presided at the Requiem Mass of which the Chief Celebrant was Fr. James Ryan of Templeduigan, Wexford (a nephew). The chief mourners included Senator Owen Ryan, Dr. Seamus Ryan, Michael Ryan, Owen O'Malley, Dr. Pierce Ryan, other nephews and nieces together with representatives of the cultural and political life of Ireland. The funeral was also attended by many residents of Roundwood who travelled to the Sacred Heart Church in Donnybrook to pay their final tribute to an old and respected friend.

Joan Hatton

Robert A. Childers

An Appreciation

Robert A. Childers died on August 9 1996 exactly 8 years after his wife. He was the elder brother of the late Erskine Childers 4th President of the Irish Republic.

When he took over the Estate from his cousin, Robert Barton, in 1973 he wasn't afraid to take of his coat and work with the men.

In October 1981 was sold to a Mr McKeown though he still retained that section of the house they were living in until he passed away.

As a patron of our Journal and a generous supporter of the Church of Ireland he will be sadly missed.

He was a kind retiring gentleman and will be long remembered for his many acts of kindness and neighbourliness.

Contributed by Annie Taylor

Wicklow People - 31st December 1910

On Tuesday evening last Mr. Barton of Ardnoe House Roundwood, who featured so prominently in the East Wicklow campaign on behalf of the Nationalist candidate gave a cinematograph entertainment to his tenantry and their friends and the people of the district in the Parochial Hall in Roundwood. The afternoon was devoted to the children and the night for the adults. The spacious hall was packed to overflowing and much interest was centred on the different pictures as they were thrown on the screen. A vote of thanks was given by Rev. F. Butler and Larry Murphy.

W.J. Duffy

There aren't many people alive today who could tell you who Willie Duffy was or why I am writing a short story of who he was or what he did to entitle him to a mention in a small bit of the history of this area. Well my memory of W.J.D. as he preferred to be called is that at the start of World War I he joined the British Army and saw service for four years in that war. When the war ended he came home to Ireland. I am not sure from what county he came but I do know he made the village of Roundwood his home.

He got a job as a postman in the village and believe me when I tell you he had no mode of transport except his two feet. One day a letter arrived for people who lived very far from the village. The postmaster asked W.J.D. what he thought about delivering the post. W.J.D. replied that "the letter should be posted".

He was a great GAA man. He often walked to Aughrim to a game and home again. He also contributed articles to the local weekly Wicklow People. As a matter of fact the article he used to write for the Wicklow People was "The Glendalough and Tócair Notes".

It was also around this time that Joe Keenan decided with the help of an engineer of the Waterworks, Mr. Fitzsimmons, to have a go at giving the villagers their first taste of electricity. I am not sure about this but I think they put up fifteen poles to carry the electric cables. The bold W.J.D. of course was a pretty good poet and might I add a great friend of Joe Keenan. Joe got this high diesel engine the fly wheel of which weighted 1/2 ton. The handle for starting it was big enough for two men to hold their hands on. In the winter they used to start it around 4 o' clock. Remember that this engine was attached to a huge generator hence the electric power. Please pay attention to these final few lines. As

everyone knew that Joe couldn't keep the engine going all night they approached him and arranged that he would start the engine at 4pm, and at five minutes to 12 he would pull back the hand operated accelerator. That reduced the amount of power going to each one's house so we were given five minutes to rush into the bed before the power was cut off. At the time the craic was to hurry to bed while the letter S was in the bulb. The following is the poem by W.J.D. about Joe Keenan's electric light.



Togher Light - A Bit of Alright

by W.J.Duffy

The village of Togher, alias Roundwood,
That stands over the Vartry, the Waterworks flood,
No more will repose in the darkness of night,
For twill soon be made bright with electric light.

For that same we're indebted, I'd have you to know,
To that popular sportsman they call Keenan's Joe,
With Mr Fitzsimmons, a skilled engineer,
Both hearty gay fellows, let's given them a cheer.

The poles are erected the wires are being laid,
The Shannon Scheme shortly, may rest in their shade,
At leastwise 'tis like it in mild miniature,
A joy for the rich as well as the poor.

Twill soon be as easy by night as by day,
To go to the shop for your ration o tay,
Or a dance in the hall if you're out for the night,
Yourself and herself in the glow of the light.

Now if any young fellow is feeling afraid,
To saunter through Togher at night with his maid,
Just let him remember to keep matter right,
Is to walk independent in the glow of the light.

What nonsense; What nonsense; did I hear you bark,
We were never afraid to go home in the dark,
And none can exclaim Oh I got such a fright,
For the guards cannot ask you "Now where's your light?"

Now candles and lamp oil are things of the past,
Old time ideas were too stale to last,
That's progress, yes, progress, it tis that alright,
We said it, you've read it, so switch off the light.

Patrick O'Brien

Three Poems by W.J. Duffy

The Lads from the Heather

Ring out merry bells lets hear the glad chime
Which tells of us beating the boys of Rathmines
We lads from the Heather, were not known to frown.
Gay comrades together from old Moneystown.
So there up in Moneystown you can hear the glad cry
And our Carrigower comrades who never fight shy.
Here's health to our sportsmen where ever they stray
All manly and merry in fight or in play.

To join Enniskerry one Sunday we went
For a tug of war contest in a big tournament.
For a set of fine medals good purpose so well
Our opponents did likewise its pleasing to tell.
While the lads from the City were favoured by all
Round the South County Dublin and the Old Golden Ball.
We lads from the heather were tougher than they
For we leathered them that November day

There was a Carrigower Captain who completed the job
A popular sportsman you know - Fisher Bob.
His keenness and coolness there is none can approach
He steered us to victory our team he did coach.
It was union of action and union of thought
That won us our medals, those trophies we brought
Back home to the Highlands, to everyone's joy,
Kept on by the teaching of the great Pat Molloy

Now our medals are silver with centre of gold
Which will shine to remind us of youth when we are old
And maybe when I am in cold death hath gone down
Will reflect back the glory of ole Moneystown.
So then fill up your glasses and drink a glad toast
Here's health to our sportsmen who can play without boast
Rejoice in the glory of our victory won
Once more in the chorus and now I am done

(1950s)

Oh Glendalough

Oh Glendalough of ruin and rock
Of lakes and of steeple
Of ruined shrines and silent mines
Of dear devoted people
These dear old scenes I see in dreams
And muse upon them daily.
Those pleasant vales where with the Gaels
I sported oft and gaily.
Old Derrybawn that looks upon
The quaint old bridge of Laragh
Fair Crony's groves I dearly love
And where the heath crop tosses.
The wind blow shrill upon the hill
Above the ancient Crosses
And in my view appearing too
Is glorious Castlekevin.
Blessed and beautified by one who died
Whose life was nobly given.
For Ireland in O'Dwyers bank
He rose to power and splendour.
Dear Wicklow Home; although I roam
Far from your peaks and passes
I love you still and always will.
And when past is life and labour
My one request is let me rest
Among old friends and neighbours.

(no date)

Song

Tonight dear friends we thank you all
assembled in this concert hall
in answer to our needful call
for our school in Annacarter

That school is wanting much repair
it lets in rain as well as air
for that we know for we go there
to that school in Annacarter

But with the help you give tonight
in coming here to pay your mite
we will very soon have matters right
for our school in Annacarter

We hope you like our dress parade
for which we thank our teachers aid
these dresses all were specially made
for our school in Annacarter

The above song was supplied by Tom Mulligan, Killoogue, son of Mrs Mary C Mulligan, N.T. Annacarter and former pupil. It was composed for a concert organised by Mrs Mulligan to raise £10 for repairs around 1940. The concert was held over 3 nights and was packed to capacity at about 40 persons per night with many people unable to get in on the last night. Admission was 1/- . School children only took part in the concert. The late Jay Doyle erected the stage.

Contributed by Joe Timmons

Wicklow Newsletter - 10th August 1889

On the last Mr. E. Davidson, Sub Sheriff of Bray accompanied by a force of 30 Policemen under command of B. G. Shaw, D.I. Bray, proceeded to Castlekevin to carry out evictions on the Frizzell property. The tenants were taken completely by surprise and there was no resistance and no apparent sympathy by the people of the neighbourhood. The first house visited was occupied by the widow Carroll. The tenant shut the door and the bailiffs forced a window to gain admittance. Some few persons came up during the eviction and she called repeatedly for the 'Plan' but there was no response. Possession was given up to Mr. McDougal, agent. The next house was occupied by a girl named Loughlin. This house was thrown down. The next house was occupied by Ned Cullen. No resistance was offered and the tenant was not admitted as a caretaker. The next house was occupied by William Murphy. Possession was quickly surrendered and this house was also thrown down. The tenants owed 3 to 5 years rent. The evicting party then left for Bray. The 4 Emergency men were headed by the intrepid Woods and made short work of what they were supposed to do.

Glendalough and Togher

Wicklow Newsletter - Sat. June 30th 1923

Laragh G.F.C.

Just as example sheds a genial ray, so has the match on Sunday broken the way. Paddy McGrath has set about rousing the Laragh Lads with a view to raising a team to play the winner of the Clara v Moneystown encounter fixed for Sunday week.

Moneystown team

The following comprised the team who defeated Clara at Castlekevin on Sunday last: Mat Kenny (Capt.) Pat Kenny, Jim Kenny, P. Cullen, L. Cullen, T. Cullen (goal), T. Miley, A. Mernagh, J. Windsor, J. Byrne, D. Conyard, E. Conyard, F. O'Rourke, J. Murphy and D. Short.

Building begun

The building of the school in Roundwood has begun. The converting of the Old R.I.C. barracks into a teachers residence is going on also. This contract is in the hands of Mr. Joe Dunne, Annamoe. The opening of the 'new works' is a windfall to labour in a small way.

Brieflets

There was quite a lot of weddings up Togher way during the week. On Tuesday Miss Lily Lynch, assistant teacher in Roundwood, launched the marital barque with Mr. Brennan of Bray. On Wednesday there was a brace of weddings; the contracting parties being Mr. Larry Carroll to Miss Kate O'Toole, also Mr. Mat Fegan and Miss Lily Byrne, Tomriland.

Popular Official

Mr Peter Farrell, who for 20 years was superintendent of Roundwood Waterworks, having retired on pension after over half a century in the employment of the Dublin Corporation has left the Vartry Lodge, to make way for his successor, Mr. McDonald. During their residence in Roundwood Mr. Farrell and family made hosts of friends. The departure of Miss May Farrell, organist, is also keenly regretted.

Gaelic Games

Whilst everybody who had a few hours to spare were making Glendaloughwards on Sunday last not so with the Gaels of Clara and Moneystown. A friendly was down for disposal on the football revival ticket and Castlekevin was the venue of choice, even though lying adjacent to Moneystown it was considered neutral ground. Clara team which consisted of beginners (as compared with Moneystown) travelled per variety style - bikes, cars and even shanks mare hurried to the venue, viz. a field of Mr. Ml. Kavanaghs, a member of a family who can boast of life long connections with local Gaeldom, even county competitions. It was a forgone conclusion the Clara would 'go under' but they were not without their rosy hopes of putting up a good show. These hopes did bloom but withered in the blast of the final touches. Although good individual play resulted they failed to raise a flag and went under to the score of 5 points to nil. Mr M. Kavanagh as referee gave every satisfaction.

Contributed by Mike Kenna and Maunie Timmons

The Emergency

June to July 15th 1939

The Whit Bank holiday of 1939 marked the start of the tourism season for Roundwood and the surrounding area and due to the good weather there were plenty of visitors who came by foot or by car. Strange as it may seem there were reports of traffic jams in Co. Wicklow that weekend as so many people had decided to avail of visits to the countryside.

For many it was the last summer of peace that they were going to enjoy as the countdown to the commencement of World War II was well under way and while political efforts were being made to prevent this conflict Germany continued with her plans to conquer Poland. Britain and France, who had pledged their support to Poland, continued to prepare and equip for a war which they saw as inevitable since Germany refused to withdraw their demand to Poland's territory which they wanted for themselves.

Serious as the international situation was the inhabitants of Roundwood, in common with the rest of Ireland, knew that in the event of hostilities commencing the Nation would be neutral even though, at the same time, it had been made known to the British that the Government would not allow the State to be used as a stepping stone for any invasion mounted against Britain. The Irish Government had also begun to enact legislation to cover the eventuality of hostilities breaking out and the most important piece of legislation enacted, as far as the civilian population was concerned, was the Air Raid Precautions Act (1939) which provided civil defence schemes for the population all over the country. Administration of these schemes, known as ARP schemes, was left in the hands of County Councils and certain designated City Corporations and Urban District Councils.

In the case of Co. Wicklow the County Council was the local authority responsible for preparing an ARP scheme for the county with the exception of Bray where the Urban District Council was one of the specified Urban Councils. All Schemes had to be submitted to the Dept. of Defence for their approval but as the Act left the matter of when to implement a scheme in the hands of the local authority, Wicklow County Council, in common with most other authorities adopted a 'wait and see' approach over implementing the terms of the Act.

This 'wait and see' approach meant nothing to the people of Roundwood as they had sufficient confidence in their public Representatives who would know when to take the necessary decisions. After all the newspapers were full of the diplomatic efforts being made to avert hostilities through dialogue and secret communications behind the scenes. The threat of War was a mixed blessing to the entire district. For those unemployed the British war industries, which had been working at fever pace since March, offered plenty of well paid work such was their demand for manpower. There was a Catch 22 to this great opportunity because conscription was in force in Britain and citizens of Eire (as the Republic of Ireland was then termed) who were working in Britain were liable to be called up into the Armed Forces. Those who decided to ignore their call up papers had no

option but to return to Ireland or continue working illegally in Britain and run the risk of arrest and prosecution for failing to answer the call up.

These matters were far from the minds of local people. As already mentioned the Whit weekend marked the start of the tourist season which began on a very good note as hoards of tourists from Britain as well as from Dublin arrived for the weekend which was blessed with excellent weather. This was to continue, according to the forecasters, well into June. While the good weather was welcomed by the farmers generally it was still too early for meadow mowing and hay making which never came early in Roundwood or Glendalough as it did in the lower regions of the county. However hay cocks could be seen in Glendalough House, which contrasted strongly with the smaller farms around Annamoe which would not be ready for some weeks to come. On the other hand work on saving turf was well under way as during the previous year wet weather at cutting time had meant that turf had been scarce during the winter. Welcome as the weather was some rain was need for the meadows, corn and root crops.

The principal event of Sunday 4th July was the 40 Hours Adoration and Procession of the Blessed Sacrament which was held in St. Kevin's Church in Glendalough. Since the event commenced with High Mass at 11 am. the times of the Masses in Roundwood were moved to 8 am. and 9.30 am. to facilitate all those from Roundwood who wished to attend. Celebrant of High Mass was Rev. Fr. O'Donnell S.J. assisted by Deacon Very Rev. T Costello P.P. and sub Deacons Rev. J. Menton C.C. and Rev. P. Lavelle. At the end of the Mass the Blessed Sacrament was carried through the Church and out around the Church grounds as far as the Presbytery and then back into the Church again. The procession was led by a cross bearer followed by school children, members of the Men's Sacred Heart Sodality, the Women's Sodality section, the choir and the public. Canopy bearers were Sgt. McGuinness, Garda J. Canning, P. Redmond N.T. Roundwood and P. Devitt Laragh East. Missing from the procession was the Togher Band, known for over 40 years as the St. Laurence O'Toole Band, and the absence was a topic of conversation amongst those who took part.

At the AGM of the Moneystown Social Club held that weekend J. Storey was elected as President and C. J. Timmons as Hon Secretary. It was decided that the club would go to Courtown on August the 15th for their 4th annual excursion and outing.

Two days later on Tuesday June 6th the 40 Hours Adoration concluded with a special High Mass celebrated by Rev Fr. P. Lavelle assisted by Rev. Fr. T. Costello and Fr. J. Menton in St. Kevin's Church with many of those who had been at Sunday's ceremonies in attendance.

Elsewhere that night P. Murphy chaired a meeting in Roundwood at which it was decided to hold an event to be known as the 'Togher Tug 'O' War Tournament' to be held on the first Sunday of July. It was agreed that there would be an admission charge of 1/- and that the winning teams would be presented with medals. It was left to the committee to organise the event. June 29th was set as the closing date for entries to allow time for the programme to be printed.

At the weekend the spell of good weather came to an end with cooler temperatures and heavy showers on the Sunday which was a little off-putting to the many visitors in

the district. However the following Sunday (June 18th) Toomey's Tea rooms in Laragh was the venue for a very successful ceidhle organised by the Glendalough Gaelic League. The evening was arranged by Mr. O'Connell who was the League's instructor and more than 35 couples took part in the evening's entertainment with music being provided by the Moneystown Ceidhle Band under J. Fitzgerald who also acted as M.C.

For farmers it was time to keep an eye out for potato blight and to take precautions against it as a blight spray warning had been issued by the Dept. of Agriculture.

On Tuesday the 20th June the Roundwood Fair took place but this was not a great success due mainly to the general reluctance of buyers to purchase the plentiful stock available. Reports spoke of a dull trade in yearling cattle as well as in milch cows and springers.

A week later Glendalough was the destination of the annual outing of the Academy of Christian Arts with the party receiving a conducted tour by Fr. Myles Ronan C.C. (a noted historian) who had served at one time as a curate in Rathdrum. Another group making preparations to visit the area was the Old Dublin Society who were arranging a visit to the Varry Waterworks for it's members as part of it's programme of Summer outings.

That same Tuesday the Farmers Federation held a meeting in Roundwood which was organised by the Roundwood Branch. One of the topics may have been the plan to set up a Creamery in Wicklow to process excess milk which Wicklow farmers could not sell in the Dublin area due to the opposition of the Dublin Milk Board.

In a more lighter vein the young people were able to attend what was billed as an all night dance in Twoomey's Tea Rooms on Thursday 29th with dancing from 9 p.m. to 4 am. Music to be provided by Fitzgerald's Band. Admission was 3/- and included a Meat Supper.

As June gave way to July there was no let up in the seriousness of the international situation but many newspapers expressed the view that war would be averted. Behind the scenes the Government was slowly preparing for the eventuality and on July 1st the Irish Red Cross, which had been established under Dail legislation, came into existence.

Domestic matters were to the fore on Sunday July 2nd when the eagerly awaited Togher Tug 'O' War competition took place in a field in Roundwood opposite the Post Office owned by Mrs Margaret Keenan. Admission was 1/- for adults and 6d for women and children. In the 110 stone contest teams came from Varry, Parkroe, Drummin, Glenmacnass, Moneystown and Glencullen. The winners were the Glenmacnass team which consisted of James Nolan, J. Doyle, William Doyle, J. Byrne, K. Merrigan, J. Merrigan, M. Farrington, D. Farrington and J. Gaffney. Team coach was J. Nolan. In the schoolboys competition there were teams from Laragh, Moneystown, Varry and Annacarter. Victory went to the Annacarter team which consisted of P. Walsh, M. McGuirk, R. McGuirk, J. McGuirk, P. Kavanagh, J. Kavanagh, S. Fitzmaurice, J. Molloy, J. Ellis and S. Kavanagh. The final event was a catch weight event between Varry and Carrigower which was won by the Varry team of R. Miley, J. Egan, J. Roche, W. Roche, H. Doyle, B. Doyle, M. Kavanagh, C. Hughes, T. Traynor and J. Byrne. Coach was William P. Murphy. Clerks of scales were William J. Murphy and Patrick Mulligan.

In a more optimistic note Michael Hayes opened his new premises known as 'The Stores' in Roundwood on Monday 3rd July.

Around this time Rev. P. Lavelle was moved to St. James' Parish in Dublin after 4 years with the Parish Church in Roundwood. His replacement was Rev. J. Floyd who came from St. Theresa's, Donore Ave., S.C.R.

A more serious note was sounded on Wednesday July 5th when recruiting for Oglaiha na hEireann, for-runner of the F.C.A., was carried out in Roundwood as part of the ongoing campaign being carried out all over the county. Enlistment was scheduled to commence in the Garda Barracks in Roundwood at 8 p.m. Prior to this the 2nd Batt. Pipe Band under the command of Capt. Duggan paraded through the village and played suitable airs for this important occasion. At 8 p.m. Capt. Hayes commenced the recruitment of suitable men and indicated that he would return on July 17th to conduct another recruitment drive and take more enlistments.

The following day Lough Dan was the final venue for a group of English ladies who were staying in Bray and who came by coach. Some 40 women made up the visiting party and they had tea at Gaffney's farmstead before returning to Bray.

On Friday and Saturday (July 7 & 8) Flax growers from the district attended the 2 day sale organised by the Scottish Wool Growers. By way of a rival event was the 3rd sale of the season organised by Messrs Haskins & Sons of Wicklow which was held in the yard of Byrne's Hotel while the Scottish Growers were at the other end of the village. Prices ranged from 9d to 10d per pound with top price being around 1½ per lb. Well washed Cheviot wool was an immediate seller and over 100 bales of wool were sold between to the 2 events.

On the Saturday Afternoon the Vartry Waterworks was visited by the Old Dublin Society. The tour of the Reservoir and its facilities was conducted by P. O'Keefe B.E. B.Sc. who had been the resident engineer for a number of years. The Society had tea in Byrne's Roundwood Hotel and returned to Dublin via Glendalough.

Monday July 10th saw the 2nd week of operation of 'The Stores'. Michael Hayes and John Ferguson had been employed in the same premises up to June 26th by Synnotts of Newtown who ceased trading on that date. The two men then decided to go it alone and were hoping to capitalise on their reputation and expertise by running the new shop.

The principal event of the 2nd week in Roundwood was the visit to Kilcoole by a team drawn from the Parish schools of Roundwood and Glendalough. At the time the team lacked a formal name but it managed to beat Kilcoole by 4-4 to 1-1. Weatherwise it was not the best evening for travelling and no sooner had the teams lined out than it began to rain heavily which coming on the Eve of St. Swithins led some pessimists to believe that the remainder of the Summer would be wet. Members of the victorious team, who afterwards decided to call themselves the 'Glendalough United Gaels', were William Byrne (captain), J. Byrne, P. D'Arcy, A. Brennan, William O'Brien, W. Timmons, J. Murphy, V. Murphy, D. Fitzgerald, T. Kavanagh and J. McCoy.

On Saturday Haskins held their 4th wool sale of the season offering prices of 10d per lb. for well washed wool. However the quantities available were small due to the previous week's sale.

Sunday July 16th marked the start of the dancing season in earnest and the White Horse Inn Ballroom commenced with a dance from 8-11 p.m. boasting 'Good Music - Good Hall - Good Floor' For those interested in travelling further there was always the Ballroom Marquee in Wicklow which offered all night Sunday Dances from 8 to 2 am. Admission was 1/3 and music was by the Leo Connor Dublin Dance Band. The rival Royal Ballroom Marquee offered all night dancing till 2.30 am. for 1/6 with music by the Serenaders Star Dance Band.

Behind the scenes events were becoming more serious as the countdown to the war escalated. Britain decided to compel everyone to carry a National Registration Card but it was made clear that Eire citizens would not need a passport for travel to Britain.

James Scannell

Wicklow Newsletter - 1st October 1859

Farm clearance sale at Castlekevin by John Hugo: 8 horses, 21 cattle, 140 sheep, 2 drays, 2 cars, 2 mould board ploughs, furrow plough, 2 double harrow, winnowing machine, churning machine, turnip cutter and oat bruiser, grinding stone, beam, scales and weights, ladders, frame saw, sawing machine, sacks, tools, glass, harness, donkey cart and harness, breaking harness, tax cart, spaniel dog, 35 tons of hay, 3 ricks and haggard of white oats, 2.5 acres potatoes, 3.5 acres swedes, turnips, carrots and mangolds.

Wicklow Newsletter - 5th January 1890

Mr. Erskine Childers, nephew of Mr. Barton of Glendalough House, was welcomed home from South Africa on Friday where he had been serving as a driver in the C.I.V. Torch bearers were marshalled in the form of the letter 'E' on the mountain opposite where a tar barrel was lighted and fireworks set off. A torch light procession set out for the house where Dr. Garland read an address and Rev. W. Stokes called for three cheers which were heartily given and Mr. Childers responded in suitable terms. Mr. Childers who is one of the clerks in the House of Commons has written a book on the Boer War which has passed through three editions and several papers have given it very favourable reviews.

Wicklow Newsletter - 21st October 1889

Mr. Wm. Redmond MP was arrested in Annamoe where he had been staying for the last 10 days on a shooting holiday. The Police searched the house occupied by Mr. Corbet MP and Sir William Butler although Mr. Redmond was occupying a separate house. He is being prosecuted for speeches delivered in Arthurstown in Wexford.

Roundwood at the Start of World War II

My memory goes back, as a young man, to the outbreak of World War II. I was born in the centre of the village and believe me things were very bad at that time with no work etc. War broke out in 1939.

In the village where Sean Kavanaghs Pub is now, people by the name of Kelly's owned and lived there then. To let you know the changes that have taken place since then, at that time from Sean Kavanaghs Pub to Jerry Doyle's gate the total number of people resident in the village was 147. Today in the exact area we have 41 people living there. Work was so scarce then, you had no alternative but take the boat to Hollyhead so I suppose that was one of the reasons for the decline in the population.

Just as now there were five pubs in the village but at that time we had different laws for the pubs. For this generation I will try to explain how those laws worked. We will take Sunday for example. Each publican had to have what will call "A Doorman". For the duration of the day he had to stand inside the door to make sure that each customer lived outside the 3 mile jurisdiction. As I explained the pub opened at 12 am Sunday only and closed at 7.30 pm. Just then the Barman shouts Time Up. Anyone who lived within the 3 mile limit had to leave the premises. The drink driving laws hardly existed then. When we locals of course had to leave the only alternative was to get on the bicycles and head for Newtownmountkenedy or Laragh where we were classified as Bona-Fides. The laughable part of all this was we often passed the people of Newtown and Laragh on the road who were within the law to come to the pubs in Roundwood and drink till 10 o'clock in those places.

Each house in the village had what we call a half-door. That means you could open the top half and have a chat with your neighbours. By now the War had broken out and needless to say we depended on Britain for our supplies of coal in particular. A Committee was formed in the Old Hall for the purpose of forming a Parish Committee. The Co. Council contracted the Powerscourt Demesne and also the Guinness Estate for the purposes of procuring Turf Banks. Almost everyone procured a piece of land on which to cut their turf. I am not certain about this but I think the charge per Turf Bank was eight shillings. In today's terms that would be 40p. About this time the Wicklow Co. Council started to cut the Turf for all the institutions, hospitals, mental hospital etc. I was working with the Co. Council by this time. The cutters and spreaders were at this time working on piece work. We were paid by the cubic yard when divided between the cutter and the turf spreaders each got 4.5 pence per cubic yard. We had to cut 54 cubic yards of turf to earn 20 shillings or £1 in today's money.

The Co. Council by this time had 300 men producing the Turf. Remember that W.C.C. were supplying Grangegorman, Portrane, Hospitals etc. They also put huge clamps of Turf in the Phoenix Park which they were selling to the people of the City.

Back to the Turf Bog. Remember that with 300 men on that bog and no facilities, toilets etc. The procedure here was that each man went to the toilet, usually alongside the banks of the rivers and brooks. The Co. Council supplied the boiler and a steel stand for

the boiler to sit on. As the allowance of tea for each person during the war was the huge amount of 1/2 oz of tea the Co. decided to help out there. Can you imagine trying to find any decent drop of clean water to make tea. The procedure was that each morning we, usually two of us, would place the boiler which held 40 gallons on a flat bottomed wheelbarrow. We would wheel that barrow to a spot at the top of the "Glenownes River". We had to make sure we got our boiler filled early in the morning before the early morning visitors went in search of somewhere to relieve themselves. I think we will end this story here.

But before I do I would like to return to the village of Roundwood and give you some idea of rural Ireland before and during the war. I happen to have an old photograph of Roundwood National School taken 60 years ago. The conditions in that school were dreadful. Imagine there were 83 pupils on the Rolls and had nothing but dry toilets. The school teachers at the time were Mrs Brennan and Mr. Redmond. If you were a bit hefty you were handed 3 or 4 buckets, a pick and shovel to dig a few holes on the Fairgreen.

Perhaps another time, I will pen some more stories.

Patrick O'Brien

Wicklow Newsletter - 25th December 1863

A petition to the High Sheriff of Wicklow seeking a resolution the Land Question was signed by the following. Roundwood: Thomas Lynch C.C., Samuel Edge, Francis H Murphy, John Kean, Patrick Murphy, James Fleming P.L.G., Thomas Kean, William Byrne, Patrick McGuirk, James Mitten, John Kennedy, Edward Daly, John Murphy P.L.G., William Murphy, James Kean, N. G. Murphy, P. Plunkett, Edward Moran, John Murphy, Thomas Murphy, John Keely, John Byrne, Laurence Byrne, W. O'Connell, Michael Connor, William Doyle. Glendalough. Edward Rowan C.C., Maurice Byrne, Mathew Keenan, Denis Byrne, Patrick Keely P.L.G., Patrick Doyle, Thomas Doyle, Denis Mahon, Lewis Byrne, Michael Byrne, James Byrne, Michael Story, Patrick Doyle, James Lawler, William Behan, Laurence Pluck, Patrick Lawler, James Mernagh, Patrick Farrell, Charles Davis, Thomas Byrne, Andrew Doyle, Peter Byrne.

Wicklow Newsletter - 14th January 1888

Luggelaw Lodge. It is reported that a child of the caretaker has cut off the third finger of his younger brother's left hand for amusement.

Ben Murray Remembered

Ben Murray came to Moneystown with his mother from Arklow according to Seamus Healy. She worked as a house keeper in Greg Cunniam's father's house at the top of Ballycullen Hill. Cunniam's Hill was subsequently planted by the forestry. Ben went to Moneystown National School and left it at thirteen years of age according to Rita Byrne. Ben may have worked for some time after leaving school on Cunniam's farm.

When Ben came to Roundwood he lived and worked with Jimmy, John and Ned Lowe's father, Jack, on Lowe's farm in Oldtown. Lowe's acquired the land in the early 1920's. Ben worked as a ploughman with Lowes and also worked a portable two horse thrasher with Jack Lowe. Ben was very good with horses. The horse thrasher was the forerunner of the steam thrasher. Two horses would walk around in a circle attached to a double shaft. This shaft turned a drum which thrashed the corn. John Lowe recalls the horse thrasher on the farm but never saw it working even though it was in perfect working order. According to John the thrasher was called upon twice a year: once in the Autumn and again in the Spring to thrash the "potato ground oats" which were stored over the Winter and used for sowing in the Spring. John explained that the ground which grew potatoes the previous year was used to grow the oats, barley or wheat which was used for seed the following year. John's father and Ben used to travel from farm to farm with the horse thrasher and even went as far as Newcastle. There also used to be a stationary horse thrasher in Larry Murphy's in Roundwood. Eventually Lowe's horse thrasher was broken up for scrap.

Ben left Lowe's in 1934 and moved into the cottage on Roundwood Bank. He then went to work for Percy Northridge at Diamond Hill farm. Northridge kept hunters and Ben would go to hunts and point-to-points with the horses to the "Bottoms". Ben had a great memory and knew the history behind all the farms he worked on. Ben worked for Northridge as a ploughman until 1947 when the farm was sold. Ben also worked for other farmers in the area including: Stephen Kennedy's father, at Kennedy's corner, who was also known as the Yank Kennedy and the Kennedys of Knockadreet.

Sean Kavanagh recalled that Ben worked for his mother, Elizabeth Kavanagh, at Woodbrook around 1935 to 1937. He was paid 2/6 or half a crown a day and sometimes he would be paid the pound or 20 shillings for the week. One Christmas, Ben threw dice for ages in Sinnott's shop and eventually won a monster Christmas stocking. Sean recalled that there was everything in the stocking including a mechano set and he should know as Ben arrived at Elizabeth's door in Woodbrook that Christmas morning between 2 and 3 a.m. When Elizabeth open the door there was Ben with the monster stocking on his shoulder. Ben was all excited and kept shouting with delight "I got it. I got it. I got it". Ben Murray helped Santa Claus deliver Sean's presents that Christmas. Sean was only 7 or 8 years old at the time and that happened nearly sixty years ago.

He then started in Mullinaveigue and Srahmore on the forestry. He cycled to work and became foreman in the tree nursery. Kathleen Donohoe recalls a story told about Ben who was always very particular about time. He would always be there before starting time every morning. Ben had a watch which he believed would never go wrong. One day

at lunch time Ben took off his coat with the watch in it and put it down. One of the forestry workmen adjusted the time on Ben's watch. Ben left for home early. He met someone on the way home who remarked that he was going home early. Ben is said to have taken the watch and broke it against a stone. Sean Kavanagh recalls another end to this story. Ben is said to have bought a second Ingersol watch for 2/6 as a double check on the time from then on. Seamus recalls that Ben retired from the forestry when he was 70 which was about 1970.

Ben lived in the cottage on the bank with Jack Lawler from whom he inherited the cottage. Jack Lawler too had inherited the cottage from his uncle Mat Hennessy. Mat was originally from Glendalough and he must have got squatter's rights on the cottage. Before Mat, Johnny Halpin lived in the cottage. He was a granduncle of Ned Halpin. Seamus thinks that the cottage may have been the gate lodge to Roundwood Park. The cottage is set back from the village in much the same way as the gate lodge to Glendalough House is set back from Annamoe. The cottage had only two rooms and was built up against the bank. Seamus commented that the gentry usually employed single people for the gate lodge rather than married people.

Mat Hennessy was a carpenter and had his workshop in the long narrow tin shed along by the side of the road. There Mat made ladders, wheels and gates. Seamus Healy's father got a horse's dray made by Jack Lawler. Kathleen Donohoe recalled how on Sunday nights for years and years farmers would go up to Hennessy's for a game of cards. There was a regular attendance in Hennessy's which included: Jimmy Byrne, Pat McGuirk, Jack Darcy, the blacksmith, John Murphy, Kathleen's father, Christy Byrne of the Hotel and Paddy Cullen from Annagowlan. They used to play forty-five for a shilling a hand and whoever would win the three forty-five games got the new wooden gate and Mat would collect the money. This was how the local farmers got new gates and how Mat got paid for the gates. Jack Lawler, Mat's nephew, would be there at the card games and made the tea for everyone. Mat referred to this as "swinging the kettle" over the open fire. The cards went on for years until Mat died.

Seamus recalls spending days in Mat Hennessy's workshop when he should have been at school. On one occasion Mat made an armchair in the kitchen of the cottage. Mat set up the armchair for a card game, though the winner could not get it out through the door. The winner would set it up the next night for less money. This went on and on but the armchair remained inside. Seamus thinks the armchair never left the cottage. Mat was especially good to the children of the area around Christmas time. Mat had a timber carpenter's workshop beside Healy's opposite the chapel. He had a pot stove in it and a lovely fireplace. The lads used to play cards in it. Every year when the forty hours devotions were on Mat would decorate the workshop with greens. "It used to be lovely" recalls May Manley.

When Mat died he left the cottage on the bank to his nephew, Jack Lawler. Jack was from Glendalough and was a brother of Kit Lawler. Ben lived with Jack Lawler for years in the cottage. On Jack's death the cottage passed to Ben. Ben was a great local historian. He was always down outside Rita Byrne's at six in the morning. Rita was good to Ben and always had Ben's dinner ready at eleven o'clock in the morning. Ben had his spot in Rita's shop on the left hand side and would read the paper cover to cover there every day.

Amongst Ben's great friends was Frank Healy of Tomdarragh. Ben often cycled down to have the chat with Frank and Julia Healy.

Ben used to drop in to Sean Kavanagh's and would often ask for "a half pint of whiskey and a Baby Power". Over the years Sean often wondered why Ben ordered the Baby Power. Ben was great friends of Willie and Annie Gilbert who used to run the Post Office in Roundwood. When Annie got on she was admitted to St Colman's. As Annie's 100th birthday approached the social committee, of which Sean was chairman at the time, decided to celebrate Annie's 100th with her. It fell to Sean to verify that Annie was indeed 100. As it turned out she was only 99 but it was decided to proceed with the planned celebration anyway. Sean and a few locals went to St Colman's and brought Annie some Black and White whiskey which he knew she would enjoy. After a few glasses Annie asked Sean to put away the bottle in a black bag at the end of the bed. When Sean opened the bag, to his great surprise, the bag was more than half full of empty Baby Power bottles. Ben was indeed a great friend of Annie Gilbert. Annie died before her 100th birthday.

Another great friend of Ben Murray was May Manley. May's mother was Elizabeth Hayde who was born in 1882 in the house opposite the chapel. The house was divided with Healys in the lower end of the house, beside the hall, and Haydes in the upper end. May and her three brothers: Ned (Edward), Michael and Billy were all born in the same room as May's mother. May was born on January 12 1917. May's father was Michael Rooney and he was a foreman on the Corporation.

The Rooneys moved down the street to the cottage opposite Larry Murphy's pub, Tochar House, where Joan Feeney now lives, when May was about 13 years old. When the Rooneys moved in there were two houses which were made into one. Rooneys was a great card house and they played cards seven nights a week except during Lent. May recalls that Ben had a key to the front door of the Rooney's and would come in every morning before going to work to listen to the 7 o'clock news on the radio. Ben was an early riser and he used to call up many people in the village.

May used to have Ben's dinner ready when Ben would come home from work on the forestry. When Ben retired off the forestry he looked after Michael, May's son, when May went to work for Garech Brown in Luggala. May went to work for Garech for three weeks and was there for 15 years. She and Garech are very great friends to this day. May would cook the dinner for Ben and Michael in the morning. Ben would come in after 8.30 am Mass and mind Michael until May would come home at 2 o'clock. That went on for 15 years until May got sick. May was operated upon for cancer 13 years ago in Sir Patrick Dunn's Hospital. Before going off for her operation May had to have look at the village one more time. When Rita Byrne saw May she thought to herself that would be the last time May would see the village. Thanks be to God and Fr. Nevin that was not the case.

After May's operation Rita Byrne use to cook Ben's lunch on weekdays and Sundays. Ben would have his dinner finished by 11.30 am even on Sundays. Ben was very particular about his food. Ben used to mind Rita's shop and sit there in the corner reading the paper.

Ben took bad one Sunday morning and Rita rang May who got his relation up from Bray. Rita got the doctor and Ben was moved to St Colman's in Rathdrum. Ben's cousin from Bray was Jim Byrne. On the Tuesday Jim Byrne brought May to St Colman's to see Ben. Ben had been fine on the Sunday but took bad on the Monday or Tuesday. When May came from seeing Ben she told Seamus Healy that he had better go and see Ben soon as he looked very bad and could not speak. Ben died that Tuesday evening at 90 years of age.

Ben Murray is buried with Jack Lawler in Glendalough. Rita Byrne in describing Ben Murray said it all when she described Ben as "the most decent man you could meet".

The memoirs in this article have been compiled from pleasant conversations in September 1996 with Seamus Healy, Roundwood Bank; John Lowe, Tomdarragh; May Manley, Roundwood; Kathleen Donohoe, Mullinaveigue; Rita Byrne and Sean Kavanagh, Roundwood.

Mairtin Mac Siurtain



Ben Murray's Cottage

Wicklow People - 6th August 1910

Winners of the Togher Technical classes. Junior. Joint 1st: Patrick Byrne, Raheen, and Edward Murphy, Mullinaveigue, 2nd: William Douran, Knockrath, 3rd: C. Moloney, Roundwood, 4th: Henry Mason, Togher, 5th: Thomas Brady, Togher. Senior. Joint 1st: John Moran, Ashtown and Joe Healy, Baltinanima, Joint 2nd: M. Brady, Togher, M. Curran, Roundwood and William Murphy, Mullinaveigue, 3rd: Edward Kavanagh, Varry Works.

Growing Up in the 1940s

The first half of the decade was known as the war years. September 1939 I remember a man coming into my father's shop saying "Kit, a war has started." As a child it did not mean very much to me, it was only when most things became scarce and could not be got at all that I began to realise that the war meant a lot more.

I remember going to school when every child would bring a bundle of sticks, these would be gathered the previous evening. If you forgot you would have to try and get some that morning off fences and ditches. Everybody gathered sticks at that time as they were hard to come by. When I look around me today and see all the sticks, branches and furze I think to myself if they only had been there when I was going to school. Parents who had children going to school would bring horse and cart loads of turf, these would be unloaded alongside the school gates. There was a part partitioned off in the porch and this was known as the 'coal hole' and the bigger boys would carry in the turf and pack it in there.

School was very cold in winter time and had only one fireplace and that was at one end of the room. Each class would get their turn to go and warm themselves at the fire but when we were back at our desks we were just as cold as before we went up. This is the way things were at the time and not a lot could have been done about it. Most of us brought bottles of milk, these would be sitting on the hearth stone to heat them up. They were all shapes and sizes and a lot of the proper caps would have been lost. Some would have corks made out of newspaper which sometimes did not seal very well and would leak in the school bags on the way to school, the books would then have to be dried by the fire.

There was a ceramic urn with a brass tap which was located on the window sill in the porch for drinking water. It was filled with water from the school residence where there was an outside tap. The water would be carried up to the school in a galvanised bucket by two boys. There was always a mug beside the urn but nobody ever used it as we all put our mouths under the tap. Not much difference between that and all using the mug I suppose.

The school yard where we played was divided by an imaginary line between the girls and boys. The girls stayed in their half and the boys in theirs. If the teacher came out and you were on the wrong side of the dividing line you were in big trouble. However there was an exception to this rule. There was a priest who came on holiday every year and he stayed in the school residence. At lunch time he would get boys and girls together and then he would throw up 3d pieces among us, he enjoyed watching us all scramble to try and get them (for the benefit of younger readers a 3 penny bit was a small nickel coin worth 3 old pence or 1p). The priest said Mass every morning during his holidays in the church which was a quarter of a mile up the road from school. I thought this was great getting out of school for a while to serve mass and I would not be in a big hurry walking back that quarter of a mile.

As the weather got warmer it was decided among us boys that everyone would come to school in his bare feet so everyone would arrive on the Monday in their 'bare ones' as

we used to say and we would continue that until the summer holidays. Needless to say feet would have to be washed every night before going to bed in this period. I would try and avoid this washing and hope that my mother would not think of it because all the little cuts and scratches that I got during the day would smart and sting to high hell when I put my feet in the water. If we walked on a thorn which sometimes did happen we would operate on each other with straight pins to get the thorn out.

Christmas, of course, was a great time for us when Daddy Christmas came to our house (we never called him Santa Claus). We had a problem with our chimney as it was not an open fire place. We had a range and the only opening was a little soot door about 8" square. Before my sister and I would go to bed we would tell my father several times to make sure and not forget to open the soot door so as Daddy Christmas could get through. I used to wonder sometimes how he got through such a small opening. We would hang our stockings on the shelf over the range. I would always look for the longest stocking I could get. My father would say in a joke "Why don't you hang up your trousers and tie the legs of it". We would be out of bed very early and up to the kitchen. With the war our toys were scarce. Maybe we would get board games of the time such as snakes and ladders or ludo. There would be an apple or twopence up in the toe of the stocking. You might get a little car made of tin which had a lot of sharp edges that would cut your hands. When I see toys being taken off the market today because they are dangerous (which is only right and proper) I think it funny how we played our way through toxic paint, lead and sharp edges. One little boy who was better off than us used to get things like a shirt or a jumper. I suppose he had a very practical Daddy Christmas.

Christmas morning we would all go to Mass where Mrs Redmond, the principal teacher, played the harmonium while my mother would lead the choir. My mother also played the harmonium when Mrs. Redmond was unavailable to play. Sometimes she would go over to the chapel in the evenings to play. She probably did this to get away from us and get some peace and quiet. Sometimes she would bring me along and I would enjoy pulling the knobs and pressing the bellows. Needless to say during Mass we would be thinking of what we had got from Daddy Christmas and we couldn't wait to get back to play with them.

In those years the radio played some part in home entertainment or the wireless as it was known then. This was powered by a large dry battery and a wet battery, no electricity then. The wet battery would have to be brought into Rathdrum to be charged. The casing of this was made of glass and sometimes was broken when carrying it on the handlebars of a bicycle. My father would always make sure there was a fully charged battery for Sunday when the important football matches were broadcast. There weren't many wirelesses around at the time and our house would be full of men listening to the match. Sometimes even though the battery would be fully charged it would break down during the match and there would be a mad rush to the shop to get a twin cell flashlamp battery as it would do instead of a wet battery. This was an expensive enterprise as it didn't last very long. My father was never in favour of using these batteries but for a football match and with a house full of people what could he do? If my sisters and I wanted to hear something and could get our hands on a twin cell battery we would hide it behind the wet battery where he wouldn't see it.

There were certain programmes my father and mother always listened to, one of which was the news. My sisters and I thought this was a horrible waste of a battery. Another programme was the programme speeches during the war given by William Joyce known as 'Lord Haw Haw'. The only thing I remember about him was at the start he would say "Germany calling, Germany calling". We would always have to stay quiet for Question time on Sunday nights with Joe Linane. We all enjoyed listening to Ceili bands. 'Around the fire' was on Thursday nights, this show comprised of songs, stories and general chat. As the wet battery charge ran down the volume would keep getting lower and lower. My sisters and I would be kneeling down with our heads as close to the wireless as possible and trying to push one another out of the way, all of us trying to get our ears as close to the speaker as possible. All the times I heard my father saying "Switch off that wireless, there will be no battery when we want to listen to the news". When the wireless stopped working we had an expert to look at it. He was a bread car driver who would come into the house to look at it. I can still see him in my minds eye with his brown shop coat. He would turn the wireless around on the table and proceed to take it to pieces. We were delighted if he could repair it on the spot but sometimes he would have to take it away with him which would be a tragedy for us children. It was great to see him arriving back with it.

The concerts in Moneystown Hall were looked forward to for weeks. All of us children would be in the front seats all excited waiting for the curtain to be drawn back. There were a few songs, Irish dancing, a 3 act play, and a funny sketch which we all enjoyed. The hall would be full to capacity. It was small that time and there was an extension built on some years later. There were 2 oil lamps hanging from the ceiling and proceedings would have to be stopped maybe once or twice during the show while somebody stood up on a chair and pumped up the lamps. Tom Fitzgerald and his son, Des, provided the music. They also lived across the road from the hall and had a shop and post office. They also had a dance band which was very popular and played in dance halls around. They had a small hall which was at a high level with cement steps leading up to it. This was used for holding meetings among other things. I was talking to a man some years back and he told me he was passing by Fitzgeralds and saw a lot of bicycles outside. He stopped to talk to a man that was standing on the road and said to him "Is there something on?" and the reply was "I think they are voting in the Upper House tonight".

My younger sister and I played out these concerts at home. There was a wooden sofa we would use as a stage. We would dress up, announce each other for songs, and try and act out the sketch we had seen in the hall. Whatever changes we had to make we had to do in a room in the dark (no electricity of course). We would ask if we could light a candle but this would not be allowed as our father and mother were afraid we would burn the house down. My father was our 'make-up artist', he would burn the end of a cork and with that charred end he would put on a mustachio, beard or what ever was required on us.

There was a man came down from Dublin to see my father usually on Sundays. He had a very successful Meat & Poultry business at 194 North King St. W. P. Kiely was his name. When he was a child his father, Joe, owed a farm about half a mile down the road from us. W. P. went to the National School with my father. They sold the farm and

moved to Wicklow town where they had a butchers shop and then from that to Dublin. When his father's farm came up for sale during the war he bought it. I think he had 2 reasons for buying, it brought back memories of childhood and he thought also that the war might spread to Ireland and Dublin would not be a safe place to be. He did work it as a farm, two men were employed and my father managed it. He would arrive at our house in this big car with, what seemed to me at the time, huge cylinders on the roof and what I think was a charcoal burner. The gas from the charcoal, as it was burned, fuelled the car. Petrol was of course rationed if it could be got at all. He would always give my younger sister and I half a crown (2/6 = 12.5p) an enormous amount of money at that time. Needless to say we would be delighted to see him arriving. We would be quietly be told by our mother or father to go off and play and not be seen looking up in the man's face. We had to time it very well and just to arrive on the scene as he was going home and say goodbye and collect our half crown, of course.

I rode a bicycle to the Technical School in Wicklow town. I had my father's bicycle and it was a 3 speed rudge. I was told to walk down Ballycullen Hill as it was very steep and I didn't of course. There was a man working in the area on the Forestry and he came into the shop one day and said to my father "Kit, that young lad of yours will be killed off that bike. He goes down Ballycullen Hill like a cannon ball". He sure put the cat among the pigeons. Wicklow Technical School was a corrugated iron building situated in the Main St. at the Mall. Us students used to call it the "Tin University". I remember we were asked to write a composition in Irish about the area where you lived. In part of mine I wrote "Tá Seipéal Scoil trí siopaf agus Oifig an Phoist ac nil telefón ar bit inn". The Master read my composition out to the class. They thought this very funny, a Post Office without a telephone. I was the only lad in the class, as they say, from the country. There was no telephone within 4 or 5 miles radius of Moneystown. Urgent messages came from Ashford by telegram and these were delivered by a man on a bicycle.

After the war, when petrol became available, people started to buy cars and vans. Some of these had been off the road for the duration of the war and were very unreliable. They would come to a halt for no apparent reason and a crank handle would be inserted in the front of the engine. The driver would swing the handle round and round. He might get it started or it might be on the side of the road the next morning. Some people hadn't got a notion of what was under the bonnet. I remember hearing about a man who was talking to his neighbour about how the ould van wouldn't start for him that morning. The neighbour said "Maybe your battery has gone flat" and he said "Why, what shape should it be?"

A farmer who lived beside us bought a new 5 cwt. Ford van. He had two sons, one of my age and one some years older. I spent a lot of time with them, hay drawing and threshing etc. They would coax their father all week for the van on Saturday night to go to the picture in Wicklow. The oldest son was old enough to have a licence. Their mother would say "What do you want to go in there for to look at shadows dancing on the wall?" That is what she thought of the Cinema and the pictures. It would be late on Saturday evening when permission would be given to have the van and one of the lads would come down to me and tell me to be up at the house at such and such a time as we were going to the pictures. The van would be taken out of the garage and the big rug that always

covered the bonnet would be taken off and folded away. The tyres would be checked, dipped for oil, battery checked, and a jug of water brought from the kitchen to top up the radiator. We eventually got going with many warnings to be careful as we drove out the yard. I would sit on an old car seat in the back of the van. Sometimes I couldn't hear what the two lads in the front were saying with the stones and chippings hitting off the underside of the van. These vans were transversely sprung and were not very comfortable. They had no independent suspension but to us at that time it was a Rolls Royce.

Things have changed so much since my childhood. Most of the changes are for the better and some are not. We were happy with what we had and what you never had you never missed. It would be nice if it were possible to have our childhood back again and we would appreciate so much more. Who was it that said "Oh! that the youth should be wasted on the young"?



Togher - Intermediate - Football Championships 1931

Front: M. Davies (Matty Keenan, mascot), P. Davies.

Second row: Gerald McDonnell, B. Clarkson, Wm. Hughes,
Joe Keenan, capt.: Wm. McCabe, M. Meehan, J. Byrne.

Third row: M. Donohue, Timmons, J. Doyle, W. Keenan, J. Fortune, B. Malone (C. Moloney)

At rere: J. Healy, P.C., president; W.J. Byrne.

Events of the Year

1996 has been another successful year. In the early part of the year we had lectures by John Nolan on Edward Fitzgerald, Rick Cox on Richard Barton and Fr. Nevin on the Redemption of Memory.

In May we hosted our 4th Seminar 'Estates of Co. Wicklow'. The keynote address was by Mary Davies, Royal Irish Academy, who spoke on the history of the main Estates in the county. There were lectures by Pat Power who spoke on the Estates of the south east Wicklow, Ian Cantwell who talked on the evolution of the Temple Estate and landlord/tenant relationships, Joan Hatton who described life on the O'Cheallaigh Estate of Roundwood Park, and finally John Anderson described the great Gardens of Wicklow. There were two field trips to Luggela, by courtesy of Hon. Garech DeBrún, and to Powerscourt led by Ms. Sarah Slazenger. Total attendance was about 200. We are grateful to Dr. William Nolan and the Local Studies Group, U.C.D. for their continued assistance and sponsorship. We also wish to thank Wicklow County Council for a grant this year.

We had summer evening field trips to the Motee Stone in Avoca, the old ruins of Glasnamullen and a visit to Mount Usher Gardens led by John Anderson. There was also a day trip to the Quaker village of Ballitore.

We lost two valued members of the society. Dr. James deValera Mansfield of Oldtown who died suddenly in January and Robert Childers, Glendalough House, who passed away in August. We offer our sincere condolences to their families. May they Rest in Peace.

Fr. Conleth Breen, P.P. who inspired and helped to found our society has retired this year. We wish to thank him for his continued support and wish him every success in his new posting to Howth.

We hope you have enjoyed this journal and thank you for your support. If you have any suggestions or items you would like to contribute we would appreciate hearing from you.

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