# Roundwood & District
## Historical & Folklore Journal


Journal No. 27, 2017

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*Cover Photograph courtesy of Darren Flynn*

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## From the Chair

I would like to take this opportunity, on the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of Roundwood & District Historical & Folklore Society, to pay tribute to our founders: the late Seán Kavanagh, Sheila Holt, Fr. Con Breen and Larry McAllister whose enthusiasm and commitment began what is now one of the oldest historical societies in Ireland.

Over the years, the activities of the society have attracted wide and varied contributions from prominent figures in history, archaeology and literature, the most recent being the 1916 Commemoration Centenary Programme, including a seminar in February at which Professor Kevin Whelan, Dr Mary McAuliffe, Professor Eunan O'Halpin and Padraig Yeates delivered lectures on different aspects of the events of the 1916 Rising. The programme concluded in September with the unveiling of a monument, a magnificent work of art by Ciarán Patterson, to the memory and the ideals of those who took part in the Rising.

2016 also saw the publication, with the support of Wicklow County Council, of our twenty-sixth journal, 'Wicklow and The Rising' – the splendid work of Martin Timmons, M.A., one of the longest serving members of the Society and member of the first Editorial Board in 1988.

Since our first edition, with a cover illustration by Michael Larkin of Derralossary Church and the grave of President of Ireland, Erskine Childers, the Journal has brought our story to all corners of the world and helped to connect those of our community who live abroad with a little piece of home.

A series of talks in 2017 has included contributions from Peter Farrell, Therese Hicks, Liz Gillis, Ned Fleming, Ian Cantwell, Michael Fitzgerald and Carmen Cullen.

Since its foundation, the society has hosted numerous exhibitions, talks and events – none of which would have been possible without our patrons, our members and all those in the wider community who have generously provided stories, articles, interviews and photographic content for the Journal. Their work, their support and their generosity has ensured our

survival and is greatly appreciated.

Thanks to the evolution of technology we will soon be accessible through a new website where upcoming events will be announced, stories shared and where new memberships can be registered. Meanwhile, our Facebook Page will keep you updated on news and events.

We hope to expand our range of historical, environmental and cultural interests and through our involvement with the Wicklow Heritage Forum and Our Wicklow Heritage and we hope that the legacy of our founder members will grow and endure for many years to come.

Imelda Duffy, Chairman, RDHFS
October, 2017

*Copies of this Journal may be ordered from info@roundwoodistoricalsociety.ie or by contacting any member of the committee. Copies of previous publications are also available.*

*We especially welcome contributions from those living locally or overseas and those who used to live in Co. Wicklow.*

*Articles and/or photographs may be submitted to any member of the Society or emailed to info@roundwoodistoricalsociety.ie*

## Appreciation - Saive Coffey
### *Dairine Coffey*

*It was with much regret that members of the Roundwood & District Historical & Folklore Society learned of the death of fellow member Saive Coffey of Newtownmountkennedy. Saive contributed several articles to the Journal focusing on her wealth of knowledge and experience of farming and rural organisations. Below her sister Dairine shares some personal memories of Saive's life.*

Saive was often to be found at the dining table, cluttered with papers and her adding machine, her German Shepherd dog, overlooked by portraits by well-known Irish painters. These included one by John Butler Yeats, of her grandfather George Coffey who was an archaeologist and founder of the National Museum in Kildare Street. Another of her grandmother Jane L'Estrange, painted at her request, by her young neighbour in Harcourt Terrace, Sarah Purser. This painting led to the marriage of George Coffey and Jane, who was given it for founding the Dublin Workingmen's Club, although he was suspicious of charitable women until he saw it.

Alongside many water colour landscapes by George Coffey himself, there was also a portrait of Cesca (or Sadhbh), Diarmid Coffey's first wife after whom Saive was named. Sarah Purser also painted life sized work of Diarmid as a small child with cat's cradle and created a pastel of him as a 21-year old, a present from her. Her father Diarmid retired in 1954 by which time he already had Parkinson's disease. He died in 1964.

Saive failed to complete any university degree which she found irrelevant, but she did a postal course in Agricultural Economics and postgraduate work for Edinburgh University and TCD, while her mother Sheela watched over the farm at home. Her mother Sheela was a keen organic food grower while Saive liked the idea of feeding the starving millions. Her varied career included working as an agricultural economist for TCD at Townley Hall, near the Boyne. She also worked for Birr Castle for many years and a number of other estates as well as the family farm at

Glendarragh. Saive also did a farm exchange in North Dakota and later visited New Zealand as president of the Irish Jersey Cattle Society.

But before any of this Saive was encouraged by stays with Travers Nuttall at Tittour (who thought my parents were mad to buy Glendarragh), sometimes helped or bothered by visiting French boys.

Saive was a remarkable lady, who as an agricultural economist, became a spokesperson for hill farmers and campaigned tirelessly for the rights of hill farmers through various local and national committees. Saive was a member of the Irish Farmer's Association from its inception, the first female president of Wicklow IFA and one of the founding members of the Wicklow Uplands Council.

*We express our sincere sympathy to her sister Dairine and her extended family and friends.*

## From the Archives (1988)

Much of our history is linked to armed conflict. There must be hardly an inch of ground that doesn't bear the imprint of war. The hills of Wicklow harbour many stories and sadly have borne a fair share of bloodshed.

One of these stories concerns a young rebel, Andrew Thomas. His story, 'Roaring Bess Failed Wicklow Rebel', written by the late Leo Bowes appeared in the very first edition of the Roundwood & District Historical & Folklore Society published in 1989.

### "Roaring Bess" Failed Wicklow Rebel
*Leo Bowes*

Since I first set foot many years ago in the picturesque countryside of Castlekevin – a couple of miles or so from the old world village of Annamoe – I have heard many versions of the story of a local youth, Andrew Thomas, who was caught up in the turbulent and gory aftermath of the abortive 1798 Rising. His tragic and untimely death at the hands of the Rathdrum Cavalry shocked and horrified the whole county.

My late father-in-law, Christopher Stacey (born and reared in Knockraheen), who served as an altar-by in St. Laurence O'Toole's Church, Roundwood, towards the close of the last century, could give quite a graphic and creditable account of Thomas's exploits. However, some of the stories I have heard about this young man have apparently been romanticized and have become somewhat distorted in the telling through the years.

The account that follows has been compiled after some research and a collation of those facts which I consider have a ring of truth about them, and as gleaned from various people. I hasten to add that I am always open to correction, and so any accurate amendments to this article will be warmly welcomed.

During the journey from Bray to Glendalough visitors who take the turn just before the bridge at Annamoe village and travel along the lower

road for 15 or 20 minutes, can find themselves in the historic district of Castlekevin, a place redolent with memories of the O'Tooles.

It was in Castlekevin that the last stronghold of this once powerful clan was situated and it was here also that brave young Andrew Thomas – a firm friend and staunch ally of the redoubtable insurgent leader, Michael Dwyer, is said to have spent a great deal of his boyhood time.

Not far from the grass-cloaked ruins of the O'Toole's remaining bastion lies a huge boulder, until fairly recently overgrown with moss and weeds and now visible after a Co. Council clean-up in the area. Local tradition has it that it was on the very same boulder that troopers of the Rathdrum Cavalry tried to smash Andrew Thomas's famous gun, "Roaring Bess", after they murdered him as the climax to a desperate chase.

Thomas, who was born in the village of Annamoe, about three miles from Roundwood in 1780, went to work for William Hugo a Wicklow magistrate, at Drumeen. He showed such outstanding skill and enthusiasm for shooting, and proved such an unerring shot, that Hugo made the youth his gamekeeper.

Thomas, at eighteen, was, in fact, one of the very few to whom the magistrate would entrust any of his expensive sporting guns. Aside from this, there was little apparently to commend Hugo as a humane man, for during and after the rebellion of 1798 he was noted for his ferocity. He was described as "a savage exterminator".

On the outbreak of the 1798 Rebellion, John Healy, an uncle of Andrew Thomas, persuaded the youth to throw in his lot with the insurgents. Thomas agreed, and, after making off with one of Hugo's best guns, "Roaring Bess", he remained out through the whole of the Rising. During one battle, it is said, he hid behind a turf clamp, and, firing with uncanny accuracy, wreaked havoc among the enemy troops.

With the defeat of the rebels at Vinegar Hill, and the subsequent collapse of the Rising, the yeomen and militia became even more lawless. Hospitals were burnt, churches torn down, and hundreds of

persons, innocent and otherwise, hanged and flogged. They were helped in their sadistic work by informers, who, for a few shillings, told them when and at whom to strike.

Bands of Irish rebels who had taken part in the Rising either escaped to other counties, or went into hiding. Such a band was that of Michael Dwyer of Glenmalure. After the rebellion they retreated to their mountain hideout to carry on the fight against the enemy.

It is not unreasonable to assume that Andrew Thomas was proud to be one of Dwyer's men, and even prouder when his name appeared in a proclamation issued in Dublin on July 29, 1800, offering 500 guineas for the capture of Michael Dwyer, and 200 guineas for the taking of many others, including himself.

It was decided by Dwyer and his band to root out and destroy the many informers who had sent scores of innocent people to their grave.

In December 1800, the band met in a house at Greenane to hear about an informer who lived at Clara. The next morning a group of them crossed the river near the Seven Churches, on the way to one of their many hideouts. During the journey they and their muskets became wet. The wanted men hid themselves in a hollowed out turf clamp at the rear of a house owned by a man named McDonnell. While they were resting there word of their whereabouts was relayed to the authorities by an informer.

Shortly after a troop of the Rathdrum Cavalry headed in the direction of the house. They stopped some distance away on the road, uncertain if the house was that named by the informer. The owner, McDonnell was shaving. When he saw the cavalry approach he dropped everything and ran. As he scurried to freedom, a fusillade of shots rang out.

Fleet of foot, Andrew Thomas, was one of the first away. He headed for high ground. When the cavalry reached the top of the rise, he was already out of sight in the hollow. Then they saw him. The young rebel turned round, and raised "Roaring Bess" to his shoulder. He squeezed the trigger, but there was no explosion. Again and again he tried

without success. Then came the exclamation that has been repeated countless times in stories about him throughout County Wicklow. "You (his gun) never deceived me before".

Andrew Thomas turned and ran, and received a charge of buckshot in the thigh from a man named James Weekes who, at the time was out duck shooting. But the wounded rebel kept on running. As he was going through a narrow passage a rider on horseback loomed up and stuck him on the head with a pistol as he passed by.

Then the cavalry were upon the unfortunate Thomas. They shot him, and, as he fell, three more shots were fired into his body. Then one of the troopers battered his head with the butt of his carbine. As if this wasn't enough, another of the group leaped his horse on the dead man.

Mutilated almost beyond recognition, the young rebel was thrown unceremoniously across a horse's back, and brought to Rathdrum some eight miles away. There they cut off his head and spiked it on the Flannel Hall.

Today, the district in which Andrew Thomas was born and reared is a busy farming one. But those who till the soil there like to be told of the daring deeds of a young rebel and his gun "Roaring Bess", which failed him only once.

## The Liffey – The River of Wicklow
*Agatha Mansfield*

I call the Liffey River – The Wicklow River – because its source is at the foothills of Kippure, on the heathery slopes of the Wicklow Mountains, not far from Roundwood, at the Sally Gap. A little trickle emerging from a peaty black pool, appears as green lines from grass, rush and moss. It gives the name to Liffey Head Bog, a blanket bog, from where one can follow it all the way to Blessington Lake on the parallel road. The Dubliners relate to it as their river, just like Londoners relate to the Thames and Parisians to the Seine.

The source of the river is only twenty-three kilometres from Poolbeg Lighthouse where it enters Dublin Bay. It is interesting to contrast this distance with the actual length of its great loop through Kildare, which is about 110 kilometres. I shall follow only on its flow through the Wicklow Hills, the most beautiful stretches of the Liffey's course.

Travelling by road, we can keep close to the river, here still just a small stream, tumbling over boulders between narrowing banks, clad with heather and moss.

Photograph by Agatha Mansfield

James Joyce visited the source of the Liffey with the writer Oliver St. John Gogarty and described it: "*Who can find the beginning, the source?*" To say: "*There's where. First. We pass through grass behush the bush to.*" He personified the Liffey and made the river the subject and heroine of his surrealistic masterpiece 'Finnegans Wake'. Anna Livia Plurabelle, the wife of Finn. His tumbling intertwining words are the river, the dreams of the days of her youth "on the spur of the hill in old Kippure, in birdsong and shearingtime."

We continue on our journey. The moorland rising all around the scene takes an increasing wildness, wide skies over peat-clad granite domes stretching away. In winter, when the water freezes, it turns into a fairyland. It is always different in changing seasons, but always exciting and new. There is a variety of landscapes and habitats along the banks and they are especially rich in an assortment of flora and fauna. On the surrounding peat we see heather, blueberry and cotton grass or bog cotton! One can spot the Irish red grouse and often find bird species e.g. jay, dipper and blue tit or see the deer family.

The river is gradually growing in strength. After heavy rain, it can rise by two or three meters. This flattens the bracken and rushes along the banks passing Kilbride.

Slowly the landscape is turning from moorland to farmland. There is evidence of Neolithic farmers over five thousand years ago. The first Stone Age farmers, to bury their dead, climbed to Seefin Mountain – about 700 feet – where they built a great burial mound with five chambers. There are several tombs know as Passage-graves. They are described in the book 'Antiquities of the Irish Countryside' by Sean P. O'Riordain, introduced by Ruaidhri de Valera. The Seefin Monument is contemporary with the famous ones at Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth in the Boyne Valley, 5,000 years old.

Photograph by Agatha Mansfield

At Ballysmuttan, the water of the Liffey is still ale coloured, stained by peat. It is a popular place with Dublin families on summer days, because the river is shallow for children to play in it. I have often observed them with pleasure, driving to my friends in Poulaphouca, near Russborough House. The river becomes broader and shallower as it approaches Blessington Lake. The banks are steep and made up of glacial sand.

The Liffey meets the lake at a place called Three Castles, it is an old name, appearing in Irish in the Annals of the Four Masters. The King's River, the first tributary of the Liffey, joins it at a confluence submerging in the Blessington Lakes on Poulaphouca reservoir. The man-made lake provides Dublin with electric power and more important, drinking water.

There are several spellings of Poulaphouca but the name means the pool of the cavern of the pooka. The word 'pooka' probably developed from Shakespeare: "A Midsummer Night's Dream", Puck. It is also an old Irish word for 'the magic mushroom'.

The border between County Wicklow and Country Kildare runs through Poulaphouca. The means that from here, the Liffey will be the Kildare river, taking a great curve through its countryside, until it reaches the suburbs of West Dublin and on into the Irish Sea.

Many artists and writers have tried to personify the Liffey. James Joyce was so obsessed by the river that he had a map of its course woven into his sitting room carpet.

In the amazing language that Joyce invented for his book "Finnegans Wake", to describe the river as Anna Livia Plurabelle and her feelings in her old age, she goes to meet her father, the sea. "*And it's old and old it's sad and old it's sad and weary I go back to you, my cold father, my cold mad father, my cold mad feary father, till the near sight of the mere size of him, the moyles and moyles of it, moananoaning makes me seasilt, saltsick and I rush, my only, into your arms*".

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3. "The Liffey – Portrait of a River, 2007. R. Burns and D. Warner.
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## Brendan Byrne's Memories.
### *Margaret Connolly*

*Margaret Connolly was born in 1959 into a farming family in Aghowle. At that time the entire townland consisted of a close knit farming community, but during the course of her childhood each of the farmhouses and farmyards there came to the end of their existence as part of traditional working farm. Margaret has written a book that records the history of the townland and the farming community that existed there for centuries. This book will be published in 2017. As part of her research for this book, Margaret interviewed a number of local people in the Moneystown area in 2016. Extracts from these interviews are published below.*

Brendan Byrne and his wife Sheila, live at Garryduff. Brendan was born in the farmhouse next door to where he now lives, his father John Byrne was born in the same farmhouse in 1881, and his grandfather Martin Byrne was also born there in 1836.

I was born, nearly 90 years ago in the farmhouse next door, where my son now lives, and it's the same house as I can remember when I was a small child. It is very old, maybe nearly 200 hundred years old. The story is that the original house was a barn, but the rates were going to be very high, so they built the farmhouse that is there.

I went to school in Rathdrum, I used to ride a little bandy-legged pony to school, and I left it in Jack Kelly's place in Rathdrum, each morning.
Garryduff starts at the crossroads, goes as far as Murphy's where the stream is. We are in the Ashford parish. There used to be a ruins there where Armstrong's built the house in Slanelough, a Byrne family lived there, but they were not related to our Byrnes. They were a brother of Joe the Herd Byrnes.

**Loughlin family**
I remember the Loughlins' of Slane, there was an old brother and sister living there in my memory. Cis Storey, who later married Tommy Miley of Park, used to spend a lot of her time there before she married, from the time she was a teenager, I think she must have been related to them

somehow. After the Loughlins moved out, Joe Ryan bought it, and then a brother of Dick Bradshaw's that was in Fanning's old place in Slane, bought it.

**Fanning Family**

We were related to the Fanning's of Slanelough. There was a Robert Fanning living in the place in Slane. A sister of Robert Fanning's married Charlie Lawler's father of Montiagh. After the Fannings were gone out of Slane, there was a few runner-ins there after that. There was a Mr Ward from Donegal, he brought John Gallagher with him. Ward only stayed there a few year, then a girl took over for a year. She thought she would make her fortune in it, but there was a bad year for tillage, and then she was gone.

Then Dick Bradshaw took it over. He had a pony and car, and he used to claim he could get into Rathdrum to do his messages in 20 minutes. He died young, he got pneumonia and left poor Mrs Bradshaw with 3 children. She used to bring my mother with her to shop in Wicklow town. She would bring potatoes in to sell, one time she brought some in on a trial to Stealer Doyle in Wicklow. But Stealer told her he would want to put them on in the morning to have them boiled for the supper.

After the Bradshaws, the German man took it over. I used to rent the Glen from him. There used to be a field called the School House field, up at Slanelough crossroads, where Larry Timmons of Park had the land. Larry's brother Bren used to say there had been a school there once. I am not sure if it was the field at the crossroads, on the Slanelough road, or if it might have been in the next field down this way.

The Soldier's field in Slanelough, used to belong to Paddy Farrell's father, of Parkmore. He had been a soldier.

I often heard that the Black and Tans used to be hiding out up there in the bushes near Ballinakill, where Mulcahy bought. When Mulcahy bought that place the bushes were the height of the house. He broke them all down, with horses and anything he could get his hands on. The poor old devils that used to be walking the roads, he would take them in, and feed them, and give them a bed, the money would not be great, and in return

they worked clearing the bushes. Sometimes he had up to forty there working, every one of them said they had a good bed and plenty to eat. Bill Staunton of Ballydowling used to tell me that, he worked in it himself at one time.

**Old roads or rights of way from Glenealy**

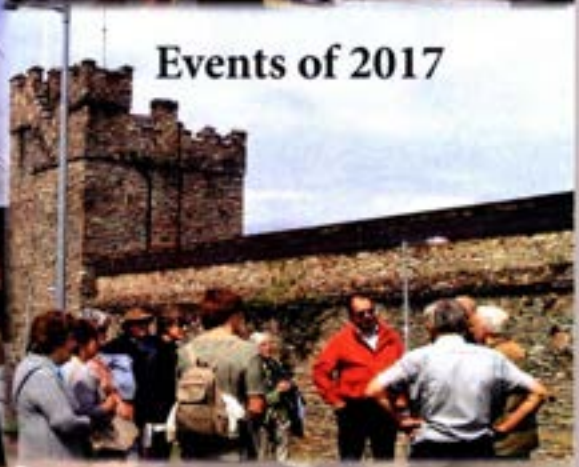
There used to be a short cut coming up out of Glenealy, it came out near Mrs. Staunton's new house (Ballydowling). It was the old road, it came out and down through Broderick's field over there across from our house here, and went on to Rathdrum road. I don't know but it crossed the road and went out at the mill over there and went on to Glendalough. Then at one stage, some of the runner-in farmers that came, closed the right of way and the poor devils of farmers years ago with their horse and cars, had to come up by Barnbawn road, which was a longer way round. Now the old road, you would start below at Glenealy, at O'Neills, an old lane there, and come up through the woods. Of course it is a lot different now that it is planted with trees. You come up by Mrs Stauntons place there in Ballydowling, there used to be a right of way down across the field there opposite our house here, and out on to the Rathdrum road. There was a gate straight opposite where it came out on the Rathdrum road that would bring you down at the bark mill in Croneybyrne, and that would have brought you straight on to Glendalough. That might have been the way you were asking me about. The old road up from Glenealy was always called the Old County Road. It was there before they built the New Line, that's what my father used to call it.

There used to be an old house over there around where the bark mill was. The Bolgers, a brother and sister used to live there. The house where they lived wasn't half the size of the kitchen here, it was down in my time. You would die with the cold where it was built beside the river, and that valley creates a fog, always has freezing fog in the winter. The bark mill had a big wheel that the water used to turn, and they had a tan yard as well, for tanning the leather.

There is a fairy rath on Byrnes land in Barnbawn, opposite Carthy's gate. My father used to say you was never to interfere with it, as it was some sort of burial place, and not to touch it. There was a round ring ditch and a sceach tree there.

There was a story of Fairies in Barnbawn. Jimmy Timmons of Moneystown was coming up with his ass and cart, and the fairies were supposed to have hopped out of the wood and into the car, and frightened the life out of him. They were supposed to have sang all the way down the New Line and up Park, and going up Park, they disappeared.

# Events of 2017



## Jack Murtagh Interview
*Margaret Connolly*

Jack Murtagh was born in August 1937 in Moneystown North, in the little farm house where his father had been born in 1910 and where his grandfather was born in 1855, His great-grandfather had married into the farm in 1844. After working at various jobs and living in Stump of the Castle, Jack and his late wife Rose, moved back to Moneystown North, when they built a house on the Murtagh family farm.

The Murtaghs came from the north originally. The story goes that a William Murtagh, my great grandfather was on the run and came to Moneystown and married into the Tyre family here.

We went to school in Moneystown. There was myself, my brothers Noel and Liam. Then when you went down the road there was Johnny and Kevin Rochford and their two sisters Sheila and Lilly. We all used to walk over the fields to school. We had to bring sticks for the school fire with us, the small little children had to carry them as well, even on a wet or cold frosty morning. Mrs Redmond was the head teacher. She was a very cross teacher. She would be standing at the gate, checking us in with a big cane. If you didn't have the sticks for the fire you got the cane. Then she would stand up at the top of the school room heating herself at the fire. Mrs Timmons, the late John Timmons of the shop's mother, taught the lower classes. She was a lovely lady. She taught the singing and the knitting as well. There were 30 pupils in the school at that time. I remember Joey Reilly that Dan and Mary Short of Aghowle reared. On his first day at school in the middle of the day he stood up and said, "I am going home now to feed the pony and the ass"

When we used to come in from school my job was to clean out the horses, we had 3 or 4 horses at the time. My brother Liam did the cowhouse and pulped the turnips.

When we were young lads back in the late 1940s, there was great money for the rabbits. Liam and I used to set snares here on the farm and we would sell them to Staffords, who used to come around with a van buying them to sell in Dublin. The Stafford van used to come every Thursday

around here to collect the rabbits, various locals would leave them here in our place to be collected.

I remember one morning going to check the snares before going to school and there was a rabbit in one of the snares, but a cat had eaten half the neck off it. So, I put it under a zinc bucket in the shed until I came home. Then in the evening when I came in from school I paunched the rabbit, but it's neck was still hanging down, where the cat had eaten a piece of it. So, I went on the quiet into the house and got a stocking of my Dads and a sewing needle and thread belonging to my Mam, and I put the stocking into the rabbit's neck and sewed it up. Then when Staffords came I got my half-crown for the rabbit. A few days later my mother was going around the house looking everywhere for my father's missing stocking.

To make good money at the rabbits you needed a ferret, so we asked Owen Stafford if he could get us one. He said he would and we could pay off it with the rabbit money as we went along.

The ferret cost 10 shillings and we went out ferreting the first week with it and with the amount of rabbits we killed we got 7 pounds. So we paid for the ferret and gave our mother 6 pounds.

Owen Stafford that came around here to buy the rabbits, was one of the Staffords from Co. Cavan. He had a brother Joe who was on the Cavan team that played in the All Ireland in 1947 in the Polo Grounds in New York. There was great excitement about it been played in New York. Not many around here had a radio in those days, but a cousin of ours had brought us a Cossor radio, so the house and yard at home here was full of people that Sunday gathered to listen to the match. I remember my mother was going around giving us young chaps bread and jam to keep us quiet during the match.

***Religion***

Myself and my brother Noel used serve on the altar at 10 O'clock mass when we were young lads. In those days you had to be fasting from the night before. We would have to walk up to the church and you would be weak with the hunger. Sometimes we were so hungry we used to take the unblessed hosts for communion and eat them.

The church was very strict with its rules and regulation in those days. I remember when I was a young teenager there was a mission on in the church in Moneystown. There was a little bearded Franciscan who came and he was preaching hell and damnation from the pulpit every night. My parents would set off on their bikes and we were supposed to follow on after them. I was going out with a young girl at the time, so when they set off for the mission I snuck off to meet my girlfriend, making sure to keep off the roads and not be seen by any of the locals. Later on that night I found out from Noel what the little missionary man had been preaching about.

Next morning when Mother was talking about what a great sermon it was, I piped up and said God I thought it was great when he said such and such, and my mother was never any the wiser where I was the night before.

When I was a few years older, I was very friendly with a lad called John Steele, his father came from Scotland. He was head of the mines above in Glendalough. John and I were very good friends and he had no brothers. When his father died he said he would like if I could give him a hand with his father's funeral. He knew that as I was a Catholic it might be a problem, as we were not supposed to go to Protestant services. I said that didn't matter to me and I would help him bury his father. So anyway I carried the coffin with him into their church in Laragh, sat there and listened to their prayers and singing and everything else. And went to the burial in Derralossary graveyard.

The next week I went to confession in Roundwood and told the priest I had attended a Protestant funeral, and God I got the third degree. Did I enter the church? Did I talk to the people? Did I listen to the sermon? etc. etc. etc. So I said yes to all the questions, and then, did I get some lecture from that priest.

## Michael Graham's Memories of Clarabeg North

*Margaret Connolly*

Michael Graham, or Mick Harvey as he is sometimes known locally, was born in Clarabeg North in 1926. He lived there until 1958 when he married Maura Timmons and moved to live in the Moneystown area, where he still lives.

My father was Thomas Graham, and my mother was Catherine Jenkinson. They had 7 children. I was born on 1st January 1926. In those days, you were christened straight away, in a day or two after you were born. If there was any danger, if you were anyway donny at all, you would be christened immediately you were born. Some old lady in the area would come in and christen you. We were all christened in Glendalough. There was a big snow out when I was born. My father went to Will Byrne of the Crosses, they had an old jaunting car, or something of that sort, at the time, and I was brought in the snow to Glendalough to be christened.

The Byrne's of Cronybyrne were the landlords around the area at that time. Where we lived was called Clarabeg North, although some called it Glenacordia. There were 5 families living up there at that time. The old house my grandfather Thomas Graham had lived in, fell, and he went up to the top of the hill up there and built another house. He built it himself with stones, I don't know how he got the stones up there, but he built two rooms and a little kitchen. That's where we were reared.

Also up there was Gar Byrnes. That's Tom Cullen's place now. Then there was Tom Byrne - he was Tom the Herd. Tom the Herd had come from Slanelough. He used to live down at the bottom of the Soldier's field over there in Slane. Then he got a job in Croneybyrne. If you got a job in the tan yard there, you got a house up around there. Then there was Joe Byrne living in the third house, Joe used to work on the roads down by Darcy's in Moneystown. He used to get the contract for doing that road every year. Then Windsors of the Hill lived in the fourth house.

They were all great people, Joe Byrne that lived up beside us in Clarabeg North, his mother and father had 9 children reared in a little room half the

size of the kitchen here, and a little bit of a kitchen. I remember the mother very well. She was a lovely woman. She was feeble in her old age. She fell and broke her hip, and I don't think she got out of the bed after that. She used to give me six pence at Christmas, for bringing her the Wicklow People newspaper every week. People often didn't have the price of a newspaper in those days, so we would share it among one another. We used to bring her ours, and she would give me two pence now and again, and a sixpence at Christmas, God it was terrific. I used to hold it in my hand tight and go up across the fields, stopping now and again to check it, in case I had lost it. I had a humpy backed camel at home with a slit in him, down his back, and I used to put it in him and save it up.

Then of a wet Sunday, Martin Byrne, Paddy Cullen, Dick Dawson, my father, Johnny, Tommy, and I don't know how many, the house would be full. They would be playing cards from the time they would come from Clara mass until 10 o'clock at night. They would be playing 25, for a penny, and there would be more fighting over them.

When I was 15 years of age I went to work for Tommy Miley, of Parkmore. Then I went to work for Will Byrne of the crosses, sligging timber down in Ballyfree. I used to have to start out every morning at a quarter to 5, go to the Crosses and get the horses and ride them down to Ballyfree, I wouldn't be home till 7 o'clock in the evening. Then I went to Johnny Miley's of Parkmore for a year, and then to Quinn's of Clara to run their little place for them.

After that I went to work for Paddy Bawn (Byrne) to follow a horse, drawing stones in the wood where they were making a new road in Stump. The men made the roads with picks and shovel and there were 9 of us drawing stones to them to pave the road. It started at the Long Bank in Stump and came out on the Clara road. Following that I went to work in Connell's in Croneybyrne, I was there in the big snow of 47. I worked there for 12 years, until I got married in 1958 and then went to work on the Water Works in Roundwood. When I worked in Connell's of Croneybyrne he had 300 hundred acres and people thought he must have been very well off, but times were so hard on the land at that time, that he didn't have a 5-pound note.

When I went to work in Connell's of Croneybyrne the bark mill and the tan yard were well gone by that time. When they used to tan the leather in Croney, there was a big wall all around the yard and a crowd of lads there tanning the leather. Then with horses and carts they drew the leather into the boat in Wicklow town. I remember poor old Jack Maher, Lord have mercy on him, he lived over at the wood there in a house belonging to Croneybyrne. He was an old man when I was a lad, but he told me that when he was only a young chap he got a job in the tan yard. The old fellow in charge told him he would give him a job driving a horse with a load of hides into the boat in Wicklow, but he wasn't to get up on the dray. But sure, he used only walk down the lane till he was out of sight and then he would hop up on the dray.

He was only a young chap at the time and he wasn't tall enough to reach up to put the hames on the horse so the boss made him a box to stand on so he could reach up. His family were paying Croneybyrne 6 pence a week for their house, and his wages was 6 pence a week. So he got nothing at all, only abuse and hardship.

**Funerals**

I often heard my father talking about the funerals around Trooperstown back in his day, before Wholohan's got the horse drawn hearse. The people who lived around Trooperstown and up on the side of Moailin (Trooperstown) Hill, like Paddy the Peskey, Dan Byrne and all them, they had no way of bringing the coffins to the graveyard, only carry them. My father was a big tall man, be God they used to get it awful hard to get a match for him to go under the coffin. When someone died, the men would set off to Wholohans of Rathdrum, Whoever was organising the wake in the house would give them a list of all the provisions they needed for the wake and funeral. They would go into Rathdrum and get a coffin, and put all the provisions into the coffin and carry it home. Four men would carry it back to the top of Trooperstown Hill. Then the day of the funeral they carried the corpse in the coffin all the way down Trooperstown, along Ballard road. Then in the old days they used to leave it down at a sceach tree there beside the tea rooms near the Royal Hotel and they would say the De Profundis. They would not go any further till the De Profundis was said, then they would get the coffin up on their

backs again and go bury him. There would be four carrying him, taking turns along the way.

Then when Wholohan's got the horse drawn hearse the people were made up.

**Rabbits**

Jimmy Connolly of Aghowle was a great man after the rabbits, I remember he used always be chewing big lumps of tobacco, Bill Staunton over there in Ballydowling was another great man for the rabbits. Bill would trap and snare rabbits all day long, he killed thousands of them. He had a big farm at the straight mile in Aughrim, and he would go there at night, from his place in Ballydowling, to hunt the rabbits. He would charge up 2 batteries for the night and bring 4 dogs and a basket of stout. He told me he went up there one night, and he kept resting the dogs and letting them out in their turns, and he would take a rest himself now and again, and get a bottle of stout. Well he arrived back home when the horn for Dean's saw mill was blowing in Glenealy and he was 1 rabbit short of a 100. That was worth 100 shillings at that time. The biggest farmer going hadn't that sort of money at the time. Bill Staunton bought land and cattle and sheep with the money he earned after the rabbits. Bill's wife, Molly, used to take the rabbits down to the train in Glenealy each week and put them on it for Dublin. I remember we used to gather in Stauntons of a night, myself, Jack Lynch, Bridget Lynch, the Byrnes, and a crowd of us would be there sitting around telling yarns in the candlelight. All the young Staunton children would be there too, doing their homework by candlelight.

**History of the farms at Slanelough**

When you went through Slanelough crossroads towards Barnbawn the Loughlin family lived in off the road there on the right hand side of the road there opposite the wart stone. I remember the family, I bought seed potatoes in there when I was only a chap, I was sent all the way over there from Clarabeg North. There was a sow and piglets running around the yard, I think I had never seen a sow and piglets before that time and I was

half afraid of them. But the Loughlins' were very nice people, and they brought me in and gave me dinner. Jimmy Storey of Moneystown used to work there. After the Loughlins died, Joe Ryan, who came from Guinness's in Dublin bought it. Now he knew no more about farming, but he bought the place anyway. He used to come over to the Grocer Timmons in Moneystown of a Saturday night, and get a big sack of loaves to feed the family. When John Timmons would comment on the amount of bread that he was bringing back to the family, Joe would reply "sure it is only the same as a lozenge to them Mr Timmons". Healy's of Glenmacnass used to take the grazing of Ryans, he used to put 10 hoggets on it. After that the Bradshaws of Glenealy bought it.

Then in behind Loughlins was the Fanning's farm. You went in to it off the Slanelough road going towards Rathdrum. Their entrance was in on the left-hand side. The Fannings were related to the Lawlers of Montiegh by marriage. When the Fannings died out Peter Bradshaw bought the farm. Then after a while Bradshaws put it up for sale for £1,600, but no one around here had that sort of money at the time. A Mr Ward bought it, and when he came he brought John Gallagher and his family, from Donegal, to work there. That's how the Gallagher family came to be around Moneystown.

The soldier's field in Slanelough: Paddy Farrell's family of Parkmore owned that. Originally Tom the Herd Byrne lived there and then he moved to work in Croneybyrne. Back in those days when someone moved out of a place, whoever had the money to pay a year's rent could go in and take it.

## Barton's Free

*This is a poem collected by the late Violet Smyth of the Green Road Roundwood signed by H.J.Kavanagh, H. Fiss, and W.J.Doyle of Slemaine.*

Robert Barton was elected in the 1918 General Election as Sinn Féin M.P. for West Wicklow. Like all Sinn Féin M.Ps he boycotted the Westminster Parliament. He was arrested for sedition in February 1919 and he escaped from Mountjoy Prison on St Patrick's Day, leaving a note for the Governor explaining that owing to the discomfiture of the cell he felt compelled to leave and requesting that his luggage be kept until he sent for it. He was recaptured in January 1920, sentenced to three years imprisonment but was released in the general amnesty of July 1921.

Rejoice with me for Barton's free
He's left his prison pillow,
He bid goodbye to old Mountjoy
Head's up, no drooping willow.
He did not care for lodgings there
He much preferred the heather
And shamrocks green around Drumeen
Here clansmen fought together.

Old Annamoe and old Wicklow
Shall ring with great rejoicing
A welcome kind he's sure to find
I hear the echoes voicing.
In great acclaim Up Up Sinn Féin
Up onward Bravo Barton.
Thou art the man to dare to plan
Our doubtful ways to hearten.

The bard that raised in olden days
Such men as Dwyer and Thomas
We've got them still with nerve and will

To fill with hope and promise
So Barton's out I hear the shout
And free he roams at leisure
They'll search in vain our rank Sinn Fein
For one who'd spoil the pleasure.

I know your hills, I share your thrills
I've read the bygone story
Of Wicklow's ways in other days
None less today the glory
They've got the Mam still with nerve and will
I know and trust, I'm certain
So here's a health to that noble Celt
Our darling R. C. Barton.

## Castlekevin townland farms between 1831 and 1928

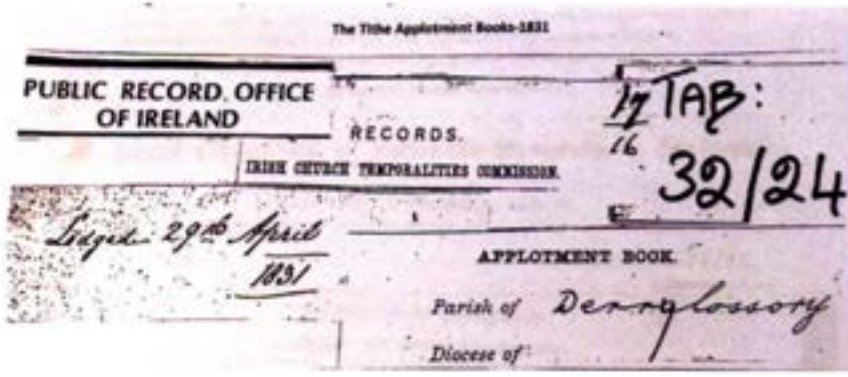
*Jim Doyle (Seamus O'Dubhghaill)*

The National Archives of Ireland contain five documents relating to the farms of Castlekevin and those occupying them from the first half of the 180s to the first half of the 1900s. These documents are:

- The Tithe Applotment Books (TABs) of 1831
- The General Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland - usually referred to as the Griffith's Primary Valuation (GPV) of 1854
- The Census of Ireland 1901: Form B1-House and Building Return
- The Census of Ireland 1911: Form B1-House and Building Return
- The Land Registry's Memorial certifying sixteen persons' title to registered ownership of lands within the Castlekevin Townland-1928

These five documents collectively embrace a time-span of 98 years and provide an interesting insight into one aspect of this Irish farming community's existence over almost a century.

### The Tithe Applotment Books - 1831




'Tithe' is a term from an Old English word meaning 'one tenth' and originally referred to a tenth of farm produce. It was a tax that had to be paid for the upkeep of the Established Church of Ireland. Originally

payment had to be made in kind-in actual farm produce but from 1823 tithes were to be payable in money. Anyone in occupation of land had to pay (unless they were occupying Church of Ireland-owned land). The tithe was not payable on all land, some types being exempted. For example, potato patches were likely to be taxed but grassland much less likely and as a result the poorest were hit hardest. This led to much country-wide resentment and unrest. A tithe war (Cogadh na nDeachuna) took place between 1830 and 1838, the social injustice being compounded by the fact that more than eighty percent of the population was either Catholic or Presbyterian and hence did not subscribe to the doctrines of the Church of Ireland.

The Tithe Applotment Books were compiled between 1823 and 1838 after which tithe payments were suspended. The Books record the valuations assessed for each rural parish by the Parochial Commissioners and are quite basic, giving the townland name, landholder's name, area of land assessed and, of course, the tithes payable.

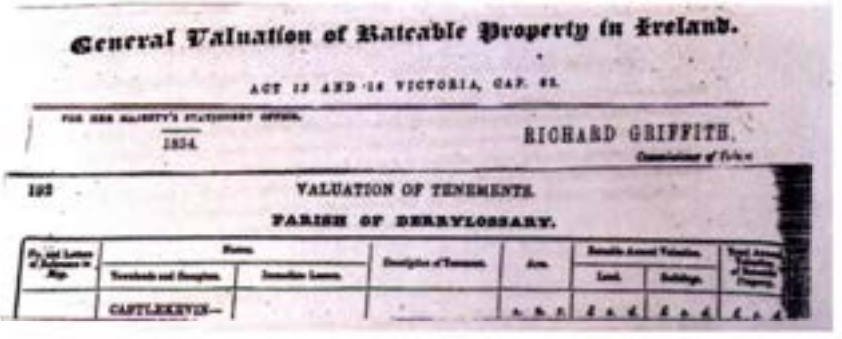
Castlekevin was one of 78 townlands making up the Church of Ireland Parish of Derralossary. Each Castlekevin farm was assigned two numbers, the first relating to the Parish and the second to the townland. The 29 Castlekevin farms appear as Derralossary Parish nos. 146 to 174 as well as being listed 1 to 29 within Castlekevin itself.

In the TABs the names of the occupiers do not appear to be set out in any particular order. However, when rearranged in alphabetical order of surname they are:-
Patrick Brady, Daniel Byrne, Edward Byrne, Michael Byrne, Patrick Byrne, Phelim Byrne, Terence Byrne, Thomas Byrne, James Carroll, William Cullen, John Doyle, (Freeman's farm), Dr Frizell, Frank Graham (or possibly Greham), John Kavanagh, (Keane's farm), Widow McDaniel, John McGrath, James McLoughlin, William Martin, Edward Mitchell, John Rochford, Leonard Rochford, Michael Smith, Patrick Toole, Mr. Weeks and Isaac Wybrants.

The sheets-written in beautiful calligraphy-have 29 listings, as mentioned above, with Dr Frizell being mentioned twice (as he occupied both a plantation and a demesne) and two farms-referred to as Freeman's and

Keane's respectively - that were apparently unoccupied at the time. Consequently there were 26 occupants then working the farms of the townland.

**The Griffith's Primary Valuation-1854**



General Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland.

ACT 15 AND 16 VICTORIA, CAP. 63.

1854. RICHARD GRIFFITH.

193 VALUATION OF TENEMENTS.

PARISH OF DERRYLOSSARY.

CASTLEKEVIN—

Twenty-three years after the TABs were drawn up the GPV for Castlekevin was produced. The Griffith's Valuation was named after its director Sir Richard Griffith and is also known as the Primary Valuation. It was carried out in order to provide a basis for calculating the rates to be levied under the poor law. The Valuation was carried out county by county between 1848 and 1860 that relating to Castlekevin taking place in 1854.

Comparison with the TABs show that twelve of the same individuals reappeared in the GPV and also that in a further two cases the same family reappeared but with a different member named. The twelve individuals from 1831 were:
Daniel Byrne, Edward Byrne, Patrick Byrne, Terence Byrne, William Cullen, John Doyle, Charles Frizell, John Kavanagh, John McGrath, John Rochfort (which was spelt with a 'd' as the final letter in 1831), Patrick Smith and Isaac Wybrants.

The two surnames carried over the twenty-three years were:-
Carroll (from James to John and Smith (from Michael to Edward).

Those names making their appearance for the first time in the Castlekevin listing were:-

Thomas Cullen, William Johnston, Edward Kavanagh, Joseph Loughlin, Sarah McDonald, Elizabeth McGrath, Charles Rochfort, Richard Rochfort, Thomas Rochfort and William Rochfort - ten in all.

These three groups -the twelve individuals from 1831, together with the two families and the ten making their first appearance-add to a total of twenty-four. The fourteen families who were farming at Castlekevin in both 1831 and 1854 shows 54% stability of occupancy over this twenty-three year period.

There are 29 areas of land listed in the GPV with Charles Frizell shown as occupying three, and Edward Kavanagh, Patrick Smith and Isaac Wybrants each occupying two. This reduces the number of occupants of land to the final figure of twenty-four (as given in the previous paragraph).

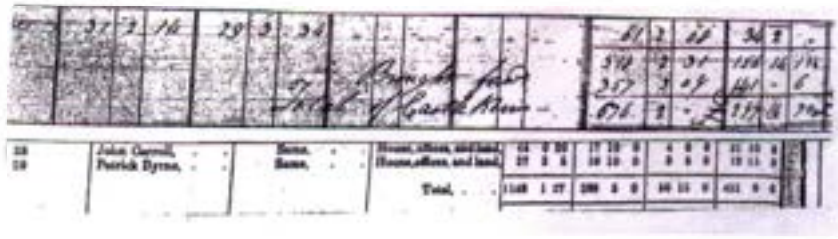
(For the sake of completion it needs to be added that two further names appear, these being Mary Tyre and Widow Miller. They were resident in the townland but were not occupiers of any land, each of them having a house only and no land. Mary Tyre lived on Richard Rochfort's holding and Widow Miller on one of the two holdings farmed by Patrick Smith).

In grouping the occupants as we have done, a number of assumptions have been made:-

When an individual is described as being listed in both the 1831 TAB and the 1854 GPV it is possible that in some cases they could be different people. To take a theoretical example, a John Murphy (son) listed in 1854 could have taken of a farm's occupancy from a John Murphy (father) listed in 1831 but unless such a change is known for a fact, it is assumed that the same person is involved. Also, it is possible that two different people with the same surname are not members of the same family after all but again, unless it is known for a fact that they are from different families, it is assumed that they are members of the same one.

**Charge of recorded acreage**

Although the focus of this article relates to the people occupying the Castlekevin farms, it is appropriate at this point to note that in 1831 the total area of the townland was recorded as being 676 acre as but in 1854 it was given as 1148 acres, which is an increase of 70%! Presumably this discrepancy is due to tithes not being payable on the full acreage of land held in 1831.



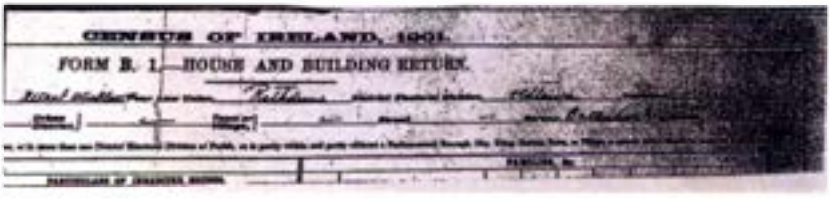
Also, when the acreage farmed by those twelve individuals in continued occupancy are considered, all with one exception are found in 1854 to be farming a greater acreage that they were twenty-one years earlier. Three examples of this are:-

- Edward Byrne (from 17 acres 2 rods 0 perches to 29 acres 0 rods 0 perches)
- John Doyle (from 17 acres 2 rods 0 perches to 30 acres 2 rods 0 perches)
- Patrick Smith (from 6 acres 0 rods 0 perches to 12 acres 1 rod 20 perches)

The single exception is John Rochfort (from 53 acres 2 rods 24 perches to 25 acres 3 rods 15 perches). This would appear to be due to the fact that in 1831 he was responsible for paying the tithe on both his family farm-where he was born and grew up-and also on his own farm. His family farm was the one which, by 1854, had come to be occupied by William Rochfort and contained 27 acres 3 rods 9 perches. This, added to 25 acres 3 rods 15 perches amounts to 53 acres 2 rods 24 perches (which is what John Rochfort had in 1831). It appears that he was the

only one of the twelve who was required to pay tithes on the full acreage of each of the two farms he held.

**The Census of Ireland-1901**


CENSUS OF IRELAND, 1901.

FORM B. 1.—HOUSE AND BUILDING RETURN.

Form B1-House and Building Return lists 20 private dwellings but one of these - No. 8 - is not inhabited and the name of the landowner on whose holding the house was situated was given as the Reverend Charles W. Frizell. (Other sources show that at the time of the census, and indeed for some years prior, he was living in the north of Ireland-Belfast. During these years Castlekevin was available for letting out to any interested party). The total number of occupants at this time was, therefore, 19.

Comparison of the 1901 Census with the 1854 GPV shows that four names are common to both, these being:-

Edward Kavanagh, John Kavanagh, Thomas Rochford and Patrick Smith.

Seven other previously-listed families are represented by:-
Mary Byrne, Edward Cullen, John Doyle, Revd. C Frizell, Charles Rochford, John Rochford (son of the 1854 John Rochfort) and Mary Smith.

Hence, eleven families from the 24 listed in 1854 are still farming in Castlekevin in 1901, which shows 46% stability over this forty-seven year period.

The other eight heads of families in 1901 are:-

Elizabeth Belton, William Belton, James Colman, Anne Douglas, Martin Farrell, Henry Harding, Patrick Kenny and James Rochford.

**The Census of Ireland-1911**

The 1911 Form B1-House and Buildings Return was set out in print in an identical layout to that of a decade earlier but the same order of the dwellings was not adhered to in the completion of the Return. For example, Henry Harding is recorded as being at house no. 2 in 1901 but at no. 7 in 1911. Similarity, John Rochford was no. 15 in 1901 but no. 13 in 1911. In fact, no land occupier who was in Castlekevin in both 1901 and 1911 was listed with the same house number in each census. The number of properties remained at 20 but one was unoccupied, the holder being WH Frizell who had bought Castlekevin from his brother in 1901.

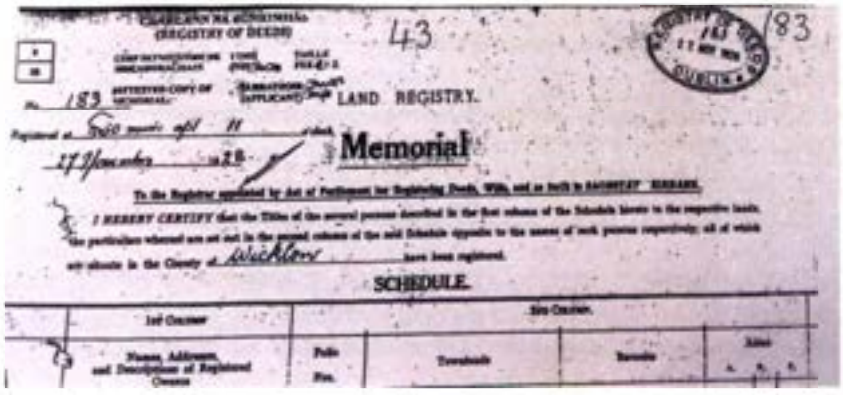
The individuals listed in both were:-
William Belton, Mary Byrne, James Coleman (spelt as Colman in 1901, Edward Cullen, Henry Harding, Patrick Kenny, Charles Rochford, James Rochford, Michael Rochford, Thomas Rochford, Mary Smyth and Patrick Smyth (spelt as Smith in 1901); thirteen in total.

There were four family names represented on both lists, these being:-

Farrell (Martin-Jane), Frizell (Rev. CW-WH), Kavanagh (John-Elizabeth) and Kavanagh (Edward-Anne).

Therefore, of the nineteen families farming in Castlekevin in 1901, sixteen of them were still doing so in 1911; (the Frizell family were not farming in 1901 and had not been for some years). This shows an occupational stability of 84% over this ten-year period.

**The Land Registry's Memorial of 1928**


(REGISTRY OF DEEDS)

43

83

LAND REGISTRY.

Memorial

SCHEDULE.

In 1928, seventeen years after the Census of 1911, sixteen people bought land in Castlekevin. Thirteen of these Registered Owners were described as farmers, two-Jane Farrell and Roseanna Smith-as spinsters and one-Margaret Belton-as a widow. All except two had the address of Castlekevin, Annamoe, the exceptions being Edward Harding of Killafin, Annamoe and Christopher Stacey of Roundwood. (I have no knowledge as to whether other farms were bought at some other date but such must be considered as a distinct possibility).

The full list of Registered owners was:-

Margaret Belton, James Coleman, Edward Cullen, Jane Farrell, Hugh Fitzpatrick, Edward Harding, Michael Kavanagh, Patrick Kenny, Edward Rochford, John Rochford, Leonard Rochford, Michael Rochford, Thomas Rochford, Roseanna Smith, Patrick Smyth and Christopher Stacey.

A comparison of the family names in Castlekevin in 1928 with those in 1911 shows that seven individuals and members of six other families are common to both. This total of thirteen families of the nineteen shows a stability level of 68% over the seventeen-year period.

**Overall observations**

The five documents involved are spaced out at irregular intervals over a ninety-eight year time period and hence there are four irregular gaps between the five of them. In chronological order these are gaps of 23, 47, 10 and 17 years. When re-arranged from least to greatest and the stability rates compared it is found that:-

10 years=84%, 17 years=68%, 23 years=54% and 47 years=46%.

In summary, this is what is to be expected. Over a longer period of time more families will be lost to a particular area and so produce less stability than will occur in a shorter period, assuming all other factors in the community's life remains constant. The actual families of Castlekevin reveal another aspect of the ninety-eight years concerned.

- In 1854 there were nine families from the twenty-six of 1831. These were: Byrne, Carroll, Doyle, Frizell, Kavanagh, McGrath, Rochfort/d, Smi/yth and Wybrants.

- In 1901 of these there were six, the six being: Byrne, Doyle, Frizell, Rochfort, Smith and Kavanagh.

- By 1911 five of the remained and these were: Byrne, Frizell, Rochfort, Smyth and Kavanagh.

- And in 1928 there were only three families of the original twenty-six, namely:-Rochford, Smyth and Kavanagh. These three represented less than 12% of the original twenty-six families then in occupation.

The story of Castlekevin from 1928 to more recent times will, no doubt also be an interesting one when it eventually comes to be told.

## A 1916 Story Comes Back to Roundwood

*Imelda Conway-Duffy*

2016 was the one hundredth anniversary of the Easter Rising. The centenary was marked by military parades and commemorative ceremonies and events throughout the length and breadth of Ireland. In Roundwood, the Historical and Folklore Society delivered its 1916 Commemoration Centenary Programme, including the publication of its 26th Journal, a special edition entitled, 'Wicklow and the 1916 Rising', a splendid work by Martin Timmons that will serve as an important reference for future historians or anyone unfamiliar with Wicklow's connections to the Rising.

The programme also included a seminar in February at which five prominent historians and writers, Professor Kevin Whelan, Dr Mary McAuliffe, Professor Eunan O'Halpin and Padraig Yeates delivered lectures on different aspects of the events of the 1916 Rising. The programme concluded in September with the unveiling of a memorial to the memory and the ideals of those who took part in the Rising.

The memorial is a magnificent work of art by Ciarán Patterson and the realisation of a long-held vision of one of the most committed founder members - and a patron of the society since its inception. Colm Galligan is the son of Comdt Peter Paul Galligan, one of the lesser known figures involved in the fight for Independence. On an overcast day in September, wearing his father's military medals, Colm stood beside a new monument in the village and watched the unveiling ceremony, performed by local schoolchildren, to remember the men and women of 1916 and in particular, his father who in 1916, at the insurgent headquarters at the General Post Office in Dublin, met with three of the Rising's principle leaders - James Connolly, Patrick Pearse and Joseph Plunkett - to receive his orders for deployment.

> *"Connolly said to me that they had enough men in Dublin and that it would be better to join my unit in Wexford. After a talk with Pearse and Plunkett, Connolly instructed me to go back to Wexford as quickly as I could to mobilise the Enniscorthy Battalion and to hold the railway line to prevent British troops*

*coming through from Wexford."*

It was now 2 a.m. on Tuesday morning. Fortified by tea and a couple of buns, Galligan set out on a 'good' bicycle, taken from the GPO storehouse.

> *"At first light, I started straight away for Enniscorthy. When I got to the Parnell monument, I looked back and I noticed that there were two flags flying from masts on the front of the GPO - a green flag and the tricolour."*

Galligan's subsequent 200km cycle took him on a wide detour to avoid British troops, via the North Circular Road, Mulhuddart, Maynooth and through County Carlow. It was late on Wednesday evening before he reached Enniscorthy.

Over the next five days, Paul Galligan was officer in charge of field operations in Enniscorthy and commanded a guard of honour as the Republican flag was raised. Enniscorthy Volunteer, Seamus Doyle then issued the Proclamation of the Republic.

At the unveiling of the monument in September, 2016 in Roundwood, Monica Farrell, former Chairperson of Roundwood & District Historical & Folklore Society read the Proclamation and Minister, Simon Harris, local serving TDs, Andrew Doyle and Pat Casey, local councillors, a colour party of defence forces veterans, patrons, fellow members of the historical society and local people watched the Irish flag being raised to the accompaniment of the National Anthem.

Torrential rain, forecast for the day held off until we were safely chatting over tea and buns (significantly more than the two supplied to Paul Galligan a hundred years ago) in the Parish Centre.

A book, *Peter Paul Galligan, "One of the Most Dangerous men in the Rebel Movement"*, written by Kevin Galligan was published by The Liffey Press, Dublin and is available on their website or may be ordered at any bookshop.

'Galligan's story also shows the experience of the War of Independence

on the ground in his native Cavan. A Dublin Castle file refers to him as 'one of the most dangerous men in the Rebel Movement.' As a member of Dáil Eireann, Galligan voted for the Treaty but also voted two days later for Eamon de Valera as President. In the ensuing Civil War, he stayed neutral but was in contact with the Anti-Treaty commanders.

This is a fascinating story of a little known but significant contributor to Irish history'.

- The Liffey Press.

http://www.theirishstory.com/2012/04/10/the-easter-rising-in-county-wexford/#.V-aGVTW2UQ4

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## Early Bronze Age Burials and Fulacht Fiadh – Life and Death in the Shadow of the Great Sugarloaf 1800 to 1600 BC.

*David Menzies*

### The Great Sugarloaf.

The Great Sugarloaf Mountain stands out today, as it has done for millennia, like a giant beacon on the horizon. Its quartzite, conical shape has attracted attention since prehistory and in its shadow many enclosures, stone cairns and mounds of burnt stones (fulacht fiadh) were constructed during the Bronze Age period. These structures plus many burials found in the area, appear to be orientated towards the Great Sugarloaf suggesting that it had some cosmological significance for the local community – (Bhreathnach, 2014, 242).

### The Discoveries

When local schoolboys, in 1981, discovered two small graves at the base of the mound, known locally as Suttons Moat, in the townland of Glasnamullen, within sight of the Sugarloaf, little did they know the hidden treasures they had uncovered – Fig 1 below.

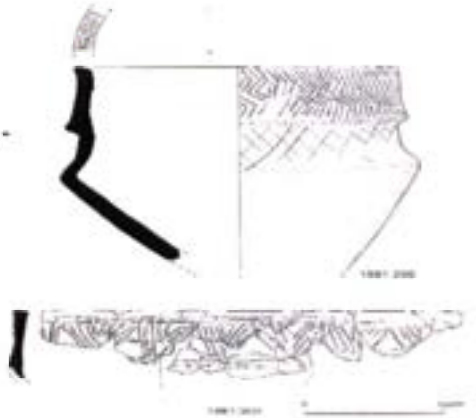

**Fig 1. Suttons Moat, Pottery Vessels. Top - Collared Urn. Bottom – Cordoned Urn.**

Forty three years earlier in 1938, when ploughing a field at Agower in Calary Lower, a farmworker struck a large stone and on turning it over he saw a grave underneath – Fig 2 below. Both of these discoveries, together with numerous finds of Fulacht Fiadh close-by, point to an area extending from the Great Sugarloaf mountain south towards Roundwood supporting people as far back as 4000 years ago in the Early Bronze Age. It appears the area, well serviced by the Vartry River was suitable for crop cultivation and grazing for farm animals, such as cattle and sheep, thereby supporting these small community groups.

**Suttons Moat and Agower Burials**

Following both discoveries, teams of rescue archaeologists were called in and identified two pit graves at Suttons Moat and a single cist grave at Agower. Both grave types comprise a shallow hole in the ground with the cist grave lined with flat rocks and typically covered by a flat capstone – Fig 1A is an example of a cist grave and burial urn under excavation.

**Fig 1A – Cist Grave and Urn Burial under excavation, Ballinagore, Co Wicklow (Courtesy Heritage Council)**

The majority of these types of shallow graves during the Early Bronze Age in Ireland have been identified as cist burials. Cists were created by digging a pit and setting up side and end stones. These were covered by a capstone whilst some pits had paved floors. After the burial had taken place, the pit was filled in and was sometimes covered with a mound of earth. Occasionally, the grave was enclosed by a circular ditch. Polygonal cists were used chiefly for cremated remains and continued to be used to the end of the earlier Bronze Age (2500 – 1500BC). Large urns, the type used at Suttons Moat and Agower, occur more often in polygonal cists and simple pits. While human bones have been found in some cist graves, cremation to a large extent replaced human inhumation as the most common form of burial ritual at this time. Along the south-east coast of Ireland numerous individual cist and pit type graves have been located with some instances of more formal burials taking place in flat cemeteries – (Waddell, 2000, P154). Occasionally Cists are found in groups and in such cases, they are referred to collectively as a 'Flat Cemetery'

At both Suttons Moat and Agower the graves were found to contain cremated human remains which would have been inserted in the grave and then covered by an inverted pottery urn. The decorated remains of the pottery fragments recovered from Suttons Moat indicated that one grave contained a cordoned urn which was dated to around 1730 BC. In the second grave a collared urn, containing the cremated remains of an adult, was dated to the period 1800 – 1700 BC – (Cahill & Sikora, 2011, P662). This period in our pre-history, close to 4000 years ago, is known as the Early Bronze Age in Ireland.

The cist grave at Agower contained a very fine encrusted pottery urn, 13 inches in diameter at the mouth and about 18 inches high, with the cremated remains of a child still present. This burial urn was dated between 1800- 1600 BC – (Price, 1938, P157 - P159).

FIG. 2. CIST BURIAL AT AGOWER, CO. WICKLOW.
Showing rim of urn in position, and slabs leaning against urn.

**Fulacht Fiadh – Open Air Cooking**

In addition to the presence of burial pits, there is substantial archaeological evidence in the area for widespread human habitation during this period, including the traces of what we now call Fulacht Fiadh – see example in Fig 3 below – (Hughes, 2015, P28).

Twelve Fulacht Fiadh sites have been identified to date across Ballyremon Commons, Calary Lower and into Glasnamullen – (archaeology.ie/historic environment app/glasnamullen).

Research suggests that Fulacht Fiadh had many uses during the Bronze Age, including the open-air cooking of food, the washing and dyeing of cloth, the curing of animal skins and when covered over, as a sweat house or sauna – (Waddell, 2000, P177).

**Fig 3. Fulacht Fiadh discovered at Sonnagh, Charlestown, Co Mayo.**

To construct a Fulacht Fiadh you first needed a local source of timber, often oak or alder was used, which was cut into lengths, sunk in the ground and made watertight with peat, moss or leather strips. Ideally this would be close to a stream or set into a wet boggy area, which was used as a water source to fill the wooden vessel. Next, a blazing fire was created in order to heat a large mound of fist-sized rocks which were carefully deposited in the water to bring it to the boil. It has recently been shown that large pieces of raw meat, wrapped in straw parcels, can be slowly cooked over three to four hours using this method – (Waddell, 2000, P175). Large horse-shoe shaped mounds of burnt and cracked stones, together with traces of hearths, have been found beside Fulacht Fiadh, indicating these as the source of the water heating.

**In Summary**

The areas known as Ballyremon Commons, Calary Upper, Calary Lower and extending east to include Kilmurry South contain a monumental

number of known archaeological sites dating back to the Early Bronze Age. See Fig 4 below for a complete list of monuments (red dots) so far identified in these areas.

The Archaeology team from the National Museum of Ireland that excavated the Suttons Moat site in 1981, surmised that there could still be more Bronze Age pit burials present and even possibly a flat cemetery with multiple burials at this location – (Cahill & Sikora, 2011, P662).


**Fig 4. National Monuments, Ballyremon (Courtesy Archaeological Survey of Ireland)**

Only further excavations would confirm this and to date this has not occurred. Current road improvements close to Suttons Moat – see Fig 5 - are being monitored by an archaeologist to ensure that should the road-works uncover further evidence of burials at this site, they will be excavated and recorded.

Advanced technology and surveying techniques provide an accurate and precise method for discovering, recovering and preserving important archaeological artefacts. Local community groups, including Historical Societies, are working closely with county councils, archaeologists and landowners, to ensure that together we identify, locate and preserve our heritage for future generations. In this way it is ensured that our ancestors' memory and our heritage is in good hands!

**Fig 5. Map showing location of Suttons Moat (Courtesy Ordnance Survey Ireland)**

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## The Ballad of Dinny Byrne
## 1798

*This ballad, submitted by Catherine Power (nee O'Brien) was recited at the Holy Well on Carrick Mountain on 15th August 2017. The man who wrote it, Larry O'Brien, was born and raised in Aghowle. The blacksmith referred to in the poem – Mick Dempsey of Bellcarrig, Co. Wexford, was Larry O'Brien's grandfather and Catherine Power's great grandfather. The forge is not in use but is fully restored and still in the family, owned by another great grandson of Mick Dempsey's – Seamus Hobbs.*

'Twas in the year of '98
When terror stalked the land
And cruel Yeos our deadly foes
Brought death at every hand
Then the men from County Wexford
Rallied to their leader's call
And vowed to fight for freedom
Or in freedoms cause to fall.

But among those gallant pikemen
Some found death and some found fame
And when we speak of '98
We still revere their name
Men like Father Michael Murphy
And his men from Slaney Side
Men from Oulart and Kilmuckridge
We remember them with pride
The men from Forth and Shelmalier
And yet another band
Lead by Marshall Bagnall Harvey
And John Kelly from Killane
There were men from County Wicklow
Billy Byrne and Michael Dwyer
And the gallant young McAllister

Who drew the Yeomen's fire
In the misty hills of Wicklow
His name they still recall
And how he saved his comrades
In the glen of wild Immal

One young man named Dinny Byrne
From the Wicklow Hills came down
To join with the insurgents
Close to Enniscorthy town
There to learn the arts of fighting
How to parry, guard and strike
And to do his bit for Ireland
With a twelve foot Wexford pike

From the woods of old Shillelagh
Came the shafts of Irish Ash
And when handled by the rebels
Were a weapon hard to match
With their shining blades all gleaming
Sure you've never seen the likes
And Mick Dempsey from Bellcarrig
Was the man who forged the pikes

At New Ross and Tubberneering
And the rout of Wexford Town
Dinny Byrne and his comrades
Saw the Redcoat hordes mown down
But later came the shameful news
Of how the cause was sold
By the traitors and informers
For the lure of English gold
So homeward to this native hills
Young Dinny Byrne fled
With yeoman troops upon his heels
A price upon his head

Near the slopes of Carrick mountain

Lived his sweetheart Mairin Ban
With laughing eyes and golden hair
Just like a summer dawn
With spinning wheel and comb and loom
She wove each Irish shawl
And sold them on a fairday
In the Rathdrum Flannel Hall
So to the valley of Aghowle
Young Dinny made his way
Through the woods of Ballycullen
Where he knew a welcome lay

He was dressed up as a tinker
Or so the story goes
A disguise to help him on his way
And foil the hunting Yeos
The harvest moon was rising
Over Carrick's misty cowl
When he knocked upon a cabin door
In the valley of Aghowle
There were decent people living there
Just like it is today
From the humblest door no man in need
Was ever turned away

But the Yeos were close behind him
And they knew of his disguise
The leader Captain Sinnot said
"We'll take him by surprise
We'll surround this cursed valley
In the early morning's light
And we'll have the tinker by the heels
Before the fall of night"

But the word had reached young Dinny
And in the dark of night
With Mairin Ban to guide him
To the mountain he took flight

And in a cave by Aghowle rock
On Carrick's lofty perch
They watched the yeomen down below
Commence their deadly search

They saw the cabins burning down
In field and bog and wood
From Slane to Ballycullen
Not a single dwelling stood
But after all no trace of Dinny Byrne could be found
The caption of the Yeos declared
"He can't be gone to ground"
He stood on top of the Cobblers Rock
And swore upon his soul
That the Devil ate the tinker
In the valley of Aghowle

Larry O'Brien 1997

## Charter Schools in Ireland

*John Pearson*


In 1733 the Incorporated Society in Dublin for Promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland, was founded by Royal Charter of George II with a mandate to establish schools providing *"... all things necessary for the instruction of the poor children in the principles of the Protestant Religion, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, as likewise with proper books, and all necessary materials fit for teaching them Husbandry, Housewifery, Trades, Manufactures, etc. in order to bring them up to Virtue, Labour and Industry"* (1) The seal of the society, shown above, bears the legend "Religione et Labore" and depicts an open bible alongside the implements of both agriculture and spinning.

The schools established under this mandate were commonly known as "Charter Schools", generally endowed by local landowners, co-educational, residential, and with enough land to be largely self-sufficient. Amongst the patrons of the Society was the Linen Board,

anxious to promote its burgeoning industry, through the supply of flax seed, and spinning and weaving equipment to the individual schools.

The first Charter School in Wicklow was established in Roundwood (also known as Templestown at that time) in December 1737. Its chief benefactor was John Temple who endowed it with 40 acres in perpetuity and an annual subscription of ten guineas. The building costs were largely defrayed by a donation of 100 pounds from Thomas Acton.

Following a routine inspection of the school its supervisory committee reported to the Society in 1740 that:

*"The children, ten boys and ten girls, appeared before us well clothed, and very clean and decent. We cannot without great satisfaction reflect on the healthy and vigorous state of all the children in this school, especially when compared with that of others of the same rank in the whole side of the country. For above a year and a half past, the country has not been free of a fever which scarce any of the poorer sort have escaped, but in all that time not one of the children has been affected by that or by any other disorder so as to be disabled two whole days. This happy effect we attribute (under God) to the goodness and regularity of their diet, clothing, and the universal cleanliness of the children and the house; which is not merely occasional when we meet, for several members of this committee frequently drop in unawares, and find it consistently in the same condition; and the frequency of such visits proves a very useful check to the whole family."(2)*

The Society's records also note a 1740 report by the schoolmaster, David Stephens, approved by the School Committee, which refers fleetingly to the pupils having completed *"the stated hours every day, for instruction in Reading Writing and learning their Catechism"(3)* but goes into considerable detail in describing their prodigious outputs in the more practical areas of Husbandry and Housekeeping.

The boys' report focuses on their achievements in:

> *"digging potatoes, foddering the cattle, cleaning about the house, gathering of dung, cleaning the land of stones and rubbish etc." (3)*

It further details a myriad of activities including turf cutting, potato planting, hay making, fence repairing and seed sowing.

The girls' report focuses on their endeavours in:

> *"washing all the linen of the family, scouring, baking, milking, serving the dairy, bringing in the water etc." (3)*

It further details the very significant output and detailed value of their activities in spinning linen yarn and carding and spinning wool.
A footnote to the girls report states that *"The linen wear of the whole family* (20 pupils plus the school master, his wife and 3 children) *is entirely made by the school mistress and the girls" (3)*

Stephens' 1740 report to the Society details the pupils' annual clothing allowance as follows:
For the boys:

> *"A coat, a waistcoat, and a cap of good broad cloth, one pair of strong tanned leather breeches, one shirt,, one neck stock of fine linen, one pair of stockings and one pair of brogues" (3)*

For the girls:

> *"One gown, and one petticoat of the same kind of cloth, one apron, one cap, one band, and one shift of fine linen, one pair of stockings and one pair of brogues" (3)*

Whilst one must wonder how much time the "stated hours" for education actually took up, there is nonetheless evidence suggesting that the Roundwood School was one of the better managed as its schoolmaster, David Stephens, was in 1747 appointed by the Society as their official Visitor to inspect and report on all Charter Schools.

The establishment of a larger school in Arklow in the 1750s called into question the possible expansion of the Roundwood school, and it was eventually closed in the 1770s. The school buildings and land were at that stage reconveyed to their original benefactors, subsequently serving as a residential agricultural holding.

The movement thereafter came under growing scrutiny and criticism with significant numbers of pupils absconding and increasing levels of difficulty in finding employers willing to take on the Charter School "graduates". The levels of private endowments fell and significant increases in State funding of the movement were required. Given the increasing levels of concern about the operation of the schools and the high levels of State funding required, the Irish Parliament, in 1782, commissioned two notable gentlemen, John Howard and Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick, to investigate and report. The findings of their report were unequivocally damning, concluding that any attempt to improve the Charter Schools, then numbering 52, was pointless, and recommending that the entire project be shut down.

Political distraction during the turbulence of the French Revolution and Napoleonic War era however postponed any official decision on the Charter School movement and it was not until 1825, following a royal committee of enquiry into education in Ireland that state funding was withdrawn from the schools and the children in them, numbering about 2,000 at that time, were either sent home or to other institutions.

The Society continues in existence and today promotes four of the country's top day and boarding schools which "*operate in a spirit of inclusiveness and togetherness reflecting the Protestant Ethos and Values*" *(4)*

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## From the Archives (1998) – Diamond Hill

*Ian Cantwell*

In August four members of the Historical Society went out and surveyed the Rath at Diamond Hill. It was an interesting experience on a fine day as none of us had previous archaeological survey experience. The accompanying sketch map shows that we were not unsuccessful even though we had difficulties in mapping the north west section as it was overgrown with gorse.

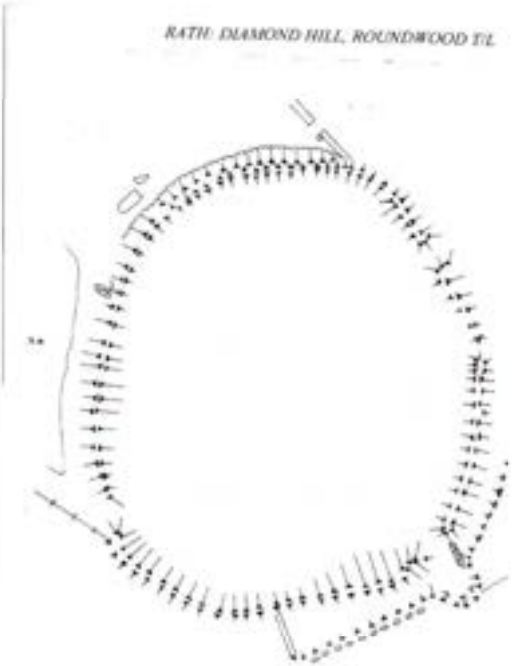
This feature is described in the recent Archaeological Inventory of County Wicklow where it is called an enclosure. The description by the Inventory is a basic one which is in line with the policy of providing a basic text to use as a benchmark for further detailed research. Several new features were noticed by us. The most important of which is probably the foundations of a clochan (beehive stone hut) in the south west corner just outside and beside a causeway into the rath. It is not clear whether the bank going north is a contemporary feature or was built later to make an effective corral. The stone row on top of the bank is of unknown purpose or date. The other gaps are caused by erosion. There are no discernible features in the rath though there appears to be foundations to the south east of the two erratics (which used to be mass rocks).

The Inventory makes a reference to the stone walls being modern but there appears to be the remains of a contemporary boundary wall on the northern face which is in the same masonry style as the causeway. Other walls are definitely modern. Some of the original facing on the north east corner survives. The structure of the rath is the usual pebble and clay mix.

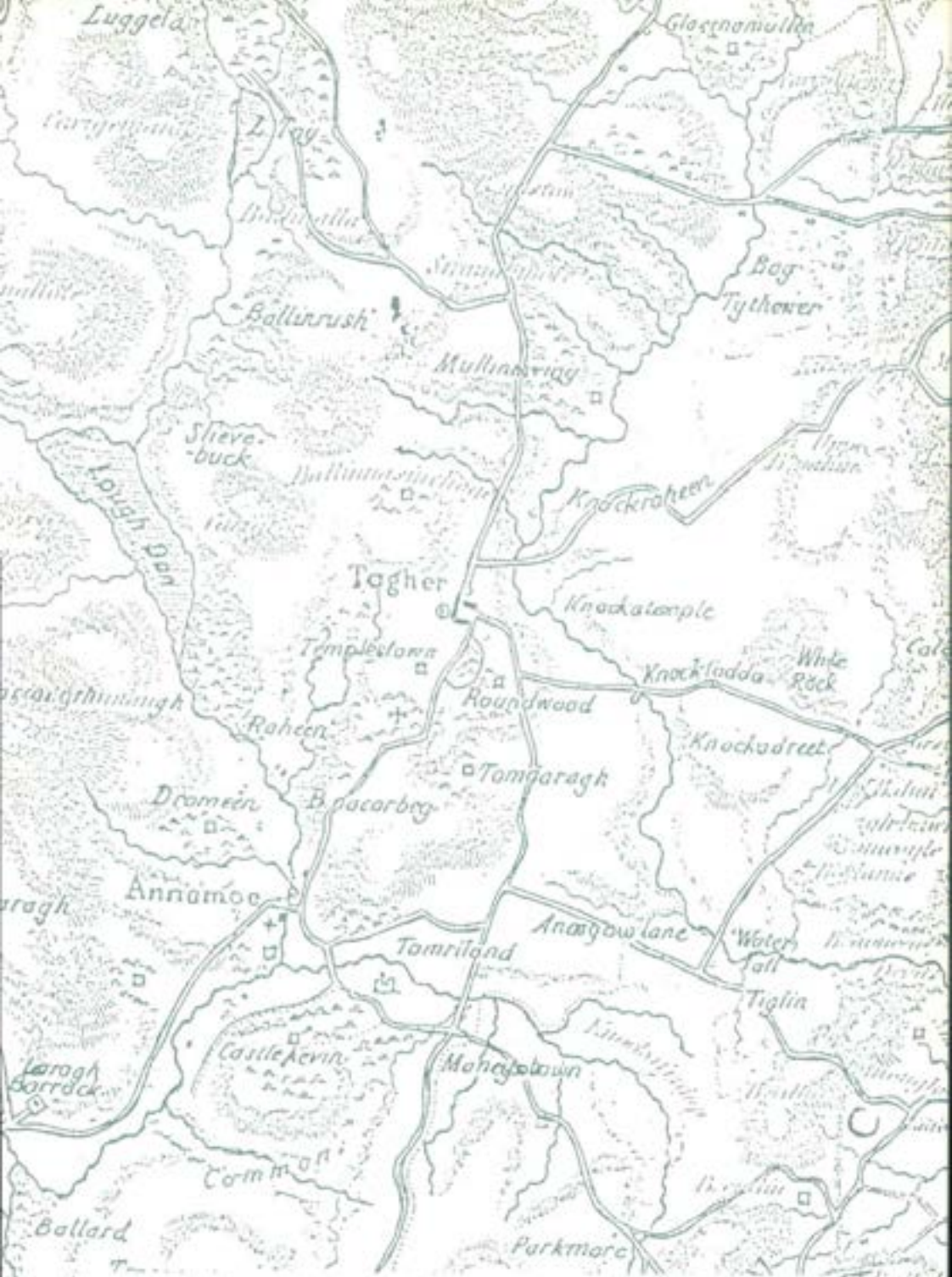
This Rath is situated on a north facing slope overlooking the Vartry river. It is oval and varies between 60-80 metres (200-265 feet) in external diameter which is consistent with the size of raths associated with the *Ri* of a *Tuath* if not slightly larger. However, the rath has to be seen as part of the monastic estate of Fertir (Vartry) and may have been one of the largest farms within the estate, it may also had some farm administration

functions. It does not appear to have been a spiritual centre as these were based in Ashtown, Derrylossary (which served the mill village of Raheen) and possibly Knockatemple though it is not clear whether the monastic estate took in that part of the plateau east of the Vartry river (this may have been controlled by a branch of the Ui Teig). It is, however, associated with a Holy Well and the Mass Rock nearby.

We wish to thank Mr. John Byrne of Knockatemple for his generous permission in allowing us to visit the site.




Surveyed, 8th August by Ian Cantwell, Tony Kennedy, Michael Larkin, Joe McNally. Cartography: Ian Cantwell

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