

ROUNDWOOD & DISTRICT

HISTORICAL, FOLKLORE
& ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Journal No. 29, 2020

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Cover Photograph: Confluence of the Glenealo and Glendasan Rivers in Glendalough - Courtesy of David Menzies

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2020 Editorial Committee:

John Pearson, Claire Chambers, Fintan Fanning Derek Neilson,
John Medlycott, Gale Menzies, Jane Pierce, Mary Slattery.

From the Chair

At this time of great uncertainty, both locally in Ireland and across the globe, due to the Corona virus pandemic, I am particularly delighted as Chairman of the Roundwood and District Historical, Folklore and Archaeological Society to introduce our 29th Journal for 2020.

Irish people have endured great personal and family stress over the last nine months since the virus forced the lockdown of our country. We have all been greatly affected by Covid 19, whether through family members becoming ill or by being separated from loved ones for prolonged periods of time. Local businesses too, have suffered significant hardship, with owners forced to close their doors as directed by government health guidelines. Life as we know it has changed with schools, colleges and workplaces transformed to cater for a new world of social distancing.

Consequently, the editorial committee were unable to meet in person due to the lockdown and health safety rules. Nor were they allowed to meet with our many contributors face-to-face. Internet and broadband technology came to the rescue, with Zoom allowing remote meetings to take place and articles to flow between authors and the editorial committee.

The result, which I hope you enjoy reading, is a Journal full of great articles and totally in keeping with the tradition and high standards of the Society

The works of local poets describing the life and times in Roundwood have featured in the Journal down the years. In fact, a number of poems by Trooperstown resident, W. J. Duffy – also known as the ‘Laragh Lad’ and the ‘Shaughran’ – appeared in our very first edition in 1988.

Continuing this poetic tradition, I am delighted that Jane Clarke, the award winning poet, has agreed to launch this year’s Journal. Born in Co Roscommon, Jane now lives in Glenmalur where she combines writing with her work as a creative writing tutor and group

facilitator. Jane's first collection of poems 'The River', was shortlisted for the Royal Society of Literature's Ondaatje Prize, given for a distinguished work of fiction, non-fiction or poetry evoking the spirit of a place. In 2016, she won the Hennessy Literary Award for Emerging Poetry, and the inaugural Listowel Writers' Week, Poem of the Year Award.

Jane's poem 'The Pit Ponies of Glendasan' takes inspiration from the mining heritage of the Glendalough, Glendasan and Glenmalure valleys and appears in this edition.

The spirit and sense of Roundwood and Moneystown is well and truly captured in this year's Journal. We have collected a really interesting set of articles covering topics such as the Roundwood ploughing championships and the history of bee-keeping in the Wicklow hills. The life and times of our 'big' houses and estates, such as Diamond Hill, Vartry Lodge and the Glendalough Estate are also vividly brought to life in this edition. The 50th anniversary of Moneystown church is commemorated and growing up in Darcy's Forge brings back memories of by-gone days when the smithy and the horse were key elements of the local economy.

Our winter talks program was badly hit this year by the Corona virus, but we did manage to hold three very successful evenings in Kavanagh's pub, before the March lockdown took effect. Our thanks go to Joe and Janette, for always making us feel welcome in their back lounge. In September 'Maud Gonne's Men' were brought to life by Anthony Jordan, followed in October by a fascinating talk on Countess Markievicz and her husband Casimir by the historian and author Pat Quigley. Prior to Christmas, John Medlycott presented the background stories of the 'Great Houses between Rathdrum and Roundwood' to our own and the Rathdrum Historical Society.

A large group of Society members enjoyed each other's company and great food in December at the Roundwood Inn. Our thanks are once again extended to Helen and Michael for hosting a wonderful evening.

It was with great sadness, in September of this year, that we heard of the passing of Jurgen Schwalm. Jurgen was a Patron of the Society

since its inception in 1987 and welcomed us warmly every December, as we celebrated Christmas with dinner in The Roundwood Inn. We offer our condolences to Jurgen's daughters Helen, Ingrid, Gisela, Sabine and their families.

I would like to thank every member of the committee for their dedication and hard work during these challenging times – Claire Chambers, John Pearson, Jane Pierce, Shona Shortt, Linda Browne and Elinor Medlycott.

Producing the Journal this year without being able to meet face to face was a particular challenge for the Editorial Committee. My thanks goes to our Editor, John Pearson and the dedicated committee members for the many hours they have spent collating and proofing the articles for this year's Journal.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to our many contributors and patrons without whom it would not be possible to publish this Journal.

I hope you enjoy reading the 2020 Journal as much as we have enjoyed producing it and that it helps to spread a little happiness at a time of great uncertainty.

David Menzies.
Chairman

Life at Darcy's Forge , Roundwood

(An interview with Betty Cullen)

At the beginning of the 20th century there were four forges serving the Roundwood area. One at the site of the newly erected children's playground known as Adam's Forge and another on the Bray road run by the Ferguson family. A third forge was situated at 'Darcy's Corner' in Moneystown and was owned by Peter Darcy. This was recently demolished and a new two storey house erected. The fourth forge, which Peter's brother Jack Darcy owned, was known as Darcy's forge of Roundwood. It was situated on the Lough Dan Road next to the site of the Fair Green (now the site of the New Roundwood National School).



Roundwood Fair - c.1934

This article will focus on life at Jack Darcy's forge as recounted by his daughter Betty Cullen (nee Darcy), with contributions from Patricia Byrne (nee Pierce).

Having learnt the trade of blacksmith and farrier from his father, Jack Darcy bought his own forge on 31st March 1928 for £5 from Larry Murphy who owned Tochar House and also The Fair Green. Jack and his second wife Mary, (nee Fanning), lived at the forge with Betty and her half brothers and sisters. The living accommodation was behind the forge, with the forge fronting the road.

The forge was a very busy place with horses and carts lining the main street to be shod and was open six days a week. Most families would not have a telephone in the house, so farmers would write to Jack in advance to book their horses into the forge for a fitting! This enabled Jack to prepare the horse-shoes in advance. The only horses that did not attend the forge to be shod were those belonging to the Luggala estate, presumably because there were so many it would be impractical for them to all accumulate around the forge. Jack dreaded attending to horses that had been left too long without shoes as their feet would need much paring down before a new shoe could be fitted. Most horses were used to the process of shoeing, but a young horse attending for a first visit could be challenging and would need to be tied up. Surprisingly, Betty does not recall any major injuries or accidents from horses kicking, which is testimony to Jack's skill as a farrier.

The work of a blacksmith was heavy and demanding and made harder by the intense heat of the furnace. Jack would need to light the fire very early in order to achieve the intense heat needed to shape the horseshoes and metal for cart wheels. The timing of fitting metal to cart wheels was crucial and needed to be performed in seconds; too cool and it would not be pliable enough to apply to the cartwheel and if too hot would burn the wooden wheel. Most days Jack's friends and neighbours, unbeknown to Mary, would surreptitiously bring two bottles of stout up from the pub for him, these were placed in a bucket of water to keep cool and help Jack through the day.

Betty's mother Mary was also very busy, juggling her time between her own family home and caring for her mother. Betty recalls her mother walking to Balislem every day to care for her mother which meant Betty had to be minded during the day by May Pierce of Raheen, who would have been around sixteen at the time.

May came from a house of 13 children and therefore was very accustomed to looking after young children. When the school day finished, May would walk down to the school with three year old Betty to meet May's brother and sister (Eamonn and Patricia Pierce) to help clean the school. After finishing their lessons, Eamonn and

Patricia had the job of cleaning the classrooms for which they were paid half a crown.

On Sundays the forge was closed but Mary and Jack's house was never quiet: up until 1953, Catholics were required to fast from midnight before receiving the Eucharist. Many parishioners would have a long walk to church as they travelled from the surrounding areas to attend eight o'clock morning mass. By the time mass was over, some folk would be weak with hunger and Betty's mother would have an open house for anyone needing refreshment before their journey home. Betty remembers her mother baking large quantities of bread and cake in preparation for a full house on Sunday mornings.

Fair day was a big event in Roundwood and was held once a month on a Tuesday when farmers would buy and sell livestock. Each farmer had his own position either on the green or on the street and rates were collected from farmers by the owner of the fair green. There would be cattle and sheep being sold on the street which would often leave their mark, much to some residents' disgust! Being in close proximity to the Fair Green, Betty would often overhear the goings on of the fair; collecting of the rates from farmers would sometimes get a bit heated, with raised voices and shaming of those that hadn't paid their rates.

By the 1950s the demanding physical work was taking its toll on Jack so he enlisted the help of a younger man named Tom Kemp. Tom was a very skilled blacksmith having trained at the famous Pierce's foundry in Wexford. Up until the 1950's, Pierce's foundry was one of the biggest manufacturers of agricultural machinery in Ireland, employing 600 people in 1900. Tom Kemp had a forte for working on harrows and ploughs, which helped Jack immensely and lightened the work load. Tom would work two days in Roundwood and two days in Moneystown for Peter Darcy. Sadly, his time at Darcy's Forge was cut short, as he died in his sixties. Jack continued to work until aged seventy nine only two years before his own death.

Darcy's forge ceased operating in 1963 and was eventually demolished in 2005. There is now a new house on the site of the old forge where Jack's grandson and his family live today.

Kind thanks to Mary Flannigan (Jack's grand-daughter) and Monica Byrne for facilitating this interview during the social distancing restrictions of COVID19.

Diamond Hill House



Diamond Hill was originally part of the Temple and later Synge estate and the house was built in the late eighteenth century and the fine avenue of beech trees was planted then. The original owners were the Fleming family. Thomas Fleming was Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1797-8. The house suffered some damage in 1798 and it is said that Joseph Holt was a bit rough on some of the Flemings' horses. By the late 1800's the owners were the Valentine family and the present owner's grandmother was Alice Valentine.

After World War One, Mr and Mrs Percy Northridge bought the place from the Valentines. Mrs Northridge was a nurse and had worked in the Richmond-Whitworth- Hardwick Hospital. The late Annie Taylor recalled that the Northridges ran Diamond Hill as a convalescent home for 'wards of court', generally people who had developed shell-shock as a result of the war. It is quite likely as in the hospital she had worked with Dr Frank Purser who specialised in treating victims of shell-shock . He used to be a regular visitor to the Fitzpatricks of Roundwood Park and, in 1926, he bought a farm in Knockraheen.

According to the late Kathleen Donoghue one of the patients was a priest, Father Murphy, another had been a lady-in-waiting to Queen Alexandra. Some people remember seeing the patients walking around the area and they were often absorbed in their books. Kathleen also recalled that Mr Northridge was a Protestant whilst

Mrs Northridge was a Catholic. Kathleen had very fond memories of Mrs Northridge who she knew well

In 1947 Mrs Broadbent, who was also a nurse, bought the place. Her husband had died in World War 2. She was renowned as a great horse lover. She taught several people to become excellent riders, notably Sheila Healy and Matt Farrell. Joe Timmons used to work for her and remembers her affectionately. She rode side saddle and used to drive around in a pony and trap. Joe recalled how she nursed Bob, a horse with no teeth, by cutting up grass and hay every day to keep him going. On Sundays she organised riding and jumping competitions and also was involved in the high jump and stone wall contest on the day of the annual Roundwood Ploughing Match. Matt remembered riding one of her horses in the cavalcade of over 40 horses that greeted President O'Kelly when he returned home to Roundwood Park. Matt regards her as an exceptional lady. The last time he was with her was very sad as she was alone in a big room in a house in Dun Laoghaire.

The next owner was Barry Reilly who was a keen race goer, but unfortunately the farm was neglected. When William Leeson, whose wife was a member of the Valentine family, bought the place it was in a sad state of disrepair and it took many years to restore the house which is now lived in and cared for by his son Jack and his wife Deirdre. However there is one issue that so far nobody has been able to explain and that is why the name Diamond Hill? Maybe someone will be able to throw some light on this.

John Medlycott.

Ireland's Vulture Funds in 17th century Wicklow

With the ending of the Nine Years War in 1603, Ireland enjoyed nearly 40 years of peace. During this time, more plantations were visited on the island, which meant an influx of industrious immigrants, anxious to make their fortunes. Despite periodic harvest failures, trade and wealth increased. The proceeds from this activity then became capital looking for investment, but in the 17th century, there were no banks in Ireland. In the mid-14th century, the English government had instituted a mechanism for the control of exports, which later became known as the statute Staple. By the late 16th century the Staple had also taken on the task of facilitating loans, providing a mechanism by which an investor might recover their money if repayment was not forthcoming.

In terms of the O'Byrne country, it is important to be aware that the O'Byrnes of *Crioch Branach* (the area of the coastal plain and low foothills, from the Downs to just north of Wicklow town) had, for over a century at this point, been firm supporters of the English government in Ireland (unlike the more westerly O'Byrnes and the O'Tooles). The eastern O'Byrnes had abandoned the raiding of south county Dublin in return for government subventions to guard the area. Many of them were accounted 'gentlemen', which meant they were part of the local elite and had adopted English dress, manners, and hairstyle. They were likely fluent enough in English to engage in trade negotiations.

It is our great good fortune to have the records of the Dublin statute Staple from 1596 to 1687. These reside in the Dublin Pearse St. library. From them we can gain the information that between the years of 1616 and 1639, nearly £21,000 (*a current day equivalent of some £100 million*) was invested in the county of Wicklow by participants in this Staple and a few other mortgages mentioned in the Mount Kennedy estate papers. Of this amount, only £64 was accounted for by loans among local people, specifically O'Byrnes and O'Cullens, not using the Staple. These loans were for sums such as £5, £15 5s, or 40s with a milk cow and her calf. They were relatively modest sums that were realistically repayable by the one taking the loan. But investors using the Staple generally only dealt in

much larger sums, at least £100 or multiples thereof. The advent of what would have been ‘funny money’ by local Wicklow standards of the early 1600s, significantly changed the stakes in the borrowing game.

With the influx of settlers into the Wicklow area in the mid-1620s, there would have been mounting pressure on the Gaelic gentlemen to keep up with the living standards of the likes of the Earl of Meath in Kilruddery, recently given his lands by the King. But their income was primarily from livestock farming carried on by their tenants, members of their septs, and would have been fairly modest. A number of harvest failures in the 1620s would have reduced even that income. This financial vulnerability was noted by Dublin businessmen, and they began to offer mortgages to these freeholders of Wicklow land. It was also at this time that Robert Kennedy, a clerical officer in the court of the Exchequer, Dublin, was in the midst of his gradual acquisition of land in Newcastle barony.

A good illustration of this gradual process in the transition of landownership from local Gaelic men to wealthy men from Dublin is the story of Farrell O’Cullen. His surviving records can be found in the estate papers of Mount Kennedy and the Dublin statute Staple. The O’Cullens were a professional family, the traditional physicians to the MacMurrough-Kavanaghs, and as such would have had the status of gentlemen. Farrell’s earliest extant document of 1610 describes how his father, Connor O’Cullen of Ballygarny, passed on possession of the townland of Cooladoyle to him. This was an important piece of property, containing as it did a mill and a sizeable village. (In the early 17th century, Cooladoyle was much larger and would have included more of the land south of the Altidore river, with Ballygarny on the other side.) Then, in 1616, Connor sold to *his* brother Farrell the townland of Carriglough (the boggy part of Tithewer) and the *town* area of Ballygarny (probably the area around the motte and down by the river). Despite this income, Connor still needed money, so he mortgaged his three acres of Kilmacullagh (the east side of Newtown main street) to an O’Byrne for £12. His son Matthew rented a portion of Kilmurry at £2/year from William Parsons, then Surveyor General, in 1618.

In 1619, however, Farrell (son of Connor) got involved with the Dublin Staple. He was one of four men who together took a £300 loan from Patrick Barnewall of Shankill. (Luke O'Toole, later leader of the rebellion, was another one of the four.) Access to such a sum of money apparently went to Farrell's head, as two years later, he individually got £200 from Robert Clony, a Dublin tallow chandler. Only a year later he was one of five men to get £600 from the Shankill Barnewalls. They must have been giddy with their sudden wealth.

In February of 1623, however, the wider world meddled in O'Cullen's property, when the King gave Cooladoyle, Carriglough, Ballygarny and Keane O'Cullen's (probably a relative) lands in the Ashford area as a grant to Sir Lawrence Esmond of Wexford. Farrell then had to buy back his lands, said to be for only the cost of an administrative fee. But this then made him liable for a yearly fee to the sheriff of Wicklow of £1 15s, and 13 pence. So, back to the Staple. He got another £600 from Robert Clony, but this time Robert took the townland of Cooladoyle, with turf cutting rights in Carriglough.

Keane O'Cullen then decided to give Farrell all his land in the Ashford area, in return for which Farrell would pay Keane's debt to 'Lady Spark' (a fancy name for an otherwise unknown woman), and Keane would owe Farrell £200. In January 1624, Farrell mortgaged Carriglough to a Ralph Leventhorpe, of Dublin, for £80. In April, Robert Clony rented Farrell's land of Cooladoyle back to him for over £26/year. Finally, in 1626, Robert Kennedy swooped in and bought everyone out. He again leased Cooladoyle and the Ashford lands to Farrell, but this time for over £32/year. At the end of 1630, Farrell gave up his lease, unable to pay the rent. This is a sad story, of how a local man went from being a property owner to being landless.

As English (and some Dutch) settlers began to establish themselves on Wicklow land, generally leased from a few major English landholders, they began to coax much larger and more varied yields from their holdings. By 1641, as recorded in the reports of the depositions taken shortly after the rebellion, there were 42 claims for losses of £180 and above, with 12 of them being for over £1,000.

(The rebels had stripped them of all moveable goods and burned their buildings.) Even if these records are inflated to some extent, it becomes possible to see that Protestant farms in Co. Wicklow were in the business of providing for the needs of Dublin, not only in terms of food, but other commodities as well. Milk, butter, cheese, beef, lamb, pork, chicken, turkey, fish, honey, four varieties of grain (wheat, rye, oats, and barley), hay, peas, vegetables, and malt were being produced in marketable quantities. Further, leather, timber, bark (for tanning), wool, charcoal, worked iron goods, fishing nets, and masts and spars for ships could be got from the county.

Driven by such a rapidly changing economic environment, leading O'Byrnes, O'Tooles, and O'Cullens had borrowed nearly £14,000 in just over 20 years. Given what we know of the previous level of borrowing, and their modest income levels, it is quite clear that they had gotten in well over their heads financially. Staple loans were secured on the lands of the debtors. Early on, it may have been possible for them to turn a blind eye on their obligations without consequences. But as the English population of the county increased, improving the reach of the county sheriff, this would have become more difficult to do. A day of reckoning was looming.

Starting in Ulster on 22 October 1641, Gaelic forces began exploding into open rebellion. The first attack on settlers in Wicklow happened on the 30th of October, just a week later. It would seem that deep dissatisfaction with a number of circumstances had already been near the boiling point in this area. Traditionally, the two major factors fuelling the rebellion are said to have been the loss of land by Gaelic families and religion. Both of these are well documented, with the O'Byrnes and the O'Tooles often quoted as shouting at the settlers, 'this land is ours!' Protestant disdain for popish Catholics is quite clear in many religious tracts. But what has not previously been clear in the Wicklow context is that the rebels were also significantly over-borrowed, and what land they continued to own was in danger of being taken for non-payment of these loans. With nothing left to lose, their armed rebellion was an act of desperation.

Therese Hicks

Peter Byrne (1908-1997)

Peter Byrne was born in 1908, the seventh and youngest child and only son of Michael Byrne (1874-1910) and Mary Hatton (1865-1945), farmers in Knockatemple.



*Peter with President Hillery
All Ireland Ploughing Championship 1978*

The farm in Knockatemple comprises 73 acres and has been in the Byrne family for, at least, 220 years and probably much longer. The first documentary evidence of Byrnes in Knockatemple was in 1831, where John Byrne, great grandfather of Peter, is listed in the Tithe Applotment Books. The farm is shown as having a Rateable Valuation of £27-5s., representing 73 acres.

The Tithe Applotment Books were compiled between 1823 and 1837, pursuant to the Tithe Composition (Ireland) Act, 1823, in order to determine the amount which occupiers of agricultural holdings, over one acre, should pay in tithes to the Established Church (Church of Ireland). This tax was fiercely resisted, as much by Presbyterians as by Roman Catholics. Full relief from the tax was not achieved until the Irish Church Act, 1869, when the Gladstone government disestablished the Church of Ireland.

Michael Byrne, Peter's father, died in 1910 at the age of only thirty-six. His oldest child was eight years old and his youngest child, Peter, was just over one year old. The cause of his death was TB. This was a devastating blow for Peter's mother, Mary, who raised her six children (the oldest having died in infancy) single-handedly, whilst carrying on farming. Peter's mother was ably assisted in the farming by some very loyal workmen, notably the much-loved John Clifton, who promised Michael Byrne, on his deathbed, that he would remain on the farm for the immediate future. Peter's mother

was also assisted, for some time, by her brother, Michael Hatton of Knockraheen.

Sadly, TB would claim three more lives in the Byrne household. In July 1928 Peter's oldest sister, Margaret, died when she was just twenty-six years old. Five years later, in May 1933, Sheelah died at the age of twenty-seven. This was during the Anglo-Irish Trade War (Economic War), which was a retaliatory trade war between the Irish Free State and the United Kingdom which lasted from 1932 to 1938. The Irish Government, led by de Valera, had refused to continue the reimbursement to Britain of land annuities originating from financial loans granted to Irish tenant farmers to enable them to purchase lands under the Irish Land Acts of the late nineteenth century. In retaliation, the British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, imposed a 20% import duty on Free State agricultural products entering the UK market, which accounted for 90% of all Free State exports. This had a devastating effect on Irish cattle exports to the UK, with prices being severely depressed, which resulted in huge income losses for Irish farmers. In order to defray Sheelah's funeral costs the Byrnes had to sell ten yearlings. This yielded just £33, which was not enough for the funeral costs.

The Economic War finally ended in 1938, following talks between the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain and de Valera, with a once-off payment of £10M to Britain. Had the Byrnes been able to hold out until then they would have seen the sale price of their cattle increase to pre-Economic War levels and the sale would have yielded over £100. Needless to say, Peter Byrne was not a de Valera fan.

In October 1940, a third sister, Annie Bracken died. She was thirty-seven and had been married for just one year.

Peter Byrne attended the local National School, which was then situated in Oldtown, until he was about fourteen years old. He then took up farming full-time.

From an early age Peter developed a keen interest in ploughing, being tutored, in the early days, by John Clifton. He participated in his first competitive ploughing match in 1922 when he was just fourteen years old, and won several local competitions in the ensuing

years. His first All-Ireland competition took place in Gorey in 1932, the second year that the All-Ireland Ploughing competition was held. The following year, on 15 February 1933, in Clondalkin, the Wicklow team, made up of Hugh Pierce of Mullinaveigue, John (Jack) Sutton of The Moate, and Peter Byrne, won first place. In the early years of the ploughing competition there were three participants on the county team. In 1937 it was decided to grade county teams into senior and junior; the senior team had two competitors and there was one person at junior grade.

Between the years of 1932 and 1980 Peter Byrne participated in all but three of the competitions. During this time, the Wicklow team, made up most frequently of John Halpin and Peter Byrne, won seventeen national titles. The highlight of his ploughing career was in being the overall individual winner in Danesfort in 1964 and in Enniskerry in 1965, where he was a joint winner with John (Jack) Halpin. He retired from competitive inter-county ploughing in 1980 but retained his keen interest in ploughing, right up to the time of his death.

Peter carried on mixed farming, his main cash crop being potatoes. His potato crop was always of the highest quality, possibly because he always used certified seed potatoes and possibly because of the soil conditions.

Peter Byrne married Sarah (Lill) Douglas, from Ballinahinch, Newtownmountkennedy in 1939. They raised nine children. At the time of his marriage he had one cow and four calves and he went on to develop the farm into a thriving business. He subsequently bought two smaller outlying farms. Like all women of her time, Sarah made a huge contribution to the farming enterprise, milking the cows and feeding the farm animals, whilst, at the same time, ensuring that the children were fed and clothed. In addition to this, she supervised the school homework, oftentimes when milking the cows and, in her spare time, she knitted jumpers for all the children!!!

Peter had very definite and strong views about right and wrong and he had a strong but simple faith: church teaching was not to be questioned. He was a person of integrity and, while driving a hard bargain, he was fair in all his dealings. He didn't believe in paying

the asking price for anything...even if this meant haggling with sales assistants in the local hardware stores!

He was one of the first in the neighbourhood to own motorised transport, acquiring his first motor vehicle in 1948. This was a multi-purpose vehicle, being variously used to transport animals to the mart or fans to a football match!

Peter Byrne died in February 1997. His wife, Sarah, died in September 2001. Both are interred in Glendalough Cemetery.

Peter's son, John, now farms at Knockatemple and his granddaughter, Bernadette, is the local Veterinary Surgeon.

Ned Byrne

Celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the Church of the Sacred Heart, Moneystown.

Introduction



Photo: John Fay

On Sunday 24th November 2019, His Grace, Archbishop Dr. Diarmuid Martin, D.D. Archbishop of Dublin concelebrated Mass, with Very Rev. Fr. Owen Lynch, P.P., Parish Priest of Roundwood and Moneystown, Rev. Fr. Damian McNeice, Master of Ceremonies to the Archbishop, Very Rev. Douglas Malone ADM, Dunlavin and Very Rev. Denis Quinn C.C. Greystones to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Church of the Sacred Heart at Moneystown. The concelebrants were assisted on the altar by William O'Byrne and his grandchildren, Rían and Aoibhínn. Uplifting spiritual music was provided by the choir under the direction of the organist, Mrs. Mary Byrne, Soloists Ms. Megan Ward and Jimmy Byrne, a student at Moneystown N.S. sang, while the school choir under the direction of Ms. Mary Tallon, Principal, sang reverential songs. During the Mass, the Sacristan, Mrs. Mary Timmons presented the Archbishop the keys of the church.



Ms. Tiney Timmons; the oldest person in Moneystown presented a gift to the Archbishop, as did Saoirse Byrne who presented a copy of the Parish Baptismal Records. It was a special occasion, over 300 members of the community filled the church completing the congregation. More detail will be provided later in the article.

Tiney presents a gift to the Archbishop

Assisted by Willie O'Byrne.

Photo: John Fay

History of Churches at Moneystown.

The previous church was constructed in 1911 on the same site, and an earlier church “St. Anne’s” which no longer exists.¹ It was situated across the road from the current site. In 1907 Rev. Fr. Dr. Michael Butler was the Parish Priest and he resolved to construct a church again in Moneystown (or more correctly the town land of Parkmore). Having located a building in England, Fr. Butler had it taken by sea and rail to Rathdrum railway station. Just as today, the community gave wholehearted support; they hauled the construction material by horse and cart, from the railway station to the site at Parkmore in Moneystown. They constructed the building, which was never actually consecrated as a church, but served the community as a hall where the Eucharist was celebrated. The reported cost of the construction was £655.² Mass on Sundays and Holy Days continued to be celebrated there until August 1968. The old church was subsequently deconstructed and sold by Mr. Edward Curley, Auctioneer from Roundwood. In the intervening period until the current church opened, the old hall was utilised.

Current Church

Construction of the current church commenced in August 1968 and the company selected to construct the Church was “Bantile” from Banagher, Co. Offaly. Newspaper reports at the time carried reports of the new Church being opened;

New Church (Irish Press)

The new Church of the Sacred Heart, - Moneystown, Co. Wicklow, will-be. Opened and blessed by the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Rev. John C. McQuaid, D.D., tomorrow at 11.30 a.m. The church has been built at a cost of £14,000 and will accommodate 270 people.³

The church was opened on 8h June 1969, when The Irish Times reported;

“A new church at Moneystown, Co. Wicklow was opened and blessed by the Most Rev. Dr. McQuaid, Archbishop of Dublin yesterday. It is the Church of the Sacred Heart. It will accommodate about 300 and was built at a cost of £16,000 and it is situated on a site formerly occupied by a corrugated Iron structure which served as a church for the locality for over 60 years.⁴ “

Assisting the then Archbishop, on that occasion were Fr. John O’Connell P.P., Parish Priest with Fr. Desmond Hogan CC and Fr. Edward Barry C.C.



Key links with the 1911 church maintained include the Tabernacle, and the carved imagery of the Heart emblem on the main altar. The parishioners have ensured that there are constant improvements made to the church and examples include; The Belfry, central heating facility, gallery & new organ (1992) and the Grotto dedicated to Our Lady (1993).

Golden Jubilee

As the church approached its Jubilee, our Parish Priest, Fr. Eoin Lynch P.P., to the delight of the parishioners, proposed a celebration to commemorate the Golden Jubilee convened a committee under the chairmanship of the William O’Byrne. Nothing would have been achieved without the hidden voluntary work of so many.

The event and legacy will live on in the memories of parishioners and those who use the church, significant physical attributes reflect the Jubilee celebration, including;

- The Stations of the Cross were reverently restored and are admired by all who pray before them.
- The original bell from the old church was fully restored and mounted on a beautiful crafted oak frame by William O’Byrne, and once again, is utilised during all ceremonies at the church
- A Kilmullen granite stone donated by Hugh Valentine, and engraved by Mark Quinn from Kilmacanogue was installed in the grounds to commemorate the event. Archbishop Martin blessed the stone after Mass.
- The original foundation stone on the front of the church was renovated and restored by Brennan Woulahan Funeral Directors, Rathdrum.
- The sacristy was updated and the entire church was cleaned, painted, had new marmoleum floor covering fitted with new carpets laid on the sanctuary. New flower pedestals for the Sanctuary were made and donated by Lisa and Cillian Johnston.
- The seating structure was modified and additional lighting and environmentally aware equipment was provided at the church and grotto by Paul Marah.
- Commemorative trees were planted in the Church grounds by Dr. Martin and Very Rev Fr. Owen Lynch P.P.
- A photographic record was created by John Fay.
- Just as Jack Byrne penned a poem for the construction of the church, Brian O’Rorke captured the Golden Jubilee in a poem which is published elsewhere in the journal.

Wonderful energy was expended by the committee under the direction of the Parish Priest, Fr. Owen and William as chairman. After the ceremony there was a wonderful welcome of everyone by the parishioners who provided a beautiful meal at the Community Hall, which had also served as our place of worship and stored the equipment during the renovations. The parishioners express through this article their appreciation to the Archbishop, Fr. Owen for his tremendous dedication to the parish and to William who is ever present to support the church and community. It was very fitting that

the Archbishop was to speak so highly of the local community on a subsequent radio programme on national radio with Pat Kenny.

Bibliography:

¹ Article by Caithilín bean Réamoinn, October 1934, National Folklore Commission of Ireland, Moneystown School, researched by Rían Byrne.

² Irish Builder

³ Irish News Archive

⁴ "Two New Churches." The Irish Times , Jun 09, 1969.

Kind thanks to Fr. Owen Lynch PP and William O'Byrne for their valuable inputs and contributions to this article collated by Fintan Fanning

Pit Ponies of Glendasan

Hitched to an eight-hour shift
in britchens, hames and traces,
they follow the miners' carbide lights,

halt under hoppers, turn
on a thruppence and lean into their collars
to pull the five-wagon train.

Low-set cobs from the Curragh,
a piebald and two greys, their hooves
fall heavy as hammers on granite.

They haul lengths of larch for pit props,
pneumatic drills, boxes of gelignite,
and, from time to time, deliver

injured men back to daylight.
The miners pat their necks in passing
and feed them windfall apples -

comrades in toil and first to stall,
legs locked at a sudden rumbling, a change
in the air or the rush of running water.

Jane Clarke

The award-winning poet Jane Clarke has written two poetry collections, *The River* and *When the Tree Falls* (Bloodaxe Books 2015 & 2019), as well as an illustrated chapbook, *All the Way Home*, (Smith|Doorstop 2019). 'Pit Ponies of Glendasan' is one of a sequence of poems inspired by the mining heritage of Co. Wicklow. www.janeclarkepoetry.ie

Layers of Landscape in Glendalough from prehistory to present day

Introduction

Living close to Roundwood for close to fifty years and raising a young family provided lots of opportunities to find new places to explore and to exercise young legs at weekends. Glendalough soon became a regular destination for long walks and cycles along the lakeside paths and forest trails. Young and old soon began to ask questions about how the valley was formed, where did the lead come from, what happened in the round tower and who was St Kevin. It is only now, in my retirement years and through the study of archaeology and geology that I can provide answers to those many questions. The 2016/2019 UCD, School of Archaeology field trips to Glendalough really opened my mind to the geology, geography and archaeology of the valley and the role it has played in the lives of so many people since the last ice age.

These trips taught me that there are a number of distinct layers to be considered when viewing the Glendalough Valley. Firstly, the early geology of Ireland together with the last ice age and receding glaciers have helped shape the valley we see today. The second layer of note surrounds St Kevin from the mid first millennium AD to the arrival of the Vikings in the mid. 9th century. Thirdly, the Anglo Norman and British eras, and their impact on the development and exploitation of natural resources in the valley from the 12th to the 19th centuries. Finally, how tourism has shaped the valley's landscape from the late 1800's right up to modern times.

The Geology of Glendalough Valley

The mineral riches, lead, zinc and copper, of the valley were laid down nearly 450 million years ago, during the Ordovician/Silurian geological periods. Today's U-shape valley and lake is the result of a large glacier melting and receding towards the sea some fifteen to twenty thousand years ago at the end of the last ice age, see Fig A below,



Figure A: Upper Lake, Glendalough Glacial Valley (Source: Author's Own Photo)

Mountain erosion caused during this period (Critchley, 2008), led to the exposure of traces of the precious minerals, in an area now known as the Miners Village, allowing human access to the valuable ores that have been mined here for the last 200 to 300 years.

St Kevin and the Arrival of Christianity

Coemgen or St Kevin, as he is better known today, was born around 550 AD and founded the Christian monastic settlement at Glendalough c 575 AD.

During Kevin's time in Glendalough the houses and churches were built from the local timbers that lined the valley slopes. All traces of these buildings have disappeared, although small timber remnants from post holes on the site have been dated to between 600 and 800 AD by UCD, School of Archaeology. The stone buildings, including St Kevin's Kitchen and The Round Tower, see Fig B below, date from the 11th and 12th centuries (Corlett, 2017), long after Kevin's death at the supposed age of 122 years around 618 AD.



**Figure B: St Kevin's Kitchen and The Round Tower,
Glendalough
(Source: Authors Own Photo)**

As a community of religious and lay people resided at Glendalough, the settlement would have had a series of secure fortifications to protect its inhabitants. The main entrance to the site was through an arched, granite stone gateway – still visible today. A large schist boulder, inscribed with a sanctuary cross, sits just inside this entrance. The rivers Glenealo and Glendasan, see Fig C below, gave secure protection on the south, north and east of the site leaving the west side probably protected by one or two circular banks and ditches (Seaver, 2018).



**Figure C: Confluence of Glenealo (left) and Glendasan (right) Rivers, Glendalough
(Source: Authors Own Photo)**

The religious community lived, worked and prayed within the sacred confines of the inner bank enclosure, where they built the church and living accommodation. The Round Tower was built around 1100 AD and served as an observation platform, food storage area and to ring hand-bells, calling monks to prayer.

Beyond the Round Tower and between the inner and outer banks was the area where the lay people lived, traded and kept their animals. Wooden buildings and workshops where tradespeople made the tools and utensils for everyday life, were built in this area.

Over time, seven churches were built, both inside and on the periphery of the main monastic site. These churches became a place of pilgrimage for people from all over Ireland. It has been said that three visits to the Seven Churches of Glendalough were equivalent to one pilgrimage to Rome.

St Kevin himself was said to reside in what is known today as Kevin's Bed, a small cave on the southern shore of the upper lake

and only accessible by boat. Adjacent to this cave are the ruins of a stone church known as Temple na Skellig.

Glendalough has been plundered and burnt many times during its lifetime and on at least six occasions by the Vikings between 833 and 891 AD. A number of interesting Viking artefacts from this period have been discovered on the site, including a tiny, Whitby jet stone cross, inlaid with tin and an 8/9th century ornate horse harness inlay – see Fig's D and E below. I had the great good fortune and immense pleasure to discover, while sifting residual soil, the Viking age horse harness during the 2016 UCD School of Archaeology dig at a site just beyond the modern graveyard. The jet stone cross was similarly discovered by a member of the Laragh community group, working alongside UCD in 2017.



Figure D: C8th to C9th gilded copper-alloy harness mount, Glendalough (Source: UCD School of Archaeology).

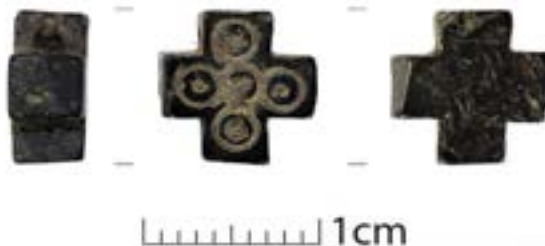


Figure E: Jet cross from Glendalough (Source: UCD School of Archaeology).

Glendalough began to decline after it was absorbed into the Diocese of Dublin in 1216 AD and within years the Archbishop of Tuam described the site as a wasteland overrun by beggars and thieves.

The Mining Era.

Deposits of lead, copper and zinc were in plentiful supply in the Glendalough valley resulting from geological activity around 450 million years ago. This led to a thriving mining industry, to extract lead ore, from the early 19th century right up to the late 1950's, with up to 200 men employed. Spoil heaps from the mines line the valley slopes and floor to this day, see Fig H below.

Prior to this there is evidence of over one hundred production platforms for charcoal manufacture and iron ore smelting, as far back as 1650 AD (Davis, 2019), see Fig F below.



**Figure F: Charcoal production platform at Glendalough
(Source: UCD School of Archaeology).**

All species of local trees – holly, birch, oak and yew – were used for charcoal production and the valley was eventually stripped bare of its woodlands, see Fig G below. The Mining Company of Ireland planted up to a quarter of a million trees, mostly Scots pines, in the valley during the late 19th century (Kavanagh, 2003), to be used as pit props in the mine shafts.



**Fig G: Monastic City, Glendalough with hills stripped of trees,
late 1800's
(Source: National Library of Ireland)**

The Luganure mineral vein was the main source of the lead for which Glendalough became famous and where men worked and died over a 150 year period (Critchely, 2008).

At its peak, over 200 local and Cornish men worked in the mines at Glendalough, toiling under very difficult and dangerous conditions. Men worked in pairs in the mine shafts, one drilling holes for explosives and a second inserting dynamite sticks into the holes. After blasting, the rock and ore had to be manually extracted from the mine shaft and then carried by mules, later by an inclined railway, down to the working areas on the valley floor (Critchely, 2008).

In the 1850's a water powered crushing machine, see Fig H below, was installed to assist in the extraction of the valuable lead ore from the granite rock. The ore was then later smelted at Ballycorus, outside the village of Enniskerry.



**Figure H: Crushing Machine and Spoil Heap, Miner's Village, Glendalough
(Source: Authors Own Photo)**

By the 1880's the price of lead had begun to fall on world markets and also, as lead deposits were diminishing, the Mining Company of Ireland, the operator, decided to close the Glendalough mines. The mines opened again for a brief period in the 1950's but finally closed for good in 1957 (Critchely, 2008).

The Tourism Era

Although only one of the hotels remains – The Royal Hotel – the tourist industry spawned in the mid. 19th century gave rise to a massive growth in visitor numbers to the valley that has continued to the present day.

At one time during this early period, there were three hotels operating between the lower and upper lakes of Glendalough. Grants Hotel, see Fig I below, was nestled in the hillside at the foot of the Poulanass Waterfall and close to the Reefert Church.



**Figure I: Grants Lake Hotel, Upper Lake, Glendalough
(Source: National Library of Ireland).**

Antiquarians from many countries visited Glendalough to see the monastic settlement buildings and to make the boat trip across the Upper Lake to Temple na Skellig and St Kevin's Bed. Stone artefacts were sometimes strategically relocated close to the hotels for the tourists benefit (Davis, 2019). Visitors stayed in either The Royal, Grants or Richardson's Hotel – on the road to the Upper Lake – see Fig J below (Kavanagh, 2003)



**Figure J: Richardson's Lake House Hotel, Glendalough
(Source: Robbie Carter)**

Today, the Wicklow and Miner's Way both pass through the valley and bring large numbers of hikers to the area. Visitors come in their thousands from all over the world to take in the wonderful scenery, walk the many forest trails and follow the lakeside path to the miners' village.

Like me and my young family all those years ago, I am sure they have many questions to ask about Glendalough, which I hope this article has in some way addressed.

David Menzies

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Vartry Lodge



Dublin had a population of approximately a quarter of a million people by 1850 and the public health of the city was a major concern for Dublin Corporation with frequent outbreaks of disease especially typhoid and cholera. A waterworks committee was established and its chairman was Dr John Gray. He was a proactive man and as a shrewd businessman, he had quietly purchased an amount of land along the river Vartry to thwart speculators. Once it was decided to build the reservoir, he then sold the land back to Dublin Corporation at cost price. On June 30th 1863 and when the river had been realigned, the Lord Lieutenant knighted Gray in recognition of the significance of his contribution to the proposed water scheme.

Parke Neville was the engineer responsible for implementing the scheme. William McCormick was the contractor for both the scheme and Vartry Lodge. The lodge was a part of the original scheme, serving as the superintendent's residence, and McCormick tendered to construct it for a fee of £500 on condition that he had the use of two bedrooms and an office in the lodge for the duration of the construction of the reservoir. This led to the interesting situation that the contractor's and the client's engineers were sharing the same house! Mr Martin was appointed resident engineer and became the first inhabitant of the lodge.

In the National Library there is an account of a dinner in the lodge on November 20th 1866. After the meal those attending were seated around the fire, considering how to unblock the ball that had been inserted, as a safety device, into the dam to prevent a major burst and consequent disaster. Neville's assistant, Richard Walsh's detailed notes are all in the National Library also. The reservoir became operational in 1867 and one of the earliest telegraphs in the country connected Vartry Lodge to Bray Station.

At the same time as the reservoir was being planned a French diplomat, Ferdinand de Lesseps, had been developing the idea of constructing the Suez Canal, which was opened in 1869. On August 19th 1871 the waterworks committee was delighted to receive a visit from this significant visitor to view the Roundwood Reservoir. Having viewed the works the visitors, including all the committee members, adjourned to Vartry Lodge where a grand dejeuner was provided at 7pm. After the meal de Lesseps in proposing the health of Mr Neville said, 'it affords me the most sincere pleasure, as an engineer, to bear testimony to the magnificent manner in which the Dublin Waterworks has been constructed. I have inspected many works of this kind but for wisdom in design, and simplicity of arrangement, and effectiveness and caution of construction, I say the Dublin Waterworks are a credit to the country. I have been connected with the largest works in the world (Hear! Hear!!) and I have never seen an undertaking like that which I have inspected this day to be carried out with such skill and such precaution against danger.' He continued by praising the scheme in great detail and concluded by proposing the health of Mr Neville.

Membership of the Corporation's waterworks committee was very popular and the inspections of the reservoir were keenly anticipated as a splendid dinner was always served in Vartry Lodge until 1892. In the court records of that year there is a detailed account of the case taken by a Dublin ratepayer and whistle blower, Bridgeman, before the notorious judge, Peter the Packer. This resulted in the ending of the feasts as it was claimed that these junkets involved two dozen bottles of champagne, numerous other quality wines, 100 cigars, and at least a dozen bottles of fine Dublin whiskey!

In the twentieth century all the engineers lived in Vartry Lodge and they have included Mr McDonnell, Mr William Fitzsimmons, Mr Larry McAllister and today Mr Ned Fleming. Mr Fitzsimmons had worked on the Ardnacrusha scheme. Among other things he established a local printing press, The Ricardo Press, which Vera Roche worked on. He also encouraged several young people and the late Mick Daly told me how Mr Fitz encouraged him greatly, especially to overcome his disability and he taught Mick how to become a remarkable electrician. Mick also learned from Mr Fitzsimmons how to graft and propagate fruit trees. Larry McAllister was at the inaugural discussions about the establishment of the Roundwood and District Historical and Folklore Society along with Seán Kavanagh, Colm Galligan, Father Breen and others.

In 1956 it seems that the reservoir had another distinguished visitor when Pandit Nehru, the Indian Prime Minister was visiting President O'Kelly in Roundwood Park, he came to Vartry Lodge where he enjoyed a game of tennis!

When a few years ago on the Historical Society's summer outing we toured Glasnevin Cemetery. We laid flowers at Sir John Gray's monument and were pleased to see that by his shoulder was a comely maiden pouring Vartry water!

John Medlycott and Ned Fleming

An account of farm work at Glendalough Estate



Glendalough House

I started working on the Glendalough Estate farm in 1959 when I was 14 years old. I was born and reared in a house in the yard. My father Tom worked on the farm as a dairy man and in those times if a man worked on the estate it followed that his sons would work on the farm and his daughters would work in the House. My two sisters Maura and Cecilia worked in the House. The Estate covered 1,500 acres, 400 of which were arable. Work started at ten minutes to 8 every day when the bell was rung and it rang again at 6 to finish the day with an hour for lunch. On Saturday it was ten to 8 till 12 noon. It was a 50 hour working week.

When I started there were around 30 men working on the Estate and most men had a particular job. Four or five men worked in the flower and vegetable gardens where there were three heated glass houses, growing pears, grapes, tomatoes and also fruit trees in the walled garden.

Three men worked in the water gardens, one of them was Danny Rochford who had hands to do anything. One of Danny's other jobs was to look after the miles and miles of stone walls.

Two men looked after the pigs and there were ten to twelve sows, one man looked after the dry stock, two men looked after the sheep and four men worked in the woods looking after the timber and general work on the estate when needed and two electrician/

mechanics. There were four carpenters who at the drawing in of the harvest came out to help. One of them one was lethal with a fork and I still have the scars on my legs to prove it!

In the early days there were three work horses and a pony. One of the pony's jobs was to bring the laundry down on a Monday to the back lodge where Liz Doyle and Mrs Wolohan did the washing in big tubs and it was brought back to the House every Saturday. Little did I know that years later the back lodge would be my home.

Two tractors were on the farm in the 1950's, one of them was an Allis Chalmers which had to be started with a handle, after which you had to count your fingers to make sure you still had all ten! There were two more tractors bought during the sixties.

In the fifties and early sixties the silage for the dairy cows was made in two big silos and the grass had to be forked into a small door in them. When they were filled there was two big cocks of hay built on top of them and then it was thatched. Two acres of potatoes were planted, most of the potatoes were steamed over a big furnace and put into silo pits to feed the pigs throughout the year.

The Estate had its own lorry which went to the market in Dublin every two weeks with 10 to 12 pigs. Every other week it went with a supply of potatoes, vegetables, flowers, eggs and the carcass of a lamb for a hotel in Dublin. The lorry returned full of fertilizer for the farm.

Twenty to thirty acres of barley and oats were sown every year and one year it rained so much the oats had to be cut by a mowing bar and thrown onto the binder and tied. So much for global warming! The farm had its own mill for threshing the corn to feed the cattle for the winter. There was a combine bought in the late sixties when the grain was put up in two lofts in the yard and if it was damp it had to be turned every other day to keep it from heating.

Electricity was supplied to the estate by a turbine run off the pond. This supplied the saw, the mill for grinding barley for the cattle and the houses and sheds around the yard. I was told many times that I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth because I never remember

being without electricity. The houses on the estate were also supplied with milk, potatoes, vegetables and firewood for the year.

My first job when I started work was picking the potatoes and helping my father milk ten or twelve cows by hand. Later on there was a milking machine and the milk was sent to the creamery. I was also looking after the hens. There was 250 day old chicks bought every year and it wasn't a job I particularly liked. I probably was thinking of a different bird at that stage.

In 1962 I was given the job I would have more or less for the next 50 years which was looking after the cattle, just in time for the big snow in '63. Ned Wolohan and Christy Brennan were sent to help me and I remember there was a rick of hay out at the field in Oldbridge. Most days when we'd go out to get a load of hay, Ned's daughter Nelly, who lived out there and is still hale and hearty, would have a mug of tea and apple tart for us.

Around 1965 the horses, pigs, hens, potatoes and oats were all gone as were the lorry, the laundry and I think the Allis was gone as well. A lot of the workers were also gone. In the late 60's a lot of the hay was made on tripods. There were always around 200 ewes on the farm. In the late 60's and early 70's there were around 100 cattle and the main job on the farm was cutting silage. There was around 150 acres cut for silage every year.

Robert Barton got married when he was in his late 70's to an American lady. When she came to live on the estate bathrooms were added to the workers cottages. Romance blossomed on the farm with the workers and there were four marriages.

Around 1971 Robert Barton left the estate to his cousin Bobby Childers. A lot of the cattle were fed in the woods in silage pits and they either had sheds to go back into or had the shelter of the wood. They were self-fed. This was done by moving the electric fence every day.

We also had 50 sucklers at this stage. Bobby Childers' son and daughter both lived in America but neither of them were interested in taking over the estate so in the late 70's it was then sold lock, stock

and barrel to Sean McKone, a builder from Greystones who also had a dairy farm in Wexford. That is when we bought the back lodge which we had been living in and which is still my home. Building must have been still in his blood because he built a massive sheep shed, a big cattle shed with a lean-to onto four eight span sheds that were already there, two big silage pits and a slurry pit. At this stage most of the cattle were fed with a diet feeder in the sheds.

In the mid 80's he brought his dairy herd up from Wexford to the mountains of Wicklow, not a good idea! At that time the shepherd was a man from Cork by the name of John Casey who had won One Man and his Dog which was a popular programme on T.V. As his family wasn't interested to move from Greystones up to Annamoe, Sean McKone sold the estate to the Johnson family.

For the first two years that the Johnsons owned the estate there were 600 or 700 ewes, thousands of pheasants and no cattle. A new shepherd had replaced John by the name of Paddy Deary who hailed from the north and Pá Curley was his interpreter as no one could understand one word he said in his Derry accent. After two years we had a new manager and we're back with cattle again: we had over 100 sucklers and the sheep were cut back to around 300. In the year 2000, the Johnson family gave up farming and the land was set to Cyril Goode of Arklow. In the space of a year I was looking after over 700 plus cattle until I retired.

The one person I haven't mentioned is my wife Ellie who sadly died in 2001. Working at all sorts of hours with the cattle sometimes she didn't know if I was married to her or the farm. I retired in 2010 after fifty years working for four different owners.

This is a rough account of my time working on Glendalough Estate and I enjoyed every minute of it. I had a few near misses and I count myself very lucky to have finished my time with everything in its right place. I think.

Liam Brady

Memories of Garech and an Otherworldly Dimension

On Sunday morning, the 20th of June 1989, I received a telephone call from London. “Imelda, I’m so glad to speak with you. I’m rather strapped for a solution to how to celebrate my fiftieth birthday at Luggala...Frightfully short notice, but I am assured that if anyone can do it, you can.” “When is it for?” I asked. “Next Friday.” The voice, which I had heard a year earlier at a party, was that of the Hon. Garech Browne.



Photo courtesy of Irish Independent

It was Curragh Derby week and not a marquee to be had, but somehow, five days later, on Friday, there was a marquee on the lawn, with tables and chairs, food and wine supplied by The Grey Door Restaurant, supplemented by delicacies flown in from London, kegs of Guinness from Seán Kavanagh’s pub in Roundwood and music provided by Paddy Maloney on

uilleann pipes, Michael Tubridy on flute, several bodhrán-players and singers and my sixteen-year-old son, Stewart on whistle. The revelry was still in full swing as I slipped away at around 4 a.m. After the clean-up on Saturday I walked in the door of Seán Kavanagh’s, hauling the last empty beer keg, and encountered a group standing in the middle of the floor, Garech among them, listening to Sean-Nós singer, Seán Garvey in full voice. “Ah, Imelda! There you are! It was a wonderful party, thank you so much. Now, would you like to join us at Luggala for the real party?” Garech asked.

Towards the end of the month, Kieran Corrigan, barrister and business partner of Garech and of my then employer John Boorman, phoned to ask me to meet him. The six-foot-plus Monaghan man sat across from me at the Boorman kitchen table, cradling a cup of

coffee. “Imelda, Garech would like you to work for him, he needs someone,” Kieran announced. I told him I would have to speak with John. “I think Garech has spoken with him already,” Kieran said. I took this to mean that they had come to some sort of ‘sharing’ arrangement regarding my working days. I agreed to meet Garech at Luggala.

Heather and gorse blanketed the mountains, sheep grazed behind low, dry stone walls bordering the long, narrow winding roadway. Beyond, thick woodland covered the slope of the hill rising to my right and then brooding Lough Tay to my left with a sandy beach curving into the foot of Fancy Mountain. Across the lake a large bird of prey launched itself from the craggy rock face and soared gracefully down the valley. The roadway opened into an expanse of gravelled driveway and a lawn, dotted with ancient trees. By the lake shore I saw a strange-looking domed stone building which I would later learn was the ‘Temple’ marking the graves of three of Garech’s siblings: a stillborn child known only as ‘Baby Browne’, a half-sister, Tess who died at age fourteen and a brother, Tara who lost his life in a car crash in London at twenty-one. Tucked into the folds of the woodland behind me was the white castellated house.

Garech was waiting to show me around. Every room was painted in dark colours and festooned with portraits. In the drawing room a fire blazed in the grate and heavy drapes framed long windows that looked out over the lawn sweeping down to the ‘Temple’ and the lake. “What will the work entail?” I asked. “Well, I suppose we’d better begin at the beginning,” Garech replied, stroking his wispy moustache that couldn’t conceal an enigmatic grin. In a courtyard behind the house, there were carriage-houses and other outbuildings. A stream gushed down from the hillside and off to one side was the “office” a small solitary stone building, its windows obliterated by cobwebs and a white scum covering the glass. Garech turned the doorknob, but the door didn’t open. “Oh, dear, I wonder if Maurice has the key?” he mused.

Hurricane Charley, which in 1986 devastated the country, had caused the stream to overflow and cascade across the courtyard, flooding the office and leaking mercilessly into the library on the lower ground

floor of the house. Dozens of rare books and first editions were submerged. When the flood retreated the sodden books had been moved and left on a table where they had languished for three years and were now growing mould. After a couple of phone calls, someone came and took them away to be placed in a freezer in the hope that they could be stripped of mould and saved from total disintegration. Garech was a collector and he knew every book in the collection and could quote passages and recite poems from memory.

In September, I started a three-day week at Luggala. My first task was to gain access to the office to retrieve anything that was retrievable from the piles of mould-covered papers, from within filing cabinets jammed with rust. A week later, it had been cleared out, scrubbed, painted and aired, ready for use. Garech departed for London and it was with the help of Maurice, the live-in caretaker, that I learned the 5,500-acre estate, included mountain, lake, forests, three cottages, an estate manager's house and a guest house for deer-stalking parties and pheasant-shooting in season. The overflow stayed in hotels and local B&Bs. Several films had been made here and the house was famously a gathering place for Dublin's intelligentsia as well as artists and musicians from around the world. Garech also owned a large house on 200 acres near Rathfarnham in Dublin, currently occupied by the Brennan family, otherwise known as the folk group, Clannad. "Who manages all of this?" I asked. "Seems you do," Maurice replied. Thus began two years of meetings with legal representatives, a hunt for a new estate manager, trips to London with Garech, a breakfast meeting with one of the Guinness trustees at the Clarence Hotel, several tours of the land by car and on foot and an introduction in Dublin to the management and staff of Claddagh Records, founded and owned by Garech, a leading proponent for the revival and preservation of traditional Irish music who was also instrumental in forming The Chieftains.

In the first two months I managed to juggle the three days at Luggala and two days in Annamoe. I hear you met Stan." Garech stood, his back to the fire, glass of Vodka dangling by the rim, in one hand, his other hand tucked behind his back. "And I hear you turned him down," he said, grin widening. "If you mean that I turned down his

offer of the job of estate manager, then, yes, I did.” Garech laughed – that deep, rich laugh, one that could mean anything, to which I would become so accustomed I can still hear it.

Soon, a long battle began with the Office of Public Works which was then on an all-out crusade to establish a network of interpretive centres in Ireland, including one overlooking Luggala. Garech won the battle. The entrance to the estate was spared the planned centre and the narrow, winding mountain road escaped the coach traffic carrying tourists to watch a fifteen-minute video of the mountains and the lake that they could already see around them. But the proposition divided the community, some arguing that the centre would provide employment. But after the construction phase, staff would have numbered only one or two, fated to twiddle their thumbs every time a fog rolled in.

One evening after dinner, Garech called me. “Can you come up and help the head of the Scottish Arts Council write the sleeve notes for *The Massacre of Glencoe*? He needs a second brain.” I found him with a tall, thin, balding, toothless stranger in the drawing room, talking loudly, outdoing each other in verse and in jokes and much laughter. “You must have a drink, Imelda,” Garech announced. Glass of whiskey in hand, notebook and pen at the ready, I sat in an armchair beside the fire. The phone rang and Garech left to answer it. The fire crackled, sending a shower of sparks onto the hearth and the head of the Scottish Arts Council’ began to hum a tune. At length he helped himself to a refill from the drinks table, leaned his head against the back of the couch and nodded off. Snippets of the telephone conversation wafted in from the next room. After an hour had passed, I crept away whilst the ‘head of the Scottish Arts Council’ reclined in peaceful slumber. I don’t know if the sleeve notes for the collection of Scottish airs that had been recorded by Claddagh four years earlier were ever written.

In the summer, Maurice turned eighty and a celebratory lunch was held in the dining room, attended by Garech’s mother Oonagh, his wife, the Princess Purna and members of the family. During the many toasts, tears of joy rolled down Maurice’s face. Paddy Moloney struck up on the whistle and immediately, family, friends

and staff were dancing to a medley of jigs and reels until well into the evening.

“Dear One, you can’t possibly leave!” Garech moaned when I handed him my notice. Now living in Bray with the offer of work in the town I would cut out the commute to and from Luggala, where a hair-raising slide on the snow-covered roadway in the winter of 1990 had bolstered my decision to quit. When I next met Garech, he and his wife, Purna were at the bar in Seán Kavanagh’s pub. I was wrapped in hugs and plied with drinks and the evening was gone in a flash – all too soon. There were other occasions when I would hear, “My Dear One” from somewhere in the vicinity and Garech would appear, hand outstretched, asking, “When are you coming to Luggala for tea?”

In 2014, I was back in Annamoe, this time compiling John Boorman’s archive. In March 2015 an archivist from New York came to assess the work. John announced he was taking us to lunch at The Roundwood Inn but first, we would be taking Garech up on an invitation to visit Luggala. Heather and gorse were resplendent in purple and gold and a trio of deer looked up from their grazing as the we approached. It was easy to see how the beauty of this place could cast a spell on people. Many had come to lunch and stayed for a month, some I had encountered wandering the corridors, entranced.

Garech stood, straight as a ramrod in the front doorway, his butler at his shoulder. John introduced our visitor. They shook hands and then Garech turned to me. “How wonderful to see you, Dear One,” he said. “Do come in. You must have some champagne.” In the drawing room, by the ever-blazing fire, John and Garech fell to reminiscing. We just about made lunch at the Roundwood Inn and then it was back to work. It would be my last visit to Luggala.

In September 2016, following the unveiling of a plaque erected in the village to commemorate the signatories of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic I felt a hand on my shoulder and there was Garech, in flat cap and his customary tweeds. He looked frail, but as ever, in good spirits. He was a staunch patron of the Roundwood and District Historical and Folklore Society and his vast library contained every journal produced by the society since its foundation in 1987.

On Saturday March the 10th 2018 Garech was in London, lunching with one of his oldest friends, the 17th Viscount (Nicholas) Gormanston, when he collapsed and died at the age of 78. His death brought to an end a gilded age begun by his mother Oonagh (Lady Oranmore and Browne) and continued by Garech who liked nothing better than a horde of guests making their way down the long and winding road to his white castellated lakeside home on the shores of Lough Tay – a who's who of the international social set – to mingle with pipers, poets, musicians and artists.

On a glorious August day in the valley, the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins, his wife, Sabina and a crowd of family and friends from all walks of life, watched Garech's nephews, Dorian and Julian walk into the bog-brown waters of Lough Tay and scatter his ashes on the water to the accompaniment of a plaintive air played by Paddy Moloney on the uilleann pipes.

Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

Imelda Conway-Duffy

The Golden Jubilee of Moneystown Church

It was at The Church of the Sacred Heart,
That's Moneystown church, where we took part
To celebrate one and all, it's Golden Jubilee;
A day contrived, for the whole Community!

It was Sunday 24th, 11. 19;
Archbishop Dr Martin, and his team,
Father Owen Lynch, and William O'Byrne,
Brought joy to all, there in their turn!

A Community the like, not often seen,
Had pulled together to give, the church a nice sheen;
A new floor had been, so carefully laid,
And the paintwork, it no longer looked staid!!

There were Sinnott's, Murtagh's Kavanagh's and a Galligan,
Duffy's, Carstairs', Heatley's and Halligan's,
There were Salley's, Fanning's and Gallaghers too;
Tallon's, Timmons and Byrne's like a few!

Mrs Tiney Timmons was there, as the eldest,
And in fear of upset, not sure of the youngest!
There were McHugh's, McGuirk's, McGarrity's and McGee's,
The heat was on, so that we wouldn't freeze!

There were Molloy's, Sharky's, Lynch's and Hasset's,
Singleton's, Traynor's and Gilmore's with assets!
There were Lawler's, Valentine's, and Cowman's so near,
Sircombe's, McDonnell's, and Keogh's, I hear!!

There were Doyle's and Kenna's, Harvey Graham's and Fay's,
Some Marah's, O'Brien's, and Breen's, she says,
There were Kearney's, a Daly, and a Cullen or two,
There were those that I've missed, hopefully not you!!

From Moneystown, the National School choir,
Came sounds as if, they were on fire,
So sweet, and melodious too;
They brought joy to all, and me and you!

The Church Choir also, gave it their all,
They sung Ave Maria, right on call,
Along with a rendition, of Amazing Grace,
To put a big smile, on everyone's face!

The Archbishop blessed, the big stone outside,
That was dragged all the way, from Kilmullen close by,
He planted a carbon, grabbing tree as well,
So you to your grandkids, you can surely tell!!

After that to the Hall, we all did go,
The Community, from up high and down low,
Was served cakes, and bickies and tea,
Along with sandwiches, and of course, coffee!

A congregation, of 300 I'd say,
Gathered in Moneystown, for the day,
They were there, to celebrate and pray,
Gave heart and soul, and come what may"

So congratulations, to one and all,
To the community, they put out the call;
Well done Father Owen and Willie O'Byrne,
For giving our church a joyous return!!

Brian O'Rorke

Wordsworth in Wicklow

In autumn 1829, the English poet William Wordsworth spent five weeks touring Ireland with John Marshall and Marshall's son James. They visited the famous places – tourist hot-spots, then as now – including the Wicklow Mountains, Glendalough, Glengarriff, Killarney, Edgeworthstown, Lough Erne, the Giant's Causeway and Fair Head, in addition to Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Derry/Londonderry and Belfast. John Marshall – husband of Dorothy Wordsworth's childhood friend Jane Pollard – was a wealthy flax-spinner from Leeds, as well as a reformist MP. Whilst one of the Marshalls' aims in Ireland was to prospect for new markets following their flax-spinning company's decision to adopt mechanised wet-spinning processes, Wordsworth wanted to know more about Irish landscapes and people.

1829 was the year of Catholic Emancipation. In some respects, the Catholic Question was coterminous with the 'Irish question'. The Marshalls were pro-Emancipation; Wordsworth was adamantly against it. Their Irish tour confirmed some of the poet's prejudices, but it also offered opportunities for interesting observations, showing him (and us) what Ireland was like in those heady days.

In travelling to post-Union Ireland, Wordsworth was following in the footsteps of many of his friends and eminent contemporaries: Thomas De Quincey and William Godwin in 1800, Robert Southey in 1801, Percy Bysshe Shelley in 1812 and 1813, John Keats in 1818, George IV in 1821, Walter Scott in 1825 and Henry Crabb Robinson in 1826. Soon afterwards, in 1831, Wordsworth's friend Felicia Hemans (a celebrity poet at that time) would settle in Dublin. Another friend, Edward Quillinan (who would become Wordsworth's son-in-law in 1843), was a Roman Catholic born to Irish parents. Shortly after his first marriage in 1817, Quillinan joined his regiment in Ireland. His first daughter Jemima was born in Clontarf in 1819. Quillinan kept a journal¹ during this military sojourn, recording his visits to celebrated places in Wicklow, such as Poulaphouca, Russborough House, Rossanagh, Glendalough and the Meeting of the Waters.

¹ WLMS 13/1/4. Wordsworth Trust, Grasmere.

Quillinan's Irish journal of 1819–21 contains material for two of his publications. His *Woodcuts and Verses* (1820) has a distinctly Irish flavour, featuring poems inspired by Avondale and Glendalough. Some of these were incorporated into *Shamrock Leaves, or The Wicklow Excursion*, a book of entertaining verses published anonymously in London in 1823. Taking place in August 1820, the eponymous 'excursion' was undertaken by a group of friends who were 'Resolved from dull Dublin at last to elope'. They traversed Bray, Newtownmountkennedy and Rathdrum, visited Avoca, Glenmalure and Glendalough and returned to Dublin via Glenmacnass and then Glencree. Like many other fashionable tourists of their time, they paid tribute to Glendruoid's cromlech, the late poet Mary Tighe's Rossanagh, the Devil's Glen, the Rock of Cronroe, the Meeting of the Waters, 'Knock-na-Moel's fair hill', Parnell's Avondale and the Glen of Imaal. At Glendalough, they revelled in local legends, climbing up into St Kevin's Bed, from where the saint was said to have flung his amorous pursuer Kathleen into the lake below.²

The wealthy tourists also met an Apollo-invoking, begging, 'ragged and barefooted mendicant scholar' who wanted to go to Maynooth College one day. They dispatched him to Glenmalure, so that 'the Inn might be there for to-morrow secure'. Quillinan acknowledges the difficulty of finding accommodation in Co Wicklow in his notes to *Shamrock Leaves*, making fun of Thomas Moore's popular song 'Sweet Vale of Ovoca'. The tourists hastened to the 'Inn of Ovoca' after a long day's journey, only to find it fully occupied. Disappointed, they sallied out again, and the young ladies sang:

'Sweet Vale of Ovoca!' we placidly cried,
As we wound by the stream's wood and hill cover'd side;
And Mamma, in reply to 'Sweet Vale of Ovoca!'
Exclaim'd, 'Not a chance e'en of tea or of cocoa!
'There is not in this wide world a valley so sweet!
'O charming!' she answered, 'with nothing to eat.'
'How calm could I rest in thy bosom of shade!'

² *Shamrock Leaves, or The Wicklow Excursion* (London, 1823), 2, 19.

‘So could I,’ she rejoin’d, ‘if my bed was well-made.’

As its Advertisement announces, *Shamrock Leaves* was intended partly as a ‘GUIDE for the Visitors of the beautiful scenery of WICKLOW’, and Quillinan’s notes do furnish detailed guidance, including a six-day itinerary:

Monday. From Dublin to Dunleary, Killiney, Bray, Belleview (whence the Glen of the Downs may be seen) Newtown-Mount-Kennedy, where put up; not neglecting Altadore and the Glen of Hermitage.

Tuesday. Dunran, the Devil’s Glen, Rosanna and Newrath-bridge.

Wednesday. Cronroe, Rathdrum, Avondale, Vales of Ovoca and Arklow, sleeping at Arklow, or the Wooden-bridge Inn, or the Inn of Ovoca.

Thursday. Shelton, Ballyarthur, Castle-Howard, Glen Molaur, where stop at Wiseman’s Inn.

Friday. Seven Churches, Roundwood, Luggelaw, Powerscourt, Tinnahinch, the Dargle, Enniskerry.

Saturday. Return by the Scalp to Dublin, taking Glendruid in the way.³

Interestingly, Quillinan’s note on the river Vartry (near Rossanagh and the famous inn at Newrath Bridge, now Hunter’s Hotel) invites Wordsworth to write about Ireland. The older poet had written profusely on English, Scottish, Welsh, and continental topographies, and his successful sonnet sequence on a Cumbrian river – *The River Duddon* – had appeared in 1820. By contrast, whereas he had imagined ‘Erin’s Coast’ in terms of Milton’s paradise (‘the bright confines of another world’),⁴ he had never set foot on that island.

Quoting Donatus of Fiesole’s praise of Ireland as the best of all lands – ‘Finibus occiduis describitur optima Tellus’ – Quillinan implicitly addresses Wordsworth, whom he had first met at Rydal in 1821:

³ Ibid., 19, 17, vi, 42–3.

⁴ See ‘View from the Top of Black Comb’.

The hand that has traced *the Duddon* from its source might do justice to this (the Vartrey) and some other ‘wizard streams’ of Irish Vales: none but a powerful hand *can* do them justice. Mr. Wordsworth, in spite of his attachment to the exquisite scenes of his native mountains, is yet ‘A Wandering Minstrel.’ He travels to the North, and to the East, and to the South. We find him celebrating Highland, Swiss, and Italian Beauties, animate and inanimate (if to a Poet any beautiful object can be said to be inanimate). But his Muse never seems to have reminded him that there was in the *West* beauty made for song, *and yet unsung*; that only a narrow channel separated his own romantic coast from scenery as fine as that of Rydal, or Borrowdale, or Ulswater, and wanting only the consecration of high and pure genius; for with all the splendid talents, and the enthusiasm of the Irish, no great *natural and philosophical Poet* has yet arisen among them.⁵

When Wordsworth toured Co Wicklow in 1829, he visited most of the places recommended in *Shamrock Leaves*. Wordsworth, who remembered Quillinan’s early poem *Dunluce Castle* (1814) in Co Antrim, would have known *Shamrock Leaves*, although he would not have needed Quillinan’s special tip-off: the Wicklow itinerary was by then extremely well known. Quillinan himself referred to G. N. Wright’s influential *Guide to the County of Wicklow*, published in 1822 and illustrated by George Petrie. We know from his Irish journal that Quillinan also consulted Edward Ledwich’s *Antiquities of Ireland* and William Wilson’s *Post-chaise Companion* for information about Wicklow.

Wordsworth and the Marshalls left Dublin for Co Wicklow on 2 September. They crossed the Dublin Mountains via the ‘over-celebrated’ Scalp.⁶ After reaching Enniskerry, they explored the river Dargle, visiting James Grattan (MP for Co Wicklow and son of Henry Grattan) at Tinnehinch and the famous garden and waterfall at

⁵ *Shamrock Leaves*, 43–4.

⁶ *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth*, vol. 5: *The Later Years, Part II, 1829–1834*, 2nd rev., ed. Alan G. Hill and Ernest de Selincourt (Oxford, 1979), 125

Powerscourt, whose grounds John Marshall thought were laid out ‘in bad taste’.⁷ They then travelled through the Glen of the Downs and slept in Newtownmountkennedy. The next morning, Wordsworth rose early and walked alone to Dunran. Later that morning, in Roundwood, the tourists breakfasted with Wordsworth’s friends William Rowan Hamilton (Professor of Astronomy at Trinity College Dublin) and Caesar Otway (the Church of Ireland clergyman whose *Sketches in Ireland* Wordsworth had read with pleasure). The company then went to Glendalough, where they spent most of the day. The tourists parted from Hamilton and Otway at 4pm and stayed the night in Rathdrum.

On 4 September, they drove down the river Avonmore. There is no mention of Avondale, where Charles Stewart Parnell would be born in 1846, but they would have driven past its wooded grounds. A former proprietor of Avondale, Samuel Hayes, had published *A Practical Treatise on Planting* in 1794. Wordsworth had a copy of it. Avondale was particularly dear to Quillinan, who wrote: ‘T were sweet to live in Avondale, | But good to die in Glendaloch’.⁸ Wordsworth and the Marshalls enjoyed the drive through this ‘charming country’, admiring Castle Howard and the Meeting of the Waters before proceeding ‘along the famous Ovoka River to Arklow’, and thence to Wexford.⁹

The tourists thus visited nearly ‘all the crack places’ of Co Wicklow, except for the Devil’s Glen (and Rosanna). Wordsworth thought the scenery ‘charming’ and ‘delightful’ for ‘residence, or occasional Touring from Dublin’, although he also compared it unfavourably with parts of Scotland: ‘The celebrated Vale of Ovoca and the Glen of the Dargle are both rich in beauty, the latter in character something between Wharfdale and Fascally in the Highlands where the Garry and Tummel meet below the pass of Killiecrankie; superior to Wharfdale, but yet in a greater degree inferior to the Scotch Scenes.’¹⁰

⁷ MS 200/64. Leeds University Library.

⁸ *Shamrock Leaves*, 52

⁹ *Letters*, 119.

¹⁰ *Letters*, 121.

The only image in Wordsworth's poetry that arose from his Irish tour is a pair of eagles above Fair Head in Co Antrim, but despite his reservations, Wicklow (along with Kerry) did leave an abiding impression. That Wordsworth did not write any poems on Wicklow is partly attributable to his 'mode of travelling' in a rather grand 'carriage and four', which, he said, hindered him from 'conversing with people'. Writing home from Ireland, he wished for the 'journalizing pens'¹¹ of his wife Mary and especially his sister Dorothy, whose Scottish journal of 1803 had provided valuable material for his poetry. However, Wordsworth left an account of a memorable encounter at the Seven Churches of Glendalough. It lays bare his prejudices against Roman Catholicism, although it is worth bearing in mind that it was not so much religion *per se* as politics – Ireland's ambiguous place within the United Kingdom of his time and Catholic Ireland's potential threat to Britain's Protestant constitution – which underlay Wordsworth's aversion to Catholic 'superstitions' in Glendalough. Here is Wordsworth writing to his brother Christopher (then master of Trinity College, Cambridge) from Wexford on 5 September 1829:

You have heard probably of the 7 Churches. The ground so famous for the Miracles of St Kevin we visited; and were highly interested – a deep valley with two Lochs or Pools, the one of the Serpent unholy, in which no one will bathe, and the other sacred. Near three of the Churches of which alone considerable Remains are left stands a very lofty round Pillar, very much like a light House, but as are the churches, of extreme antiquity. While we were look[ing] round upon this sad solemn and romantic scene with a train of poor hangers-on, and our guide – a woman about 30 years of age passed bearing a sickly child in her arms.

Mr Otway a Protestant clergyman who along with Professor Hamilton had kindly come from Dublin to meet us here, knowing what she must be about, put to her some questions; from which we learned that she was going to dip the Child in a part of the stream, called St Kevin's pool – to cure its lameness; she had already come four long miles to do this –

¹¹ Ibid., 138.

a trouble she had taken three times already, and said her prayers nine times kneeling on 4 corner[s] of the rocks in the bed of the River, in succession. Afterwards I went to see this Pool. Near it stands a sacred thorn which I found hung with innumerable little rags of linen cloth – small slips, hung there to wear away in the weather; from a belief that as the rags consume – the disease will abate also – It would have affected you very much to see this poor confiding creature – and to hear the manner in which she expressed her faith in the goodness of God and St Kevin. What would one not give to see among protestants such devout reliance on the mercy of their Creator, so much resignation, so much piety – so much simplicity and singleness of mind, purged of the accompanying Superstitions: The tenderness with which she spoke of the Child and its sufferings and the sad pleasure with which she detailed the progress it had made towards recovery would have moved the most insensible – but after all her resignation to the event be it what it might was uppermost. After nine of these visits had been performed, and all the rites gone through the sufferer assumed that God and St Kevin would either *mend* or *end* the Child – What the result will be I fear, that if she continue as poor as she is, after this is done, the Child will perish through neglect when care, it is concluded, can be of no use. Now the question is Do the Priests encourage these superstitions, or do they only tolerate them: I cannot tell – but it is lamentable that near the 7 Churches Protestants were once numerous, but Popery has gained ground fast upon them by neglect, etc. As Mr Otway was relating to us, among the tombs and ruins, several of the wildest Legends – an odd half-mad half-drunk protestant, a fully well dressed Man, and of good property – exclaimed – Aye gentleman that’s all regular sense, and not a babble of nonsense. But whether he meant that it was the true tradition, or that the things had actually happened, I cannot tell.¹²

That Wordsworth could not fully sympathise with Catholic customs in Ireland is regrettable. Nevertheless he would have understood and appreciated Quillinan’s poem ‘What Have You Seen in Wicklow’,

¹² Ibid., 121–2.

which portrays the county's various autumnal landscapes in picturesque terms:

All that the heart has ever charm'd or awed;
Scenes for Salvator; landscapes fit for Claude;
Banditti's glens; monks' temples; hermits' cells;
Lone streams where nuns might bathe; and lovers' dells;
Tall hills whose swelling bosoms heave with woods;
And rocks with their rude children, the fresh floods,
Plunging and leaping from their parents' arms –
These have I seen – with all the added charms
Of tint and shade that Autumn could impart
To captivate the eye, and fix the heart.¹³

Brandon C. Yen

*Brandon C. Yen holds a PhD in English Literature from Cambridge University and is the author of *The Excursion and Wordsworth's Iconography*. Having worked from 2017 to 2019 in UCC as a Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellow, he is currently writing a book entitled "*Wordsworth's Ireland*", from which this article is drawn, which probes into Wordsworth's connections with Ireland in all respects- biographical, socio-political, literary, religious and touristic.*

¹³ *Poems by Edward Quillinan* (London, 1853), 48.

Childhood memories

I grew up on a farm in Carrigower, the youngest of a family of five. Thinking back 75 or more years to when I was helping my father stuck turf in Carrigower Bog, it was a noisy place - many larks in the sky - always amazed when they dropped like a stone and could stop 1 to 2 feet above the ground near their nests. Sadly the last lark I heard was in 2015. Many stonechats, warblers and meadow pipits have also gone together with curlew, duck and lapwing. I remember my father zigzagging across the field to avoid the lapwing nests. Also gone are the snipe and woodcock that sat tight until almost upon them, getting as close as a yard before they got up, the first sight of one was large blackish eyes like marbles.

I also remember large flocks of golden plover in the fields and on the bog in Autumn - never seen now. Fieldfares have taken their place. Their arrival is usually heard first as they are noisy, but they are not in flocks as large as the plover. For years they have stripped the holly trees of berries - irritatingly preferring the red berries to the yellow berries!

I left in 1953 but came back permanently in 1982 to a new house in Carrigower. Already then, I noticed changes in the natural world.

Near my new house, I noticed a pathway used by badgers. On my walks I was always looking out for the carcass of one. Asked my brothers, if they had ever seen a carcass of one. Many years later on 'Mooney goes Wild', a man phoned in, he was watching a sett for four years from up a tree. This evening, a badger came out, gave up high-pitched sound he'd never heard before, a second one came out dragging a dead badger. They brought it a few yards away then began digging around - going round and round until the carcass was low enough - then filled it in. Wonderful, finally the answer to my question!

Yesterday evening I saw two wrens - had not seen any for years. My mind went back to preteen years and home. There was a lean to shed at the bottom of the yard. It was thatched - now has a corrugated roof. Over the door was a wren's nest. I had noticed many wrens were going into the nest. One cold winter evening, decided to see how many were in it. Tapped on the thatch inside - 19 were in it. In my mind's eye I can still see that white feather covering - the entrance - no human could have put it there better. That nest was there in use when I left home many years later.

In the summer my brothers and I spent a lot of time in the river fishing. Jim was great at hand fishing. He could tickle the trout into a position to catch it. He lay on the bank and gradually brought his hands together - if trout was there, he usually caught it. We often set nightlines. Jim being an early riser went to check on them. Whatever we caught we had for breakfast. My nightlines were occasionally successful.

We went to Calary National School on the Commons. It was 3 ½ miles across bogs and fields from Carrigower crossing two streams and the Vartry river at the Moate, then onto the road to the Commons. We learned to 'long' jump from an early age! We passed through Roche's yard. On the way home, if Jack was in the yard- he often invited us in to the house that was thatched. We were treated to shop bread, plenty of butter sprinkled with sugar. The thought of it now is good! As we sat round the hearth, the crickets would come out and chirp to us, probably enjoying our crumbs. At home we rarely had shop bread. Jack made his own butter. He used a large sweet jar with cork stopper and through it a plunger - the butter was as thick as the bread! For his tea, he would have at least six eggs. He worked very hard, schooled and trained racehorses. Some were well-known. When he was eating was the only time he did not have a cigarette in his mouth. He lit one from another. I don't remember him ever being ill. Visited him when came on holiday. He was almost 100 when he died.

It was always a happy day, on our way home from school, when we saw tents going up in Donnelly's field - Calary Races. Had time off school. I cannot remember how many days the races lasted. They were gruelling races for the horses- 4 miles and more over many ditches. I cannot remember ever seeing a horse put down, perhaps I was too young to notice not all horses came home.

It hurts me to think back and realise that so much is gone. The silence over the bog, no 'hairy mollies' and dung beetles. No cowpats or sheep currants, both are in a permanent state of mild diarrhoea from eating present day grass. Will we ever be able to restore the natural world?

Pat Fisher

The Croppy's Grave, Kilafin Laragh

A site known as the Croppy's grave lies just outside Laragh Village as you head towards Annamoe. It is situated a short distance off the roadside to the left in an area that was known as Walsh's Bog. This area is now planted with trees and in a small clearing the grave is marked by a collection of irregular stones with a simple slate cross at the top, near the foot of the grave is a large granite stone inscribed with the year 1798. For more than two centuries a strong local oral tradition has managed to keep the knowledge of this site alive.



Over the intervening years there have been various written articles and accounts relating to who may lie in this grave and the circumstances of his death. Like many accounts of such events that have survived by being handed down orally from generation to generation there may be some variations in the retelling of the story. I thought it might be a useful exercise to gather all the written records that I could locate and compile them in a single article.

Roundwood & District Historical & Folklore Journal

In Journal no.14 printed in 2003, the following reference appeared:

The Croppy's Grave by Máirín Lindsay

There is a Croppy's Grave in Laragh. To get to it go to St. John's Church in Laragh. The field is approximately at the back of the Church and to the right going towards Mr. And Mrs. Walsh's farmhouse. In my memory it was on a small incline in the field, exactly as it is now on the main road. The headstone is slate, and the grave is marked by rough stones.

It would appear that Máirín Lindsay's recollection of the grave rekindled strong local interest in the site as the following year in Journal No. 15 the first article was titled:

Croppy Grave Commemoration Laragh 2003 by Daithí Ó hÓgáin, with photographs by Agatha de Valera Mansfield, and Wendy Mullen.

The following extracts are taken from this article:

The line of folklore preserved by Mrs Maureen Lindsay was first told to her about seventy years ago by the then elderly couple who lived in a thatched cottage beside Laragh village.

The story avers that an unidentified United Irishman was accosted near Laragh during the 1798 Rebellion by two yeomen who shot him on sight when he would not halt. It transpired that the rebel was a messenger who consumed the dispatch entrusted to him before expiring from wounds. It is alleged that the incident was reported to a yeoman officer who directed that the body be interred, presumably adjacent to where it had fallen, as there was no effort to bring the corpse to consecrated ground.

Thanks should be extended to Mrs Lindsay for her persistence over the years in keeping the memory of the 'croppy grave' at Laragh alive. Also her wish to witness recognition of the site in her lifetime.

The piece was accompanied by three pages of photographs of the commemoration ceremony, these were taken by Agatha de Valera Mansfield and Wendy Mullen, and the original photographs of the event are still in the safe keeping of Agatha de Valera Mansfield.

Irish Folklore Commission Copybook Collection.

During the 1930s the Irish Folklore Commission with the cooperation of the Department of Education enlisted the schoolchildren of Ireland to collect folklore in their home districts, the accounts were recorded in copybooks that were sent to the

archives of the Folklore Commission. This invaluable resource is now available on www.duchas.ie/en/cbes

Within the copybooks submitted from the local schools I found the following three references to the Croppy's grave:

Annacarter School, Mullinaveige, Teacher: Mary C. Mulligan
Recorded under the heading of 'Archaeological Ruins and Monuments':

In a field near Laragh, a small village between Glendalough and Annamoe there is still to be seen a small stone cross it is said that it was erected over a soldier's or "Croppy Boys" grave

Glendalough School, Teacher - Máire Breathnach
Recorded under the heading – 'Historical Traditions'

During the time of the '98 rebellion, there was a man named O'Toole who was going with a message to the rebels, there were British soldiers in Laragh Castle and the soldiers on guard there shot him as he walked along the Kilifine road. He was buried by the women of the locality in Walshe's bog and the place is known as the Croppy man's grave.

He is supposed to be an O'Toole from Aughowell [Aghowle]

Information was collected from Patrick Walsh, Insurance Agent, aged 52, of Kilafeen,

Elsewhere in the copybook collection from the same school -

In '98 the croppy man was going with a message to the rebels, some English soldiers were in Laragh Castle and they saw him and they shot him, and the women of the district buried him because all the men were fighting.

Information collected from Patrick Byrne, aged 40 years, Home Assistance Officer, Derrybawn, Co. Wicklow.

The Wicklow People Newspaper

1898- Edition Saturday May 28th - An article in this edition of the paper gave details of the proposed plans of the Roundwood and Glendalough district for the commemoration of the Centenary of the 1798 Rebellion, the following refers to the plans for the Laragh district -

.....and that Laragh would remember the lovely Croppy's grave and that Messrs. S. Nolan and T. Byrne would pass the signal south from Maoilin, which if the night was fine, would be in sight of Tara Hill in Wexford.

1910 - Newspaper edition Saturday 17th December contained the following letter written by

Wm. J. Duffy:

Rebel or Yeoman?

Friend or foe, rebel or yeo? This is the conundrum that bothers the knowledge of many in and around and far beyond the neighbourhood of Glendalough, having its origins in the matter of a lonely grave which lies in (?) bog, on the lands of Mr. Patrick Walsh, about ¼ mile nor-west of Laragh, on the road to Annamoe. The grave has been known throughout the passing years since ill-fated 98 down to the present as 'the Croppy's Grave'. It is lone and desolate, with no adornment to attract the eye of a stranger, save a plain little slate stone, on which is carved a tiny cross; a few white stones such as one would see in a garden rockery embroider the wild little mound. The lone tenant sleeps there. Tradition has it that it contains the remains of a man named O'Toole who came from Aghowle district Ashford, and who was one of the insurgents who took up arms in defence of liberty against the King's troops in those "dark and evil days".

The insurgents were encamped in the vicinity of Laragh, and O'Toole was placed on picket at an angle of the road close to where the grave now is, to watch the advances of the red-coats, information of whose approach in this direction had been intimated to the insurgents. Having become worn out and fatigued it is said O'Toole lay down and slept at his post, but the sound of approaching footsteps close by aroused him. Jumping up in a dazed condition he looked to the road where he saw a scout of the enemy. The main body of soldiers in view followed closely. Realising he had betrayed, or surmising, so he like the brave M'Alister at Bernamuck risked the

sacrifice of his life to save his comrades. He levelled his gun at the scout and fired: so that the shot would, perchance, lessen the strength of the foe and alarm his own companions. The shot was fired, the soldier fell, but alas! the main body coming up just then retreat was impossible. The faithful O'Toole paid the penalty of his heroism, as he was literally riddled with bullets. The soldiers, if such we may call them, pursued their way and left both the body of O'Toole and their comrade stark, cold and bloody where they lay. Now comes the solution. Opinions varied, and still vary, as to the occupant of the grave.

The recent celebration of the Anniversary of the execution of Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien, when a wreath was placed on the grave (made by Mr. C. Malton Glendalough) has opened up discussions and controversy anew. Whilst nine tenths of the populace believe that the ashes of a bold insurgent lies beneath the sod there are many who content that it is not a "croppy" but a yeoman who was interred there. Some heated arguments have been employed in clearing up the matter, but those who maintain that the grave contains a "croppy" have stubborn opponents who claim for the yeoman, not for love of the enemy, but just to keep the history intact. Some few years back the Holt, Harman, and Thomas' '98 Association, of which I had the honour to be hon. Secretary, was busy engaged in collecting the unwritten local records of '98, and though not entirely successful in clearing up the doubt respecting the "croppy grave" from well-founded and authenticated facts became convinced that the grave is that of a '98 rebel. As to the tenancy of a yeoman, or British soldier, they conclude that the yeoman shot by O'Toole, may have been buried along with O'Toole. It was the women of Laragh who made the grave and buried O'Toole's body as the men were away with the insurgents.*

I am wholly in accord with my colleagues of the Holt, Harmon and Thomas Association, and the views they advance, namely, that O'Toole was interred in the "croppy's grave", and if the yeoman, for humanity's sake, was also buried there, may they rest in peace.*

Wm. J Duffy.

1914 – Newspaper Edition Saturday 5th December - it would appear from articles printed in the Wicklow People Newspaper around this time each year that it was a common practice at that time in the Laragh District in early December to gather to remember the

Manchester Martyrs and the Croppy's Grave was a principal location for this remembrance ceremony. The following extract is taken from an article by *Derrybawn* (aka Mr. Wm. J Duffy)

.... The procession was marshalled in the village square at 8pm. The band followed a blazing tar barrel carried on a huge bearer by stalwart hands. Following this came a stout company of well-disciplined Volunteers equipped with bandoliers and rifles, a quartet of whom displayed glittering bayonets which flickered and glittered in the glow of the blazing torches. The general public brought up the rear, and a very imposing celebration was thus constituted.

On arrival at the Croppy's Grave the band struck up the "Memory of the Dead" and a trio of wreaths were placed on the lonely mound where sleeps a hero of '98 of the Clan O'Toole. The Volunteers then went through a series of evolutions that looked charmingly picturesque in the midst of such solitude, a deadly silence prevailing the while, broken only by the volley fired by the Volunteers over the Croppy's Grave.

The article then described the group's return to Laragh Village where speeches and music followed.

*The Holt, Harmon and Thomas Association mentioned above was an association which was set up in the local area around Roundwood and Glendalough following the centenary commemorations of the 1798 Rebellion. Mr Duffy was one of the major figures in the group. Their purpose was to acknowledge and commemorate the leading local persons who had played their part in the Rebellion, The association's name was taken from three such local heroes: Captain Joseph Holt, John Harmon and Andrew Thomas. Part of their work appears to have been the collection of local oral accounts of events to try and verify the validity of local stories relating to the Rebellion.

It seems from Mr Duffy's letter in 1910 that they had satisfied themselves that the person buried in the Croppy's Grave was an O'Toole man from the townland of Aghowle, which is about 9 miles away, and that there was a slight possibility that the un-named yeoman he shot may also lie with him in the same grave.

Margaret Connolly

1940 Wartime Recipes

Banana Parsnip

Ingredients:

2 Medium sized parsnips
4 drops of banana essence

Equipment:

1 banana shaped mould
1 medium sized bowl
1 medium sized pot
1 fork

Method:

Boil parsnips in just enough water to cover them. Do not allow them to become water soaked. Strain and mash them. Add the essence, and while still warm place in the mould. Leave to cool for two hours. Turn this out onto a plate. This can now be spread or sliced to make sandwiches.

Hawthorn tea

Ingredients:

2 oz (60 g) of dried tea
4 oz (115 g) Hawthorn leaves

Equipment:

1 very sharp knife
1 chopping board
1 large plate

Method:

Chop the fresh Hawthorn leaves finely. Spread the leaves evenly to dry in the sun. Turn the dry leaves on top to the bottom periodically to ensure the leaves are fully dry. Mix dried tea and chopped leaves. You have now trebled your tea.

Kathleen Farrell

Kindly shared by Monica Farrell from the Recipe Book of her late Mother in Law, Kathleen Farrell

Fifty years at the Bees

My earliest encounter with bees was at my uncle's, Us children were playing in the orchard when he ran past trying to escape a cloud of bees. They ignored us. Next time was in 1968, arriving in Roundwood, I lent Sgt Shanley a hand in his vegetable garden. Unfortunately he kept bees there too. I worked at right angles to their line of flight. Soon the bees were hopping off me so I got many a sting. When Shanley was transferred to Greystones, he offered me a hive for free. My answer was 'Not even if it came with £100!'



What changed me was a section of honey left in by Joe Taylor as he cycled past one day. It was gorgeous and that started me off. I got my breakfast, dinner and tea at McCabes and Billy got me going with a hive. He was a good beekeeper, the old style, brought into it by Fitzsimons who was over the Waterworks, an interesting man by all accounts. He used no gear, sleeves rolled up, but he used smoke, filling the yard with it. Sections would go on in spring and off in the September, catch a swarm if he could. That was the extent of his beekeeping, which is nearly as good as any.

But like many a new beekeeper, my bees died out that first winter. I probably meddled too much. There was also a whole new language to be learnt where things were not always what they meant to outsiders - CDB, cells, commercials, drones, excluders, extractors, frames, pollen, queens, sections, supers, workers.

Then, there were many good beekeepers in the area. Some quiet, just with a few hives to keep the family going, others more energetic with hives they took to the heather and making a small income from the sale of honey. Most were members of the Roundwood Beekeepers Association. This was linked to the Federation of Irish Beekeepers' Associations (FIBKA) that gave automatic insurance cover as well as a monthly journal. Some joined just for the insurance, but others came for the meetings and demonstrations. The Association also

acted as a kind of cooperative for buying essentials and sharing equipment.

The monthly meetings in the Old School were gas – just to watch the reactions. Some liked to teach, notably Joe Martin. He had hives in Carrigower, but lived in Blackrock where he also had hives. Joe was very technically knowledgeable and had a weekly bee column in the Irish Independent. He was often driven out by his wife, a patient lady who quietly sat at the back, knitting. This meant he could have a drink before heading back to town. He frequently spoke at these meetings. I still chuckle at the night that Joe was pontificating about some newfangled idea that worked in Blackrock. Mutters could be heard such as ‘that would craze the bees’. Paddy Jackson from Laragh dozed off, and came to saying, ‘I wish that bloody fella would stop talking’ in that loud whisper that many hard of hearing have. There was a ripple round the room, the knitting needles just went faster.

Paddy was retired from a very senior position in the British Colonial Service having worked in Malaysia. He was very experimental. In summer he would have demonstrations at his hives. He brought in Buckfast queens and introduced us to the Jenter queen rearing method.

The Buckfast bees were very docile, beautiful gentle bees that you could stroke with the back of your hand. Joe got a Buckfast queen in the post but as he was going away, I took on to look after it, as Paddy did not have a spare hive. I invited some youngsters who were becoming interested in bees to come up. They were impressed and stayed a bit longer than planned. As I was running late, I rushed to close the hive. I just knew I had trapped a bee but it was only one...Joe’s Buckfast queen!

Paddy and Joe liked trying new progressive ideas. Both could sound very persuasive about the benefits of these, but luckily there was a quiet voice of reason, Andy Kavanagh. Andy always listened intently and then quietly said it would not work. Nine times out of ten, he was right. I found one thing wrong with Andy. He always said a swarm could not be caught after 3pm. It was only after I got more into beekeeping that I realised this was true at Andy’s place, as his

hives were all facing the one way. Where I am, I get more light and swarms later in the day. Just showed that there is no simple recipe for successful bee keeping.

There were many others who came to the meetings as wise, quieter all working to their own recipes and local knowledge. This was shared later in the pub.

Another I am very grateful to Bob Dagg as he was so knowledgeable with a unique feel of when jobs should be done. Though a youngster like myself, he taught me so much.

Bob and I would bring the bees down to the rape at Stringers in Newtown. The season was a bit later than now, and a great boost for filling the lean bit of the year. I remember coming back one Sunday with 27 supers full of rape honey, Jack Roche of Knockraheen was on the road, I pulled up as proud as punch to show him. When I opened up the car, bees started to fly out. He said nothing, never looked at the honey, but was disgusted that I was not concerned about the poor bees, and thought me heartless for saying they would be happy to go to my hives at home. He was so gentle with his, if he found one astray, it would go in a match box and then be put back in the hive.

I always take the bees to the heather later in the year. Both honeys have their own challenges. Rape honey has to be caught early from the comb as it crystallises and sets rockhard sometimes even in the hive. Heather honey also sets but remains soft. I prefer the taste of heather honey. In between the rape and heather seasons, the bees collect nectar from anything around. The blessing of this mixed flower honey is it is liquid.

I was often called to help out. John Keenan would ring if there was a swarm, as Joe, his father was in his 80s at that time and his sight was not good. Sometimes there would be 2 or 3 swarms, his hives were falling apart but patched with a sheet of galvanised but he still got his sections. This day, a swarm was on an apple tree branch. I put a hive on the branch over the bees saying they would move up into the hive. I did not allow for the weight of both honey and bees. When I got back later, Joe was fixing out the tables on the decking. I asked how

he had gone on. ‘They fell down as the branch had bent with them. I gathered them up as best I could, I could not see the half of them.’ I could see blood coming out one ear and his head was destroyed with stings, but he swore he was all right except for the buzzing in the bleeding ear. When I looked in there was still one very cross bee in there and loads more stings!

As many of these beekeepers including well known Roundwood names like Jack Halpin and George Lawless who sold his sections at Sally Gap, to name a few, passed away, the Association nearly died but Willie O’Byrne, his wife and myself took to running the Association. At some meetings, only the 3 of us. This did not discourage Willie who is now considered one of the leading lights of Irish beekeeping, encouraging the return to the native Irish honey bee. Delighted now that the Association is in thriving with a new bunch with the same generous spirit but now also using social media.

These ramblings has made me realise I am now the old codger. However, unrepentant, I will still talk to my bees. It is not many of my age can say that they are surrounded by swarms of females working for them.

Tom Jackson

The Knockatemple Bell

First discovered in 1879 by Henry Keogh of Knockraheen House, the 1000 year old Knockatemple Bell was subsequently “lost”. Thanks to the efforts of Cormac Bourke of the Ulster Museum and members of the Roundwood Historical Society, it was found to have been in the possession of the Archdiocese of Dublin since the 1920s. The bell now forms part of the Glendalough exhibition in the National Museum of Ireland.



Images Pre and Post Restoration

