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# An Coinneal



LOUISBURGH

## List of Foundation Members

*We again express our gratitude to the following readers who have shown their appreciation of this magazine in a practical way:*

Mr. Austin Burns, Coventry  
Father John Burns, Roxbury, Mass.  
The Casey family, Liverpool  
Mr. Coleman and Mrs. Connolly, Chicago  
Miss Ann Carr, Framingham, Mass.  
Miss Donnelly, Leigh  
Most Reverend James Fergus, Bishop of Achonry  
Mr. Joseph Fergus, Cromwell, Connecticut  
Misses Nora and Mary Gibbons, Brockton, Mass.  
Mr. John F. Grodon, Boston  
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## An *Comneal*

Subscription: Single copies—Three Shillings and Sixpence (half a dollar); by Post Four Shillings

**JOHN J. PHILBIN**

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Confectioner Newspaper

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Fishing Tackle Hardware and Cement

NUMBER FIVE

CHRISTMAS 1967

*An Choinneal* is a periodical of Kilgeever Parish. It has appeared in alternate years since 1959.

*Editor:* Father Leo Morahan

*Editorial Board:*

Father Joseph Moran, B.D., Doctor Columb McHugh

*Secretary:* Mrs. Clementine Lyons, N.T.

*Treasurer:* Mr. Séamus Durkan

**Subscription: Single copies—Three Shillings and Sixpence (half a dollar); By Post Four Shillings**

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## Letters to the Editor

MY HUSBAND is from Galway, but has a lot of friends here from Louisburgh besides his in-laws. . . . How thoughtful and wonderful an idea for Louisburgh people all over the world to receive a magazine written about our own first parish, Kilgeever, where we were first taught to have a strong faith in God. We would like to become foundation members and have a copy of each issue as it is published.

(MRS.) MARY CONNOLLY (née Durkan), Chicago

Coinneal-time is around again, if I recall correctly. I'm enclosing a couple dollars to cover my copy. I suppose that, like ourselves, the laity are a little confused at home over the changed liturgy in the Mass. . . . Each parish here had classes beforehand and now they have laymen in the pulpit directing us along. We're all wondering who would be chosen to direct the congregation at home!

(MRS.) VERA CAWLEY (née Cannon), Philadelphia

I WONDER would any of my old neighbours in the West remember the words of the song "Along the Plains of Mayo"? It was a song of an exile from Clare Island and it began "Adieu, Adieu, Clare Island, a long and last adieu". I would love to see that song published.

(MRS.) MARGARET COYNE, Balrath, Navan

If any reader can let us have this song, we shall be glad to publish it in a later issue—ED.

I AM just a little familiar with Louisburgh; and a very good friend of my family comes from there. I haven't as yet read all of *An Choinneal*, but I am

not a little impressed by it. Such a fine magazine from such a (seemingly) sleepy town! . . . I particularly enjoyed the account of his American holiday by Father Pat Prendergast; many such adventures I have myself experienced.

M. F., New York

Thank you! (with, of course, a certain obvious reservation!)—ED.

I ENCLOSE a clipping from the *Framingham News* to tell you of the party we had for Patrick McNally on his 90th birthday. Pat says he looks forward to his 106th birthday, as his mother celebrated. Austin Carr attended the party and sang a song for the occasion.

(FATHER) JAMES F. DARCY, Brighton, Mass

Father Jim, I suggest that you tell Pat what his mother said to Father Martin (then curate in Louisburgh) when she reached the age of a hundred. "I'm going to make the two hundred, Father", she said; "after all, amn't I stronger now than when I began the first hundred?"

I THOROUGHLY enjoyed the Louisburgh magazine and indeed was misty-eyed travelling down "memory lane" via its pages. I laughed so much at those letters that I got up in the reading of them to 'phone my sister, Frances, and read her excerpts; for instance, the *gleic* on Jack Benny! She couldn't understand me, I was laughing so. I sent her my copy of *An Choinneal* and she more than enjoyed it, too. And she agreed with me that reading about Martin Hehir's sugar-stick really made our mouths water!

(MRS.) JESSIE O'LEARY (née McGreal), Boston

# MONEY MATTERS..

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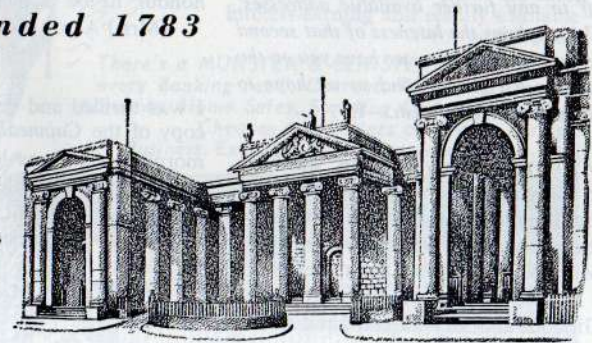
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I WAS born and raised in Askelane. My daughter visited Ireland last summer and, of course, visited Louisburgh. There she bought this (1965) copy of the parish magazine. If you have any extra copies of the 1961 and 1963 issues I would very much like to have them. Please list me as a foundation member.  
(MRS.) SARAH (HALLINAN) MONAGLE  
Everett, Mass.

THANK YOU very much for the copy of the magazine. I enjoyed it very much, reading about the parish and the people at home. I enclose two dollars and would like to receive a copy of future issues as they come out.

NORA McDONOUGH,  
Winnetka, Illinois

*Thank you! You are now on our mailing list.*—ED.

I JUST received your magazine, *An Choinneal*, which I received from home nine months ago. Speed up your mailing and mail them as soon as you publish them, not a year later. One dollar enclosed.

MARY M. COYNE,  
Worcester, Mass.

*Sorry, Mary. We have no excuse, but we have an explanation. Immediately after publication, we deal with our mailing list and local market. Later, if copies are still left over, we mail these off to any further available addresses. This explains the lateness of that second copy. Now, however, we have you on the mailing list proper, and so we hope to comply with your wish.*—ED.

MY MOTHER, Mary Gibbons, was born in Ballyhip, close to Louisburgh. Her grandmother was a McHale. I visited there in summer 1965 and stayed at the Murrisk Abbey Hotel for three weeks. I had a warm welcome from the Gibbons and McHale clans and feel an

integral part of Ireland. We lived in Clinton, Mass., and the last issue of *An Choinneal* had an article in it naming Clinton people that I know very well; but that is not my main reason for enjoying the magazine. The stories my mother told me, and what I saw personally when visiting, have given me a very strong desire to know more. . . . My feelings naturally want me to know more about the land my mother came from.

Father Prendergast drove me around Louisburgh and I met an amazing old gentleman who knew my mother and all her brothers. Mother had five brothers—two of them lived in Clinton. This gentleman's name was *O'Reilly*.

Your list of Foundation Members intrigued me. Congressman Philbin is from my home-town and, as I plan an East-African trip, I noticed a Mr. McHale who lives in Ethiopia.

The highlights of my trip to Europe were Ireland and Lourdes, for they seem to have left a spiritual impact that will remain with me the rest of my life. . . . I believe sentiment will find me in County Mayo again!

(MRS.) NAN MAYHEW,  
Key Largo, Florida

I AM writing enclosing five pounds from the Casey family to become a foundation member. *An Choinneal* is a magazine to be proud of and an honour to be a member.

(MRS.) ALICE CASEY (née Durkan),  
Liverpool

I WAS thrilled and delighted to find a copy of the *Coinneal* in the mail this morning. As I was looking over it, I thought that I should write to let you know what excellent reading it is and what fond memories it brings back to me.

(MRS.) ANNE MALLEY (née Joyce),  
Dorchester

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MY MOTHER'S father, Redmond Lyons, came from Accony, and my mother has always talked about Louisburgh and Mayo. We were fortunate to be able to tour Ireland some years ago and visit all the places we had heard about. We felt right at home in Mayo. While in South and East Africa in 1965, I stopped to visit mother's cousins from Louisburgh, Father John O'Malley in Port Elizabeth and Father Redmond Lyons in Nairobi. They were kind enough to send mother a copy of *An Choinneal*; and she was so delighted with your publication—as were we all—that she would like to enrol as a foundation member.

MARGARET O'BRIEN,  
Crystal Lake, Ill.

*Thank you, Margaret. We hope that this and future issues will give your mother such pleasant reading.*—Ed.

THANK YOU very much for sending the last edition of the magazine. Kindly send the next one, for I enjoy reading it very much. It is wonderful. Since I wrote last, I lost my husband, William McNamara (of Carramore). Please pray for him.

MRS. W. McNAMARA,  
Bronx, New York

LOUISBURGH is the birthplace of my father, Patrick J. Ryder. My uncle, Peter M. Ryder, lives there. My grandfather was John Ryder and my grandmother Brigid Corrigan. Please enrol me as a foundation member.

MARY RYDER HARVEY,  
Linden, New Jersey

I HAD heard bad reports of the last issue, so I was very pleased when it came to hand, as I felt it was a very successful one and did not warrant the dismal verdict I had received. I think the photographs were much appreciated though the quality could have been better. I did not realize how important

photographs were to those who had been a long time away until I returned from Ireland in 1963. So I think some kind of photographic survey should be a regular feature.

MICHAEL J. DURKAN,  
Middletown, Conn.

I STILL enjoy looking through old issues of *An Choinneal*. I think it has achieved its purpose of "stirring the pulse of Louisburgh life wherever it beats and to give it a heart of unity". I will be looking forward to future issues, even to that issue ten years from now which you mentioned on page eighteen of the last one!

Toledo, Ohio

CONGRATULATIONS once again on another issue of *An Choinneal* which I read and enjoyed from cover to cover one Sunday morning. . . . About a year ago I was talking to a young Dominican priest from Chicago, Father Kilian John O'Malley. His father is from Cloontey and his mother from Kilsallagh. He was asking me about the meanings of those placenames. Since I did not know them I said: "Now that would make a good article for a future issue of *An Choinneal*". So that is a suggestion for some historian of the parish. . . . God bless you in your work and God bless everyone in Kilgeever Parish is the prayer of a daughter of the parish.

SISTER JANE ANTHONY (O'MALLEY),  
O.S.U.,

Lima, Ohio

P.S. I did very poorly on *Keep your Word!*

*Well, Sister, we have attempted the place-names on page 61.*—Ed.

Leabhar állainn íontach é. Is truaigh nach bhfuil a leithéid in ngach par-roiste.

MAIGHREAD BEAN Uí STANDUN,  
An Spidéal.

## In this Issue . . .

	page
Letters to the Editor	4
Our Contributors	10
Astir!; Candle to our Shames (Editorials)	11
Father John Burke, P.P.	J.G. 19
The People and their House	P. W. O'Toole 22
Journey into History	John D. O'Dowd 24
Diluted Dilemma	Sister M. Philomena 30
Schoolday Memories of Oldhead	Martin J. O'Reilly 32
Letter from Home	33
Keep Your Word!	37
A Few Hours on Clare Island	Claude Kosmann 39
Encounter on Croagh Patrick	Michael Scott 41
Tales of the West of Ireland	review by Etienne Rynne 43
Keep Your Word?	46
Saying it with Starch	50
<i>Seanmóir na nAithreacha Naofa</i>	ó Liam Ó Máille 53
<i>Tom the Cobbler</i>	Pádraic Burke 56
Passing of a Storyteller	Editor 57
Story for Bedtime	Michael J. Burke 58
The Place-names	Dáithí MagRael 61
Parish Review: Ordinations, Marriages, Survey, Committees, Deaths, etc.	63
<i>The "Playboy of the Western World"</i>	91
Requiem for a Fellow	from <i>The Mayo News</i> 92
Terminus	Father Leo Morahan 96
Holy Land Journey	Father Pat Prendergast 105
Index to <i>An Choinneal</i> 1959-1967	122

## Our Contributors

**Mr. Pádraic Burke** is a native of Bridge Street, who is Director of Studies at the College of Surgical Chiropractic, Cork.

**"J.G."** is a parish priest who has been a friend of the late Father John Burke for many years.

**Mr. Claude Kosmann** was a visitor to the parish from Paris during 1966.

**Mr. Dáithí MagRael** is a native of Tallabán district and has been for many years principal teacher at Cregganbán School. He is an authority on Irish language and is a keen student of local history.

**Mr. John O'Dowd** lived for many years at Falduff. He was clerk of Louisburgh Petty sessions (1908-'21) and District Court Clerk for Westport area 1923-'55. In an earlier *Choinneal* he told of his experiences in the San Francisco earthquake.

**Mr. Martin O'Reilly** was born in Chapel Street and now lives in Westport where he is employed with P. J. Kelly, Ltd. He has always kept a live interest in the history and current affairs of his native parish.

**Mr. P. W. O'Toole** has retired for many years from the detective branch of the British Police Force. He has been very successful with gardening as a hobby, and has already contributed a humorous "suspense" story to *An Choinneal* (1963).

**Father Pat Prendergast, D.D.**, is headmaster at the Secondary School of Kylemore Abbey, where he is also chaplain. He has written for many numbers of *An Choinneal*.

**Etienne Rynne** is a regular reviewer for the Dublin Journal *Hibernia*. The present review is reproduced here by kind permission of the Editor of that journal.

**Sister M. Philomena (Scanlon)** is a native of Louisburgh at present in the convent of the Mercy Order at Mulranny.

**Mr. Michael Scott** is a native of Bridge Street who, having got his Leaving Certificate, has just begun to study medicine at University College, Galway.

*We wish to express our sincere thanks to Mr. Liam Lyons (photographer), Westport, for many prints made available to us for this issue.*

## Astir!

SINCE THE publication of the last issue of *An Choinneal*, the most important event in the temporal affairs of the parish was the address by Father James McDyar in the Parochial Hall in Louisburgh, in February, 1967. Most important, we say, in the *temporal* affairs; and in the long run it may have far-reaching spiritual effects, too. Overseas readers may not yet be aware of Father McDyar's campaign. Father McDyar was a curate in the Donegal village of Glencolumbcille—a district which he transformed into one of modest but growing prosperity. He has now applied himself to a campaign which is being generally known as "the defence of the West." A quotation from his February talk in Louisburgh will give the pith of his beliefs and message:

Our policy is not to blame anybody, but to ask the people of the West to start working together. We will not reach prosperity unless we work together: our policy is based on this. Unless our "small people"—and that includes our shopkeepers—get together, the writing is on the wall for them.

There is, of course, nothing original in the call for unity: at parish level it has already been preached by Muintir na Tíre, perhaps even in a fuller form. Indeed the whole modern emphasis on unity in a wider and deeper context could be expected to produce, eventually, such local attitudes. But it is the application of this in the concrete circumstances that is of interest and of value in this current campaign. In our parish the practical working-out of the policy has been done through the three committees that have been formed—the Handcrafts, Farmers and Tourist committees—and success has been attained by every one of these. If the Handcrafts committee has up till now had more-apparent success than the farmers, the reason may well be that their commodities are, by nature, of quicker return. Few of us would wish to see any industry out-do our farming. The work of the Farmers' committee will undoubtedly bear fruit; more slowly, it is quite probable, but then more permanently. The worth and activity of that committee has been the subject of comment in the context of a summer television programme from Louisburgh:



however, the facts that comment was *made* and was later challenged, are in themselves healthy signs of the sincerity and intent of the effort to implement the policy in the parish.

The tourism project is rather a different one. Its benefits to the economy of the parish are evident—a direct source of income in ready cash, the provision of a larger summer market and the ready money that this provides to grocers, butchers, merchants, etc. But there are in-built hazards in our accepting tourism, or rather in our *handling* tourism. One—not the basic one—is that we as a farming community might fail to produce the native provisions which would both make our boarding-houses more successful financially and give them the distinctive *flavour* which tourists expect when they have come so far west. To put it another way, it will be so easy for catering-houses to yield to the temptations of the tin-opener and the “sliced-pan” rather than go to the extra thought and effort of spending their money in the local market so that it can circulate within the parish to the extent of another family or two. A propos of this, there is plenty of room at present for one greengrocer or more, or for the revival of a weekly market, at least for the summer months. The problem is twofold, of course: will the foods *that can*, be raised by the community; and if it is will the consumer buy the home-produced foods (vegetables, for instance) even when it is more wholesome, though not as eye-catching as the imported? In practice, a minimum of organisation will be necessary, but it should be sufficient.

Tourism has another in-built hazard which we must avoid: it is the possibility of our falling down into line with other tourist resorts in regarding visitors to the parish as so many wallets; or, as someone has put it, as so many *sterling* characters! The Irish word *stocaire* has an encouragingly odious meaning in our society still. We must not allow our independence and wholesome self-respect to be conditioned by our own mis-use of a praise-worthy economic venture. The project of encouraging tourism can itself be a great boon, but the cost would be too high if (repeat, *if*) we were to barter for it our traditional, sincere generosity and welcome for visitors. A contributor to a symposium in the first issue of *An Choinneal* chose two examples of the Louisburgh way of life which he wished to see retained. They were *generosity* and *being ourselves*. The development of tourism will put both to the test; but, let it be added, there is no compelling reason why they should succumb.

There can be no doubt about the zeal with which the campaign

for the Defence of the West has been tackled in the parish; and there is quite a tangible amount of evidence of its guaranteed success. Let us not be too quick to despair if there should be—as there may well be—some reverses in one sphere or another in the coming year. It would, we think, be less than justice to describe this success without reference to, and acknowledgement of, the continued and energetic efforts of Father Joseph Moran (Louisburgh), who has fitted so much activity into an already exacting personal schedule. His talent for organisation has been a contributing factor in the success of practically all the projects that have been undertaken.

Perhaps the most praise-worthy decision by the leaders of the campaign at the outset was the decision to learn the problem by having a survey of the parish compiled (see p. 78). The material in this survey will be of interest and give food for thought and debate. The very execution of the survey, since it states our problems clearly in figures, is itself a sizeable contribution towards helping and rebuilding our parish. Those who carried out the work of the survey deserve our thanks and our acclaim. Setting ourselves to eradicate some of the “warts” on the face of our economy is obviously the next step. Father McDyar has given the lead; not merely theoretical lead, but one proved in the hard and exacting tests of practical economy in his own parish. He has also the gift of enthusiasm which can be so infectious and so effective in such an undertaking. “Let us hoist a standard, a beacon, a war cry, here”, he said in Louisburgh. “We are together, . . . working and enduring together, we shall conquer!”

## Candle to our Shames?

What, must I hold a candle to my shames  
They in themselves . . . are too, too light

—Jessica (*The Merchant of Venice*)

NO WRITTEN comments have been received on the article, *S.O.S.* contributed by Father Patrick O'Malley to our last issue. At first sight this is a disappointment; not just the disappointment of an editor seeking controversial material for a magazine; but disappointing in that people either do or do not agree with the points made by Father O'Malley, and should not remain silent about them. The general thesis of the article was discussed in many a gathering and—here's the rub!—there should have been some readers, even *one*,

who would accept our invitation to agree or disagree with the ideas which that very honest article put forward. One could visualize Father O'Malley's disappointment if his views, which must have caused him some personal effort to publicise, did not merit even a mention in subsequent issues of this magazine. Is it lack of interest? or of initiative? or conviction? or is it excess of caution? If so, we have yet a long way to go in using dialogue as a means of pooling our knowledge and our individual views of truth.

That is at first sight: fortunately, there is room for a second sight. A practical opportunity has now arisen, in the *Defence of the West* campaign, for what Father O'Malley calls "that united army dedicated to saving our parish from extinction." If the *Coinneal* article has so conditioned its readers that they were quicker to co-operate in the campaign, their tardiness in making public comment or contribution may be pardoned. In the absence of such comment, however, the editor takes the liberty of writing Father O'Malley an open, personal letter:

*My dear Father Pat,*

*This must be a record—to get a reply now to an article you wrote to me some three years ago! However, you understand the reasons. Besides, you know how I welcomed your article and I do not have to restate or underline that welcome. Indeed, as you well realize (for we have discussed this matter often already), I am writing to you only so that our readers can "look in over your shoulder". And, since we do understand each other's view-points, I'll have no lifting of birettas or swinging of thuribles: I'll just write what I mean.*

*You were right, Father Pat. Your observations and remembered experiences were very telling. I have heard, at one or two removes, that people agreed with you. The practical things, like the idea of cheaper manures, better wool prices, cheaper seeds, experiences of hard work and drudgery, really did appeal to them; and I feel that they were impressed and convinced by the suggestion that the *Coinneal* should take up those who paint ours as the ideal parish when, "in fact, the parish is dying before our eyes." I cannot say whether people relished these points for their valid worth, or merely in a mood of blaming others, or because of a hope of short-cuts to prosperity by grants and aids. But at least I hear that many people did agree with your ideas. I am sorry that no-one agreed with you in print: your article deserved more.*

*You were right, Father Pat. But, as I intimated in a note after your article in the last issue of *An Choinneal* I do not share all your view-points. I will confine myself here, of course, to how this magazine is implicated; and to explaining, as I think I can, how *An Choinneal* may appear to have failed in its role in the critical state of affairs that you describe. I shall put it first by way of analogy.*

*Both of us, I imagine, have had, in our younger years, experience of a simple event such as I shall refer to now. We were often cutting or "footing" turf on a summer's day and had an open-air fire on the turf-bank. As the sun began to move towards Muilrea we decided to prepare a meal but found that the fire had dwindled into cinders and was "in fact, dying before our eyes". We decided that if it was to live, and to serve its purpose, we must be gentle in our first approach. So we carefully collected what embers there were, set them in the driest fuel we could find, encouraged them with the gentlest of breathing, and screened off the stronger wind until our fire was healthy again.*

*The first *Coinneal* was a collecting of the embers, for the fire had indeed dwindled. The first editorial expressed as its set purpose "to afford a pooling of experience, of ideas, and suggestions for practical enterprise such as might benefit the home parish in any sphere whatsoever". To do this I was prepared at the outset to avoid excessive criticism, even self-criticism, of the parish and its people; to screen off the stronger winds, so that our embers might live. Perhaps I should have been ruthless from the beginning; but for the sake of fashioning an instrument which I thought, and think, can serve the parish well; and for the sake of survival (a very potent urge in all of us!) I did deliberately choose the gentler approach. Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí ("Praise youth and youth will flourish") was part of my motto; and in the world of writing we were then all young. Besides, with regard to the future of the parish, I was an optimist. I still am; but not excessively, I think. When someone bemoans that the vessel is half-empty I just choose to be happy though not satisfied, that it is at least half-full. And on reflection I feel that *An Choinneal* has had its quota of discriminating articles which did ask that the vessel be fuller.*

*In the very first issue (Christmas, 1959) for instance, there was a collection of eight individual views on the topic "What is Louisburgh's greatest need?"—exactly the kind of feature that you would wish to see. This by no means gave a too-healthy picture of an ideal parish, for among others the following needs were listed: farmers' clubs, tourism, faith in ourselves, setting-up of markets, afforestation, punctuality,*

reclamation of land, lack of selfishness, revival of fishing as an industry, education in agriculture, investment of our money at home, a turf-marketing board, improved social life, liming and fertilising of soil—a fair catalogue indeed! It is true that one contributor (incidentally, the only non-native of the eight) thought that Louisburgh “needs nothing”; but the same writer had suggestions about our needs in tourist accommodation, amenities and adult education. It is of interest now to go through this list of our needs, named in 1959, and to count how many of these have been seen to, in whole or in part, since then. Articles in later issues, such as those on surface-seeding, pig-farming, and one, “Are we peasants?”, must also have served to balance any exaggeration that could have appeared in writings—like Liam Maher’s—that extolled our virtues.

I am genuinely thrilled to read your account of our Louisburgh community in Coventry. I cannot imagine any parishioner of ours who would not be. But I can make a guess as to which of our readers were most thrilled by your description of our people in Coventry; and my guess is—our people in Coventry. It is reasonable to believe that they were delighted that someone had what we call “the good word” for them and recognised their effort in circumstances that could be difficult. I feel certain, too, that for those of them that read your article it has been a further incentive to them go further ahead and improve their position still more; that it was a source of confidence for them—self-confidence, by which they would be encouraged to eradicate any faults that may be found even in the best of communities. In short, they too, I believe, have benefitted from praise. So would our emigrants anywhere. And that is exactly my point and policy, except that there it is being applied abroad. An Choinneal thinks: if praise brings good results in Coventry, why not in Curra or in Cloonty? If in Camden Town why not in Caher? If in San Francisco why not in Shranacloy? True, there may be less reason (in some ways) for praise here: perhaps there is then all the more need. At least that has been my conviction as editor. I have a distinct and infuriating memory, from within the last ten years of a public reference being made at home to “the dying parish of Louisburgh”. The infuriating aspect of it was that it had such a dooming effect on the people who heard it. “It was dead right”, they said. “It was the straight truth”; “Just look at the way that . . .”; “Just look at all the . . .” It was a safe enough bet. If the prophets of doom were proved right, people would recall how shrewd they were. If they were wrong, people would probably forget what had been foretold. Do they? I saw the embers and

valued them; I decided to breathe gently, and to screen the newly-begun fire from harsh winds like those of The Economist. In later, more vigorous, days the fire would have overcome that wind too; perhaps be fanned to further flame by it; but—so I thought and think—not in its struggling start.

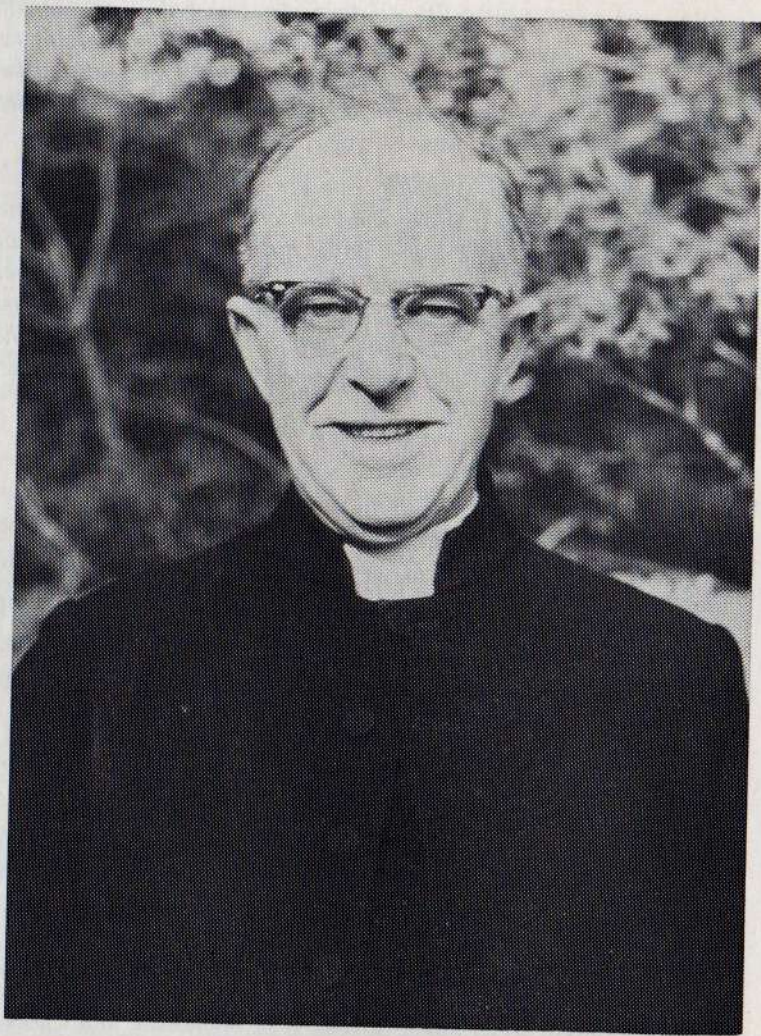
Your intervention—so obviously sincere and concerned—is altogether different. It was a strong wind too, one that I think the flame could not have withstood in leaner days. But it was different in that it was controlled; more like a fire-bellows, for it was firm and yet restrained; and (perhaps this explains the difference) like a bellows-gust it was from within. It was timely too, if even to hasten the hour when the screen could be removed; and (need I repeat?) it was truly welcome.

TÁ DAONNA SAN PARÓISTE AGAINN FÉIN A DEARFAS SUR AISTEAD AN SCÉAL É MÉ BEIC AG “TADHAIRT FÚT” MAR SEO. IS TUBAISTEAD, TAR LEO, SO MBEAD BEIRT SÁGART AG SÁRAÍOCT PAOI CÚIS AR BIÉ. IS CUID DEN TUBAISTE AN TUAIRIM SIN; SAMPALA É DEN INTINN AGUS DEN DEARCAO RÓ-ÉURAMAC, RÓ-ÉOSTAC UO ATÁ AG TOCAIT PAOIN SPIORAO AGUS PAOIN NEAM-SPLEÁCAS IONAINN.

NÁ BÍOÓ BRÓN ORT, ‘AÉAIR PÁDRAIC, NÁ LAG-MISNEAC. NÍL ÁR RÉ TUGTA, NÁ SAR UÓ! NÁ CUINEAD SÉ INNÍ ORT SO BFUIL AN UORAS URUITE AR UÁ SCOIL SAN UUIÉÉ ÉEANA FÉIN, NÁ SO BFUIL TRÁCT PAOINA LEITÉIOÍ EITE ARÍS. BÍONN CUISEANNA EITE LEIS SIN SEACAS LAGÓU DAONRA. AGUS SAN AON AMHRAS, TÁ CORRAÍ PAOIN BPARÓISTE I MBLIANA. TÁ SPIORAO FÓS ANN, AC É A BEACTÚ: TÁ ÁBAR TIME, AC AN TIME A ÉADHAIRT UÓ. NÍL AON AMHRAS AC SO BFUIL LEAS DEANTA AG AN MÉIO A SCRÍOB TÚ. AGUS NUAIR IS LEAS U’ÁR BPARÓISTE ATÁ I GCEIST, BÍ CINTÉ NAC SPARÁTPAR SAN **COINNEAL** UÚBAC NÁ PÁIPÉAR!

Duíocás ón tsean-fóto!

Leon Ó Mórcaín.



FATHER JOHN BURKE. *Born in Castlebar 15 June, 1896; went to Saint Jarlath's, Tuam, September, 1911; Maynooth, September, 1915. Ordained in Maynooth, 18 June, 1922*

APPOINTMENTS: *Crossboyne (temporary); Clare Island; Diocesan Inspector, Athenry; Westport—curate; then administrator; Louisburgh. He died in Louisburgh, 28 December, 1966*

SURVIVING RELATIVES: *Mr. Frank Burke, Castlebar; Dr. Bernard Burke, Southampton; Mrs. Margaret McDonnell, New Ross (members of family); Miss Brigid O'Connor, Castlebar (niece).*

## Father John Burke P.P.

BY THE DEATH of Father John Burke, Louisburgh has lost a good parish priest, and I have lost a life-long and loyal friend. I knew Father Burke from the time he came to Saint Jarlath's. In those days—and I presume now too—every new student got a nickname. We had “the Cock”, “the Bear”, “the Duck”, and so on. No nickname of that nature seemed to fit John Burke. He was a little older than the rest of his class, and appeared more mature and serious. I presume that was why someone—no doubt some student from Louisburgh—dubbed him “Old Head”. It was a coincidence that the parish to which he was ultimately appointed had Old Head as a prominent feature.

John Burke was a good student, of a high order of ability. He had a distinguished career in Saint Jarlath's; and afterwards, in Maynooth, his abilities came into still greater prominence. He was essentially a thinker, and the higher studies in Maynooth were better calculated to bring out his latent talent. Even to the end of his life he had the habit of hesitating for a few moments before replying to a question or expressing an opinion.

The national struggle for independence had just begun when we decided on our course of studies for a University degree. John Burke had a very deep interest in that struggle, and I think it was because of that that he chose Celtic Studies for his degree—which, I may add, he secured with honours. Subsequent events seem to have dampened his enthusiasm, and it is interesting to note that in his later days he engaged in a comprehensive study of the plays of Shakespeare.

His career in the theological school further displayed his abilities. He secured a high place when getting his degree in Canon Law and Theology. Yet he had no ambitions for an academic life; neither had he any aspirations to ecclesiastical honours. He was a humble man and preferred to shun the limelight. He was willing to take any position assigned to him by Providence, and worked hard and conscientiously at any task that was allotted to him.

Father Burke was a kindly and charitable man—both in word and deed. While being pretty strict on himself, he had a great sympathy for human weaknesses in others, as befitted the good priest that he was. He was a man of high principle, who 'nothing common did or mean'. He was a genial and generous host, and went out of his way to suit the tastes of his guests. I have a grateful memory of the lobster he sent me from time to time down through the years, when he found I had a taste for the thing. And, by the way, I have a sad memory of the last time I dined at his table. We had the company of the late Canon Patten of Liverpool. I little thought that within a short time one of them would so quickly follow the other to the grave. Canon Patten was a brilliant scholar, and his untimely death was the occasion of a great loss to the diocese of Liverpool, and of great grief to all of us who knew and esteemed him in his native diocese.

Father Burke was well read and a good conversationalist. He took a great interest in the liturgical changes, and read widely on what is called the new theology. He had little interest in worldly possessions, and was content with a modest car and modest furnishings. He was a man of sound judgment, and could always be relied on for good advice. I hardly know of any man who had such intolerance of nonsense. He was of a retiring nature, and consequently not as well known as he might be. No doubt, his ill-health contributed to that. He made few intimate friends, but when he did form a friendship, it was solid and enduring.

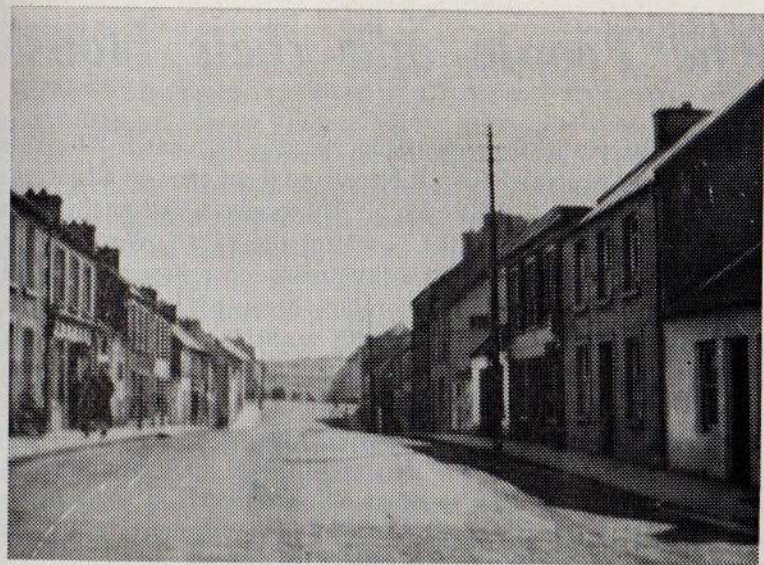
To sum up, Louisburgh has lost in Father Burke an honourable man and a good priest, and the writer of this has been deprived of a dear and loyal friend. May he rest in peace!

J.G.

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*We sincerely welcome to the parish Father Burke's successor, Father John Fitzgerald, who has been appointed parish priest. Father Fitzgerald is a nephew of Canon Healy, who was our parish priest from 1905 to 1934.*

*We wish we could think of some original way of expressing to Father Fitzgerald our joy at this link with the past; but in the absence of originality, we ask him to be satisfied with our sincerity.—EDITOR*



*The town in the thirties—Main Street*



*The town in the thirties—Bridge Street*

# The People and their House

THE Irish people in their own language call the church "*Teach a phobail*"—the people's house. It belongs to them one and all: everybody has a right to it. It is open all day to give a welcome, just as one's own home does, to the people of the parish. We may not always be conscious of it, but a little reflection brings home to us that we start out on a Sunday morning—because it is Sunday—to a place that is our very own, to join with our neighbours in honouring God. We could, of course, honour God at home, but it is well to be united with our neighbours in prayer. And it is well to have a house from which that united prayer ascends to the throne of God. In the later years of our life whether we spend these at home or abroad, it is to this house—the church—that our hearts are, in some unexplained way, drawn. The memory of that house must very often help to keep our emigrants safe amidst the dangers and temptations of the world. No doubt they share the poet's wish:

Whenever I go a pilgrim back, dear holy isle to thee,  
May my footsteps always lead me to that abbey by the sea;  
To that abbey—roofless, doorless, shrineless, monk-less though  
it be.

Be it great or small the parish church is the visible centre of our religion. Its influence is always the same; and so it is that, all the world over, an important part of the pastor's care is the building and decoration of the church. The genius of the ages has employed itself on church embellishment; so much so that no study of art is complete without a visit to the paintings and stainglass of churches.

There was an era in this country when the British government thought it well to pay the Catholic clergy. It seemed a glittering gift and looked pleasing and satisfactory in bad and difficult times. But it had strings attached, for the Government wanted to have a vote on the appointment of bishops in Ireland. Had this come to pass as law, Tuam would never have seen that vigorous champion of the Catholic cause, the famous John McHale. But the system already in vogue was continued: the clergy depended on their people and so remained free. Very often they were the only persons in a community who were free to hack off the shackles so tightly riveted on their people by an aristocracy which was alien in name and in

race. The system has worked well. Of their own free will people are always ready to contribute to their pastor's support.

When I was young the people of our parish were always talking about Father Curley or "Father Mick", as they lovingly called him. (He was grand-uncle of the Father Curley we knew in later years.) He it was who had our present parish Church—Saint Patrick's—built; and in its early history it was regarded, as I believe it is even today, as a fine example of architecture equal to almost any in the country. This Church was a new beginning; in a sense it was the restart after penal times. But even in persecution you cannot destroy everything; and against our dark hour Saint Patrick had done his work well. The fact that our priests were from among the people ensured that our religion would live; and although they were a native clergy they were nonetheless honoured by the people they served. So when the fog of penal days was eventually dissipated, the faith needed only the warmth of a second spring to blossom forth again. New churches were built—among them our own parish church; but the priests and people who had that work have gone to their reward. *Beannacht Dé ar anamnacha na marbh!* Their names, however, are enshrined in the hearts of the people, just as "Father Mick's" was, and just as the name of our late parish priest will be a household word for generations to come.

The Grianán  
Carramore

P. W. O'TOOLE

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"Besides Kilgeever there are the following burial places in the Parish at which it is probable there were formerly chapels of ease:—

- (1) Dumhach Mor (Great Sand Bank) situated on the lands of Wastelands near the Six Knaggins. The cemetery is now just covered by the sands.
- (2) Killeen, in the townland of Cloonlaura. No ruins of a Church at present.
- (3) Kill Bhrighde, an ancient burial place but no trace of a Church at present. There is a Holy Well adjoining it, called Tobar Bhrighde (Tober Bride) i.e. Fons Brigidae, at which stations are performed with great devotion".

—*Ordnance Survey Letters* (O'Donovan and others) 1838.  
Mayo, Vol. 1, par. 469.

## Journey into History

THE TRAVELLER who sweeps up from Louisburgh via Tully, or by the more scenic route via Roonith and Killeen, towards Leenane, passes by Gleanncaoin; and then plunges down to the pass where lies the *dark lake* (dubhloch). The lake mirrors that thousand-foot cliff of Muilrea over which, a hundred years ago, the golden eagles built their nests in security. Maxwell in his *Wild Sports of the West* mentions one incident when a man was lowered on a rope to rob the eagle's nest; and that when he was hauled up again the rope was found to be worn to its last strand and about to break. I knew a man whose father was one of those who hauled Timoney up to safety and who had heard the tale from him.

When I saw the pass seventy-seven years ago it was possible, with care, to bring a light vehicle as far as Gleanncaoin; beyond that and across the bog there was only a path which ran along the Claiscéim mountain as far as Doolough House (now in ruins) where a road to Delphi came from Westport and Drummin. My father always had a dream that a road would be built so that the scenic grandeur should be open to view; and in 1899, after we had come to live at Falduff, he brought us—my sister, my two younger brothers and myself—on a trap to visit the place and to go as far as we could with the horse and trap. I still remember that drive: we went by Ballyhip, crossing there the bridge which my father told us was the second-oldest in Mayo (in 1899!). We continued by Tully; and there we saw, in the little rise before we came to Tully Lodge gate, the walls of the original home of the Garvey's of Tully. This was the family one of whom was Sheriff of Mayo at the time of the war of the Confederation (1641-'9); and who was in charge of the evacuation to Galway of the new proprietors of the Elizabeth and James plantations. On his way to Galway this Garvey was attacked by some of the Irish at Shrule; but the local Catholic family came to the relief of himself and his men and saved most of them. Although this massacre of Shrule was used by the English as propanganda, Garvey of Tully was

hanged in Galway the following year (1643) for his cowardice and ineptitude in guarding those in his charge.

The road from Falduff to Tully and on to Cregganbawn and Gleanncaoin was at that time in a desperate condition. Not that *any* roads were at that time good; but this particular road was covered with rough, loose gravel and had *pot-holes* every short distance, where the bog oozed up. These soft places usually had a flagstone or two, positioned so that the horse could find footing to cross over. We three young boys sat at the back of the trap; and we could never anticipate accurately when the wheels would sink into the ooze and be jerked out again with such force as almost to snap our heads off.

We crossed over the old Tully bridge which was in its last stage of decay; its planks were rotten and full of holes. The horse and trap had to ford the river below the bridge to gain the road or track up the hill to Róinbhreac. There we joined the road from Louisburgh to Cregganbawn and, as we travelled on to Logmore, my father told us that Logmore was one of the places where Finbarra, King of the Connacht Sidhe, held his court. When we had struggled on as far as the river at Gleanncaoin we could go no further; so we children remained there with the horse and trap while my father walked ahead to view the approach to the lake and to the pass, and perhaps to indulge again in his dreaming of a road through the pass.

Eventually my father saw his dream come true. About that time Arthur J. Balfour came over as chief secretary to Ireland with the avowed intention to "Kill *Home Rule* with kindness". It was a new idea in British relations with Ireland and the Irish! Balfour introduced a series of *relief works*; and so in the Westport Board of Guardians, my father, who was one of the guardians, advocated again and again the advantages of having a road constructed through the pass. He spent his spare time writing to all the influential people whom he knew, asking for their help in this project; and at last the Congested Districts Board (which came into being at that time) agreed to do the work. It was finished in 1902. (I might mention that Gleanncaoin was the residence of one of the Signatories of the Composition of Connacht in 1585. His name was Mac Gibbúin—a name not unknown in Mayo!)

That *dark pass* had seen terrible things in the famine years (1846—'9). Indeed terrible things were happening then all over Ireland, but

especially on the western coast from Kerry to Donegal. I often heard of how the starving people had crowded into Westport where the *workhouse* was; and when the *workhouse* could not hold all, the stores along the Quay from the Customs House to the present railway gates were crammed. Dead people were being picked up on the roadway every morning, while the grain that would have fed them was being exported from the Quay. I was told of a man, who lived near Oldhead at that time. When his wife died of starvation he could get no help to bury her; so he had to take her corpse on his back and, resting now and again on his way, he at length bore her to Kilgeever burial ground, where he scraped a hole in the earth to cover her poor body. On his return to his cabin he found that his only daughter had now died; and he had to repeat that mournful journey to Kilgeever.

There were people in Ireland in the midst of the terrible hunger and devastation who were ready to wring a profit from it. My father told me of one merchant and flour-miller who owned a thousand tons of oatmeal for which the Poor Law Guardians offered twenty-seven pounds per ton. He demanded thirty pounds and refused to sell for less. Then, from the United States, ships arrived carrying cargoes of Indian meal for the starving people; and the oatmeal was left on his hands. It deteriorated and he eventually sold it all for £300 to a Cork firm. The firm, however, went bankrupt and he never got a penny for the meal. He also told me of people who, in handling the orders, stole meal out of the bags destined for distribution among the starving people. They restored the bags to the original weight by steeping them in water. My father often commented: "There *is* a God and I saw his justice enacted!" For, these people who robbed the poor melted away, and not a trace of them is left. *Is mall agus is díreach díoltas Dé!*

Doolough Pass had its own tragic part in that famine period; and I remember the story as it was told to me by people who had lived through the famine. From their telling, it appears that the British Government appointed commissioners to investigate the rumours that a famine raged in Ireland; and in the early part of 1849 two of these gentlemen arrived in Westport. There they sought the hospitality of the Marquis of Sligo, whose extensive estate held a very large part of these starving people. In justice to him, I must say that I was told that he did whatever he could to help his tenants, but the disaster was too great for him to do much. The commissioners sent out word to the relieving officer in Louisburgh, to compile a list of

those in need of food and to have this list ready for them when they came to Louisburgh. This would be a heavy task; and, instead of coming out to Louisburgh to meet the relieving officer and to see for themselves the state of famine that existed, they sent word to the relieving officer that they would be in Delphi Lodge on a certain date. There they would interview him and all the people who desired relief, for they considered it too much trouble to make the journey to Louisburgh themselves.

We, a well-fed people—the best-fed in Europe according to statistics; we, who think it a hardship to walk a few miles and must have a motor-car for anything longer, to ease our way; we might well consider the prospects before these hundreds of men, women and children who were lucky if they got one meal in the day, and were faint with the weakness of starvation. We might with profit consider the prospect of a journey from Falduff, or Askelane, from Roonah, or Carrowniskey or Tallabawn up to Cregganbawn and Gleanna-caoin, out along that track on the mountainside of Claiscéim over the lake, fording the river at Doolough and then on to Delphi. A rumour sped that there was food at Bundorcha—that a ship, full of food, had come in. All these hundreds set out for there, saying to themselves: "If we can only reach Delphi and Bundorcha we will get food: we will live!" There was food and drink at Delphi for the two British commissioners. There were, I am sure, wine and cigars. But there was no food for the starving Irish of Iar-Umhall: for them there was despair as they looked around and saw the mountains towering over them. No shelter there: no food there.

They turned and faced the journey back to Iar-Umhall. Dark night fell on them and with it came snow. As they crawled along the mountain-track some fell never to rise again. And so the *death-march* went. I knew in his old age a survivor of that terrible return journey: Affy Dillon of Falduff. His mother and her four children made their way to Delphi and on the return, in the snow and darkness, he got separated from the rest of the family and found a hut or some such shelter where a sheep had given birth to a lamb. He stayed there and was kept warm by the woolly sheep, and indeed sucked her udder to keep himself alive until he was found. His mother and the other three children perished. Some reached their poor cabins they came from; along the roads and *boreens* many others dropped one by one. I know of two who reached Kilgeever before they fell and I know the corner of the field in which they lie buried. The snow fell



and spread its white blanket over the dead ones—the little children, the youths, the women and men who were covered at last were at peace. And He, the Holy One of God, came and touched each of them. And there was no hunger or starvation; no more tears or sorrow; only the joy of the Lord.

JOHN D. O'DOWD

Falduff Lodge, Louisburgh

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*The "death-march" referred to in Mr. O'Dowd's article took place from Louisburgh to Delphi on Friday evening, March 30 and (the return) from Delphi to Louisburgh on Saturday, March 31, 1849. The following letter appeared in the Mayo Constitution of April 10, 1849 (also in The Telegraph of April 11):*

Louisburgh

April 5, 1849

SIR—On last Friday, 30th ult., Colonel Hogrove, one of the vice-guardians of the Westport Union, and Captain Primrose the poor-law inspector arrived here on that morning for the purpose of holding an inspection on the paupers who were receiving out-door relief in this part of the union, but, for some cause or other, they did not but started off immediately for Delphi Lodge. In a short time after, the relieving officer a person of the name of Carroll ordered the poor creatures forthwith to follow him to Delphi Lodge, as he would have them inspected early on the following morning Saturday, March 31st, and in obedience to this *humane* order, hundreds of these unfortunate living skeletons, men, women and children, might have been seen struggling through the mountain-passes and roads for the appointed place. The inspection took place in the morning and I have been told that nothing could equal the horrible appearance of those truly unfortunate creatures, some of them without a morsel to eat, and others exhausted from fatigue, having travelled upwards of 16 miles to attend the inspection.

It is not for me to say why the inspection took place at Delphi, it being the most remote part of the Union, and some of the poor, as I have stated before, having to travel upwards of *sixteen* miles.

I have now the melancholy duty of informing you and the public, that a woman named Dalton, from Wastelands, six miles west of the

town, her son and daughter were all found dead on the road side on the morning after the inspection midway between this town and Delphi; and about one mile nearer to this town two men were found dead—in all five. The bodies of these ill-fated creatures lay exposed on the road side for three or four days and nights for the dogs and ravens to feed upon, until some charitable person had them buried in a turf-hole on the road side.

Now, Sir, I call upon you as the sincere friend of the poor, and in the name of that just God who is to judge all at the last day, to call upon the Lord Lieutenant of this county to demand a searching inquiry into this melancholy affair and prevent, if possible so many of the poor being sacrificed . . . .

I am, Sir, Your obedient Servant,  
A Ratepayer.

*The account as presented in this letter is at variance with the traditional account in two main points—namely, whether the commissioners came at all to Louisburgh, and what number died as a result of the journey. With regard to the latter point, it is of interest that in an editorial comment (24 April, 1849), the Mayo Constitution states that reports from the locality say that descriptions have fallen far short of the frightful and shocking scenes that were witnessed.*

—Editor (Coinneal)

#### NO RELIEF

“Even applications from the west, where the Government was pledged to provide food, were refused. Mr. Garvey, of Murrisk Abbey, for instance, chairman of the Kilgeever Relief Committee, asked for the establishment of a depot at Louisburgh, County Mayo, one of the few towns in that wild and poverty-stricken district. Mr. Garvey was told, bluntly, “there will be no depot in Louisburgh”. No offer of assistance was made, but the relief committee of Kilgeever was instructed to raise a fund “to be employed in the purchase of supplies of food,” which might then be sold by the committee. On no account, however, were supplies to be given away or sold cheaply; sales must always be at prices sufficient to repay the first cost with all charges, and a commission allowance of £5 per cent.”  
from *The Great Hunger* (p. 123) by Mrs. Cecil Woodham-Smith.

## Diluted Dilemma

ON A FINE Sunday morning in May, Johnny Clancy stood in his doorway gazing around listlessly. In front of him lay an expanse of sea, hemmed in by a belt of mountains. It sparkled and glittered under the summer sun. That gave him no thrill, as he saw it every day; but he had a feeling of well-being, for he was the proprietor of a thriving guest-house.

His house stood on a height facing the sea. If he were a giant and took three strides forward he would arrive at the water's edge, and if he were in the mood for a swim, he could forge ahead straight across the water and arrive in no time at the foot of the Reek. But he was not in that mood at all. He had a job to do, and do it he would. His wife slipped out beside him on her way to early Mass. She was neatly dressed and was engaged in putting on her second glove. She gave him the usual do's and dont's and proceeded on her way. The last order was: "Don't let the hens out in front of the house when the people are coming from Mass. Keep them back at the back". He pursed his thin lips, which meant: "I may or I may not". He went down to the little front gate to make sure that she was well out of sight.

"Now or never!" he thought to himself. He reconstructed a little picture in his mind . . . *We were in this room after he gave it to us. Then she brought it out. She didn't go upstairs; so now it must be around here someplace.* . . . So the search began. He searched every box and drawer and cabinet and found only what Mother Hubbard found in her own cupboard! This added to his disappointment and he mounted the stairs. He went from room to room, searching every hole and corner as he went. There were many cabinets and presses of his own making, for he was a skilful carpenter. Alas! another fruitless search.

Dejectedly he returned down stairs and began to busy himself with the various chores. Mrs. Clancy had not prepared breakfast in the morning, for like all good women on a Sunday morning she was

going "to the rails". He put down the fire, filled the kettle, cleaned the hearth and tidied the kitchen.

Suddenly, he thought of the hens! He rushed out to find them on the road. The problem was how he would gather them in. He went in for a basin of oats. He got the basin and plunged his hand into the bag of grain, and then—he came up with the object of his morning's search! Dropping the basin on the floor, he jumped with joy, for Johnny always liked a drop of the "creathure". He got it very seldom—at Christmas, Easter and Saint Patrick's Day. He had no use for porter or beer, but a drop of the hard stuff warmed the cockles of his heart. Promptly he emptied the contents of the bottle into another, filled the first one with water and put it back safely into the oats bag. . . .

A few days afterwards, Mrs. Clancy had a visitor—a cousin from America. They entertained him highly and in the course of his visit she asked him if he ever tasted *poteen*. "No, ma'am, never", he replied. "Well, you'll taste it now", she said. She brought in the bottle and two glasses and gave Johnny and the visitor a glass each. Johnny kept looking at the pictures on the wall. "Sláinte", said the Yank and they both quaffed the drink. Turning to Johnny, he said seriously: "Johnny, isn't it very like water?"

SISTER M. PHILOMENA

Mulranny

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### PINNED: COLLARED!

He was a priest and also a pioneer, so his old friend was surprised to meet him coming out of a pub.

"Oh, Father, since we met here, maybe you'd take a little pint from me"

"Sorry, Ned; I cannot. Though it puts me to the pin of my collar to refuse you!"

"Ah well, Father, since you have the *pin* and the *collar*, I won't force you!"

## Schoolday Memories of Oldhead

*O Louisburgh, ever dear to me: the place where I was born,  
Your smiles and welcome bring me hope, though I may be forlorn;  
Deep down in every human breast there are so many fears,  
Now softened in the golden light of boyhood's happy years:  
To climb up to the mountain-crest in clear and bracing air,  
With scented thyme and heather brown abounding everywhere.  
Or bathing in Loughranny or where'er our fancy led,  
Along the sylvan-bordered road that leads down to Oldhead.*

*How fondly I remember each exploit that then took place:  
Exploring caves and crannies all around its rocky base,  
Where smugglers once had brought their crafts with holds that did  
contain*

*Tobacco, wines and vintage rare from Italy and Spain.  
And when the hush of evening fell, the scent of spices rare  
Was spreading its aroma on the still and balmy air.  
The old Salt-house was standing then, beside the purling stream,  
And swallows darting in and out were nesting in its beam.*

*The salt-pans still encrusted with the ocean's briny rind,  
And we played at handball up against its rough-cast gable-end;  
Or clambered down the beetling cliffs, their sides so grim and bare,  
And sought out all the sea-birds' nests, the seal's and otter's lair;  
To climb again no easy task, with footholds insecure,  
But agile limbs and daring plans contrived to make them sure;  
To look down then with deep amaze at the seething cauldron boil,  
While panting there, the thrills it gave made up for all the toil.*

*Oldhead with all its fragrant paths to secluded places led,  
Where courting couples strolled its banks, while others basked and read.  
And homeward bound our route would lie through these Elysian bowers,  
With floral spoils of every hue, the gift of nature's dower;  
Their slender stems in vase or bowl were well kept, water-drowned,  
To decorate God's altar when Our Lady's day came round.  
The kindly folk who once lived in the Gate Lodge down the road  
Are dead and gone to eternal rest and reside in God's repose.  
School-pals I knew are scattered too; but now remain instead,  
The memories of my boyhood days spent in beloved Oldhead.*

Westport

MARTIN J. O'REILLY

## Letter from Home

*Dear Austie*

That was the best news I heard this long time, that we can expect you home in the harvest. Thanks be to God that you feel so well again; and you'll see that a while at home will have you as right as paint again, please God. I hope that September and October will be fine and that the work will be over mostly when you come, the way you'll have your ease to walk in and out as you please.

Well I wrote all the news to Mary and Noreen just last week but maybe you didn't hear from them since. Mary said she keeps the letters from home the way she can read them over again not to miss anything. It looks funny writing the same thing in two letters, but just the same you'll like to know all that's going on.

It's no lie to say there's plenty going on in Louisburgh this past year; good sensible activity too—societies and clubs to beat the band. I see by the last *Coinneal* I sent you that there was in the parish that time the *Muintir na Tire*, and *I.C.A.* (in Louisburgh and Killeen) and *Macra na Tuaithe* and the *G.A.A.* of course. Well now there's the *Crafts* society (Gráinuaile it's called) and *Tourist Development Committee* and the *Town Park Committee* and I don't know how many more! Tommie Joe must be on two or three of them and sure enough there isn't a night he goes to the town that he doesn't come home with a hat-full of news of all sorts. Often I wait up on purpose to hear of the plans the committees have for improving the parish.

They do be bad to me not to take my full night's rest, but sure I can sleep a while in the morning now, not like long ago. I never missed one morning or night from the mission there in June. Michael changed the old car after the Christmas and got this black one. It's giving him no trouble at all and he left me to the town every morning and I'd watch for a lift home. We had famous weather for three weeks or more at the time. You'd miss the mission awful when they'd be gone.

Well you heard FATHER BURKE died, God rest him. He was a quiet class of a man but a very kind and good man especially when one

would be sick. No priest was sent yet in his place. We're *mithered* of course with all the changes we have in the Mass. Now the priest is turned down the church for Mass all the time; and half the prayers or more are in English. You'd get used to it though and surely it's a great improvement for people to assist right at Mass.

The town didn't change that much lately. MR. and MRS. GAFFNEY have built a grand new bungalow opposite where Kelly's had the shop in Chapel Street; and JOE STAUNTON has made a lovely job of the old courthouse as a chemist's shop. It makes a great improvement on the Square. They should go a good way in the contest for tidy towns this year. Tommie Joe said they were to put litter bins on the telegraph poles in the town and sure enough it would be no harm. MORRISON'S HOTEL in Killadoon has a big new block on to it since Christmas: we were back at it one day we went to Gowlnaw, and surely it's a credit. All the hotels have been improved too because of the increase in tourism; but I'd say myself there isn't that many coming this year so far. Not Yanks anyway.

We had the County Council Elections in the end of June: there were two up from the parish. MARTIN JOE O'TOOLE was elected again but OLIVER MORAHAN was defeated. There was a good share of excitement for the elections and an awful lot of people went to vote. Dadda and myself went to the schoolhouse with Michael. Dadda wouldn't allow us to put the stick in the car; and, sure enough he walked up the passage like a two-year-old. Who should he meet on the way out but Big William. "Begob, Austin" says he, "I don't know who you're supporting but I'm glad to see you can support yourself anyway!" He was always *glic* with the tongue; but hadn't he his word near him?

Did you know that Tommie Joe twisted on his ankle at the football? It swelled greatly first, and he was a few days he couldn't leave his foot on the ground; but it's alright again now, thank God. And I suppose it's short until he's at the football again. They're all gone wild over the football here this last while since Mayo beat Galway in the big game in Galway city. Did you see the Galways when they played over there this year?

JOHN GIBBONS of Accony is a teacher now and he's teaching in Dublin; LORCAN GEOGHEGAN has his B.A. degree in Galway and of course JIMMY TIERNAN of Doughmackeown is qualified this while back as a B. Ag. and has a position in Sligo. There's a lot more, too, I cannot just remember now.

Well there was one great event in the town early in April. An industrial display they said. It was showing-off all those things that were made at the crafts classes, and sure enough all the stuff that was there was a living credit to any parish—lace, and crochet, and collars, and blouses, and caps, and Aran sweaters, and all sorts. Would you like to get an Aran sweater? I thought them awful dear myself but Eileen says they're half as dear again up the country. I got a small one for young Austin for his birthday but he isn't big enough to fill it yet. He's great life about the place, but he's the dickens for roaming away—over to the *currach* and down the road and even one day he wandered over to Big Thomas's. Thomas calls him "Richard Kimble" after *The Fugitive*. By the same token, I meant to ask you do ye see *The Fugitive* in America? We were very given to that programme the first year or two but you'd get fed up because you'd know well he was going to escape every time. As usual Old Tom had his come-hither on it: "Arrah," says he "that man, if he had his mind on his business he'd keep out of all those sorts of *achrann* and he'd have clapped the bridle on the one-armed bucko long since." Still he's tempted to come looking at it. We all think there's no programme as fine and as natural as *The Riordans* on Sunday evening. As for *My Favourite Martian*, Old Tom said: "There's a screw-driver lost in that fellow's head". And one Sunday he was here early for a piece of *The Lucy Show*: "Well" he said, "that one would want slashing with a flat board!" He's a tonic when he comes.

We had a television programme from Louisburgh town in July, talking about tourism. BASIL MORAHAN and SEAN HENEGHAN (of the vocational school) were on with a HEFFERNAN man on Frank Hall's programme. Frank Hall praised up the place well, how good it was for holidays and that. People weren't too pleased at what was said about the farmers not cooperating; and there was talk. But one thing, they didn't spare the *dole*; and my blessing to them. A penny of *dole* never came under our roof; or, please God, never will.

Now I think I've all said mostly. There was a bit of a stir in the town where the children were kept at home until the school would be improved. But now anyway there's holidays. You'll see in the *Coinneal* this time that our grand old friend MICHAEL BURKE of Doughmackeown died. God be good to him, many a joyful hour we had out of him story-telling.

Let us know for definite again when we can expect you. Eileen said

herself and Michael might go to Shannon to bring you if they know the day and the time. And don't give any promise to them beyond, when you'll go again. You want a good long rest at home with good Irish brown bread and country butter and milk and eggs and potatoes and meat. You won't know yourself after a month under the old roof!

God keep you safe, Austin. It'll be a glad day for the two of us when you darken the door.

Your loving

*Mother*

*P.S.*—I left this letter on the dresser ready to send it to the town when someone would be going; and didn't I only get it where I was looking for the clothes-pegs.

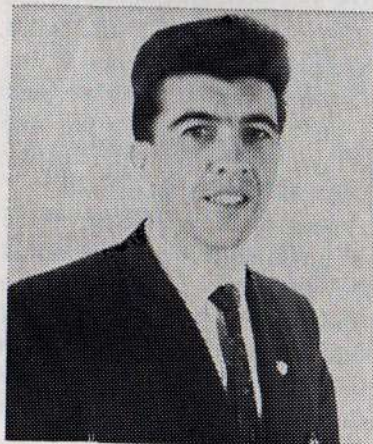
Well, we have a new parish priest got—Father Fitzgerald, a nephew of Canon Healy that you often heard of, the priest that married us. He came to us from Knock, they say.

We were in the town at Mass, Sunday; and they're putting in the radiators for the new central heating in the Church. We're all glad of that, though Dadda says we're getting soft! I'm hearing talk of repairs to Killeen Church—or maybe even a new church there; I'll tell you when I write again.

The weather was terrible this last month. Even with all the draining Michael had done in the Spring, he almost lost the oats in the *currach*; and the *glais* is like a river. But we've plenty of turf and everything, thank God.

You'll stay for the Christmas, won't you?

M.



**MR. JIMMY TIERNAN** (Doughmackeown) B.Agr.Sc., who has been appointed Agricultural adviser with Gouldings Chemicals and Fertilisers Ltd., for the north-western counties (including Mayo). Mr. Tiernan went to school at Carrowniskey, and to Sancta Maria; in 1960 he was awarded Mayo County chholarships both to Ballyhaise Agricultural College and to University College, Galway. After two years at U.C.G., and two at U.C.D., where he was conferred, for a short period he taught rural science at Westport Vocational School before obtaining his present appointment.

## Keep Your Word!

READERS of the past issues of *An Choinneal* will be familiar with the form and content of this feature. It presents a list of words which do not appear in English dictionaries, for the simple reason that these are terms which remained on in the speech of the parish when English replaced Irish as the vernacular language. It is of interest to note that, although the words chosen for this feature are—in nearly every case—in use in the parish still, some of them are not in use in the districts in Ireland where Irish is still the vernacular. Some of our words are not to be found even in the standard Irish (language) dictionaries.

It is encouraging to find that this feature is being received so well at home and abroad; and to hear or read the memories which one word or another evokes. We welcome any comment or correction on the pronunciation or meaning of the words we now explain. As usual, we give the feature the form of a quiz. The words are printed in alphabetical order, with our Louisburgh pronunciation of each one in parenthesis. There follows each word a set of four *possible* meanings; and we invite you to test your memory and word-power by choosing the correct meaning in each case.

1. *Buachallán* (boh-ha-lawn)—(a) a narrow path; (b) a strong boy; (c) a yellow wild-flower; (d) a tethering-rope.
2. *Catach* (koth-uch)—(a) curly-headed; (b) like a cat; (c) left-handed; (d) a whin bush.
3. *Clabairín* (klob-a-ryeen)—(a) a tongue of a shoe; (b) a chatter-box; (c) an implement for spreading turf; (d) part of a churn.
4. *Cóitheach* (koh-hyuch)—(a) certainly; (b) questioning; (c) a great haul of fish; (d) an unconcerned woman.
5. *Currach* (kurruch)—(a) a boggy field; (b) a reaping-hook; (c) "Get up and stir yourself!"; (d) a boat.
6. *Fánach* (fawn-uch)—(a) moving in a circle; (b) yellowish-brown; (c) careless; (d) lovable.
7. *Fíodán* (fidh-awn)—(a) a mountain stream; (b) a home-made musical instrument; (d) easily annoyed; (d) a "gad" or twisted rod for wickerwork.

## A Few Hours on Clare Island

8. *Gliomach* (glyum-uch)—(a) wet and slippery; (b) grasping at another's property; (c) a lobster; (d) completely drunk.
9. *Gruth-buí* (grub-bwee)—(a) to "bolt" one's food; (b) a yellow beetle; (c) "Move in, please!"; (d) a food made from milk.
10. *Leisceadóir* (lyesh-kye-dhoh-ir)—(a) a lazy person; (b) a rope ladder; (c) a "quack" doctor; (d) a wooden bolt for a door.
11. *Meas* (mass)—(a) nonsense; (b) respect; (c) the haunch of an animal; (d) home-ground oatmeal.
12. *Núdaí-nádaí* (noody-nawdy)—(a) without any covering; (b) a "yo-yo" toy; (c) a listless person; (d) a weather-vane.
13. *Pucán* (puck-awn)—(a) a well-fed specimen; (b) a strong stroke with a hurley; (c) a hinge; (d) a wild billy-goat.
14. *Rúiteach* (roo-itch-uch)—(a) a sprained ankle; (b) uproar; (c) mashed potatoes mixed with milk and butter; (d) a skin disease.
15. *Síóg* (shee-ogue)—(a) a gust of wind; (b) a female swan; (c) a ghostly silence; (d) a fairy.

(Answers on page 46)

NOTE: In giving the approximate pronunciation, we make use of no standard phonetic symbols, but rather try to write the sounds as they might be spelled (phonetically) with English letters. In particular, *-ch* is to be said as in 'loch'; *-oh* as in 'doh'; *-ogue* as in 'brogue'. Other symbols used are: *dh* (for an Irish *d*), *tch* and *th* (for different Irish *t*'s) *y* which, after a consonant, shows that it is slender or clear.

The Clare-Island boat at anchor in Roonagh Pier.



THE RAIN abated as we landed in the tiny harbour. There was Gráinneuaile's Castle on our left, and in front of us the mountain, towering over the beach and harbour.

Going past the new hotel, I wandered to the north-east. It was now raining heavily. I noticed the same stone walls as in Aran, and little enclosed pastures, but I could not shelter from the rain at first, as it came driving along the path, the wind blowing full force, and there were no side-lanes. I went over a stile or two and, bearing slightly west, came again to an inhabited part. Then I waited for the end of the shower, admiring the wonderful light over the scanty grass and rocky patches.

This was like the Garden of Eden: on the left, the mountain rose gently to fifteen hundred feet above sea-level; small houses nestled at its foot. The fuchsias were in bloom, and the land in this quarter was green—although there are practically no trees on the island (except for a small grove which I afterwards discovered, well sheltered in a hollow not far from the east coast). On the right, the path runs

The road to Roonagh Pier at Cahir.



quite close to the cliffs, only separated from view by a narrow stretch of boggy ground. The sun came out and everything was bright. But a fresher shower overtook me and I again took shelter in a hollow lined with heavy crags—following the track evidently used by sheep.

The afternoon walk was longer (and in fact so hurried that I could not take in the landscape at leisure), the return part of it being along that same road which had seemed Paradise to me in the morning; patches of sunshine came and went, and occasional showers. Crops were being harvested, high up on top of those threatening cliffs. And an almost perpetual rainbow lent its peculiar glory to the scene. At times, I left the road, to have a look at the cliffs; and a shark-fishing boat sailing her course quite close to them. The sea was much calmer than in the morning and yet one could not be sure of its intentions. (We actually had a choppy crossing on our return to the mainland two hours later). . . .

I am walking along the south coast and can see Inishturk and Inishbofin outlined in the distance against the sun. The sea is a silver colour and black clouds threaten overhead. This shore is lower, and the land about well cultivated. Here too, the harvest is in progress. I visit the old church and monastery with the O'Malley stone, and then turn sharply "inland", climbing up to the central part of the island, which consists of high, boggy ground, used as pasture for the many sheep. This is also where the islanders get their turf, and a few turf-piles loom like deserted houses on each side of the lonely path. My only companion is the wind. This path in between the two mountains is fenced off so as to keep the flock from straying. And, opening the wooden gate set across the way, one seems to enter a beautiful, wild garden—little streams run down the mountain sides, their banks deep-set and overgrown with fern and heather. There is no snow or frost on the island at any time of the year.

After a while, I could see the lighthouse perched high up on the most northerly point of the island. My doubts as to whether I should proceed any further vanished, and I went up the winding road, passing ruined houses on my way, in the midst of a fearful gale. From the lighthouse, one has a commanding view of Achillbeg, Achill itself and the Curraun peninsula. Having admired this for a few minutes, I hastened back to the hotel, and on to the harbour. Presently, we sailed to Roonagh Quay, and the day was over.

Paris

CLAUDE KOSMANN

## Encounter on Croagh Patrick

ON THE MORNING of August 15, 1965, I decided to climb the "Reek", this time on my own. The previous year, my companions, who knew the mountain "so well", led us astray and we reached level ground three or four hours behind schedule. Shortly after second Mass, I mounted my rather rusty steed—the bicycle—and headed for Murrisk. Having walked as far as the statue, I decided to climb from there in my bare feet, so after depriving first my right, then my left foot, of their protective covering, I gingerly placed them on the loose gravel, and steadily began the slow, weary journey upward towards my goal. Just then the "Reek" was momentarily shrouded in a white, misty fog that seemed to sweep down towards me and beckon me on with its thin, icy, if not translucent, fingers.

After plodding for almost two hours—stick in one hand, rosary in the other, half-empty knapsack dancing on my back—at last I came to a view of the summit. Now, the long-awaited challenge presented itself. Although the sharp, jagged rocks threatened to slide from under my aching, blistered feet, I had to face them. I couldn't very well turn back, having come so far. Never could a wearier, more wounded pilgrim have the happiness of experiencing that boundless, everlasting joy which swept into my heart as I bent on my knees at the foot of *Leaba Phádraic*. It was one of the happiest moments of my life.

My intentions were good; but my will-power was weak. Refraining from breaking my fast, I set about traversing the fifteen rounds of the top barefooted, before setting out for "Gorry Mór". But three rounds had not been completed before I collapsed, exhausted, hungry, bleeding, and aching all over. Still, a cup of tea soon refreshed me and set my heart at its right pace again. A second one washed down my provisions. The sun was setting; it was time to go. I left the holy ground—sick, sore, but not sorry.

Half way down the summit, I encountered the only other pilgrim I had yet seen on the mountain that day. He had left it a bit late—but there he was, running to the top, with his stick working like a pendulum. We greeted each other curtly and continued on, each on his separate way. No sooner had he reached the top than he turned

on his heel and headed off down, quicker than I had seen him go up, remarking on the fine weather as he glided past me. Eventually he joined his wife and son who awaited him at the base of the summit; and there they sat and talked awhile.

My legs apparently decided that I was getting too heavy for them and they let me down with a bang and a thud, bringing a weary groan from somewhere below my parched throat. The man came rushing towards me once more. I had envied him his energy, but now I thought it generous of him, a total stranger, to come to my aid. His action was to offer me a section of his bar of chocolate, which I unhesitatingly accepted. Between gasps of breath he asked permission to sit down beside me. I offered him my knapsack to sit on, for the ground where I was stretched was wet.

"It must take great devotion to be prepared to do this pilgrimage in your bare feet; I find it difficult enough in my sandals", he said. "Aye, ye must have a wonderful faith to be prepared to do this". [He was Northern, I thought, by his accent]. "I love my God, too; I adore and respect Him, but I would hardly be able to make such a sacrifice as you have made for your God. I wish we could stay with you and accompany you to the bottom. We could, I am sure, have a good discussion about your faith; but we have a long road to travel to Donegal". In a few moments he was gone; but not without leaving me a further supply of chocolate. When all three had rounded the bend, I arose and descended along the hazardous path. I felt as fresh as a daisy: my feet no longer hurt, and I reached the statue before dark. Nevertheless, I found great comfort in donning my shoes at the base of the statue of Saint Patrick.

I never met that man since; but I shall never forget his face. He didn't tell me to what religious sect he belonged; but I hope to meet him again someday, perhaps coming out, with his wife and children, from Mass on a Sunday morning, in a church yard somewhere in Ireland; perhaps in Lecanvey.

MICHAEL SCOTT

Bridge Street

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Trí haird Hérenn: Crúachán Aigli, Ae Chúalann, Benn mBoirche  
The three heights of Ireland: Croagh Patrick, Ae Chualann and  
Benn Boirche.

## Tales of the West of Ireland

**BOOK REVIEW:** *Tales of the West of Ireland*: James Berry (Ed. Gertrude M. Horgan) The Dolman Press, Dublin 1966. 217 pp. 30/-.

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JAMES BERRY is not a name to conjure with; he will be unknown to 99.9 per cent. of all students of Irish literature and was by no means an important writer of outstanding literary merit. But he told a good story and he told it well. Born in 1842, near Louisburgh, County Mayo, where he lived for most of his early life, he moved on marriage to Carna, in Connemara, dying there in 1914. A natural raconteur, he collected and invented a large number of racy, semi-traditional tales about those two districts and about the people who lived in them.

Although his tales might almost rank as folk-tales, he was such a close observer of his surroundings that they will be of interest and of some importance to all students of the social history of 19th century Connacht. Through them we can picture the life, joys, hopes, fears and sorrows of the Irish peasant (to use an internationally-understood word) in a way which the more sophisticated histories and stories of the period cannot provide.

James Berry has, in transcribing his tales to paper, granted us the privilege of an insight into the minds of his friends and contemporaries, and we must all feel exceedingly grateful to Miss Horgan for resurrecting them from the forgotten pages of a local newspaper.

When Berry writes as a storyteller, he writes exceedingly well, combining an element of fantasy and humour with the sincerity of the true *seanachie* who half-believes the stories he invents. At times, however, Berry seems to pull himself up and remind himself that he has lived into the 20th century and should, therefore, model his prose on a more literary style. . . .

On page 159 one will find a jewel of descriptive folk-writing to counteract (any) aberrations. Here, in a humorous and keenly-observant piece of writing, Berry has described for us how King O'Toole of Omey Island, doing "all the culinary work himself like all old bachelors", made a savoury lunch of *bruteen*—but "Doctors aver that this sort of pudding causes wind on the stomach, so King O'Toole must have often ruffled the waters around Omey Island."



Berry was a very fair commentator on the people of his time, judging all in a reasonably sympathetic light, and few could accuse him of excessive bias or of a propagandist outlook. He obviously told his tales because he enjoyed so doing, and not for material gain, just as the faction-fighters he so often mentions "fought for glory, and sometimes for pleasure. They did not fight in order to kill; they did not use jack knives, stones or bars of iron like the other men of those times, for they were as honourable as Sarsfield, and as brave as Myles the Slasher."

Berry also was a thinker and in his own way a bit of a philosopher. His stories do not have a moral appended to each, but oft-times a moral is evident though left unsaid, as, for instance, on page 30, when he writes: "... and he saw it was a great book she was reading, *The Imitation of Christ*. The peasant girls of those days never saw a magazine, a journal, a novel or a penny novelette; consequently they became the best wives and mothers to be met on earth."

This is a marvellous book, readable, amusing and educative, and although not great literature, it deserves to be read, not only by students of 19th century Ireland, but also by all who enjoy reading good, unpretentious, short stories told by an expert.

ETIENNE RYNNE

THE WRITINGS of James Berry have been a legend in Louisburgh. They had appeared, years ago, as a series in *The Mayo News*: people told you that they use longed for each *Mayo News* to come; everybody seemed to relish them; one of the articles was preserved and in later years reprinted; people thought that some few had—actually *had*—Berry's writings; but no one could produce them. Tantalisingly, you were asked: "Tell me, did you ever chance to come across Jamsey Berry's writings? Ah, pity! They were great!" The present reviewer did in fact locate some of the tales in the newspaper files of the British Museum (for a fire had destroyed the files of the paper in Westport during the troubled times); but for all who have sought or longed for the series we heard referred to as *Recollections of My Early Boyhood*, it is welcome news indeed to know that Berry is again in print—this time in even more durable form. And, paradoxically, we owe this to the energies of an American student of Anglo-Irish literature Miss Gertrude M. Horgan of Aquinas College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. It was her good fortune (and ours) that she was able to unearth the many tales which were, we feared, lost.

The tales divide into two sections—those of Mayo and those of Connemara, although the division is by no means clear-cut. Readers of this magazine will already be familiar with the tragic and very human story of Hugh Gordon the pervert smith of Feenoone. Besides this there are stories of the faction-fights between the famous *Gallanaghs* and *Gromastons*; of the sinister stones of Lough Céas; of the escapade at the 1848 election; of the original charity-ball known then as a "cake"; of Boyce Egan's murder; and of the love-story of Jimmy McDonough and Maggie Shiffell.

James Berry could write well. He was in love with his native locality. And these two elements give his writing a flavour which must appeal to any Louisburgh reader. Particularly it will appeal to Louisburgh people who are away from home—as the writer was when he recorded these tales. Their authenticity has been called in doubt; and some reputable historians of the time and district are of the opinion that Berry did not write history. True, some episodes—say the angered blacksmith pounding his furious oaths on the anvil while the terrified, sleepless bailiff dies in horror—do not stand the light of the present day; still the tales are evidently the legends of a people and as such are of consuming interest. Besides, the narrative—so racy of the parish—seems to have lost none of its appeal since it was first read half-a-century ago. The matter may at times be far-fetched, but apparently it is always a fiction rooted in fact and the explanations and sidelights by the author give a very valuable social picture of the pre- and post-famine Louisburgh. These social "blockings-in" few would, I think, question for validity. Besides—and the Gordon tale is one in point—there are also some pieces which vouch for their own historicity and can be proved true from other sources.

This book is well produced. The cost may appear prohibitive to people who are not in the habit of purchasing such works; but it can be truly said to be excellent value for thirty shillings. Louisburgh readers will find one minor fault. The thrill of seeing a recognisable name in print is denied them too often by mis-spellings which may have been mis-prints in the copy. An "outsider" will care little, but it is slightly irritating to find references to Coramore (for *Carramore* p. 90) and Tubor-na-Long or Tiobód-na-Mung (for *Tiobóid-na-Long*, pp. 80, 111).

But these are like a fly; and the ointment is good. For any person young or old, interested in the history and legends of the parish a century ago, there could be no more welcome present than the "Tales of the West".

L. Ó M.

# Keep Your Word?

(Questions on page 37)

1. A *buachallán* is a yellow wild-flower. The proper English name is "ragweed"; the full Irish name is *buachallán buí*. This flower grows on many road-sides in the parish, and in too many pasture fields (in villages other than yours!). And there was the story of the child stolen by the fairies in a village in the parish. In its place was left a dead child who "turned into a *buachallán*". But that's another story!
2. *Catach* is curly-headed. It has three shades of usage. One is the natural meaning—naturally curly hair, though it more properly refers to the hair-type which has very many, very small, curls; and "runs" in certain families. So if there was a number of families of Magee's, one of them could be the *catach* Magee's. A second usage of the word is less complimentary—it describes a "head of hair that hasn't seen a comb for a week". The third meaning is a mixture, with an element of parental pride added. A father is threatening to chastise his son who is in fact the apple of his eye: "If you do that again, I'll take the *catach* head off you!" A person with a *catach* head is called a *catachán*.
3. *Clabairín* is part of a churn. In the old-time standing-churn, a "churn-dash" was used and this was raised and lowered through a hole in the lid. To prevent cream being splashed up through this hole, a small six- or eight-sided wooden collar (or washer) was slipped onto the handle of the dash and rested at the hole in the lid. This was the *clabairín*. It had a secondary purpose too. When the churning was made, it was dropped into the churn "to help the butter to gather".
4. *Cóitheach* is an unconcerned woman. The word is almost impossible to translate, of course, unless one were to be uncharitable and list some likely qualifiers! To qualify, a female must be strong, uncultivated, swift and of the "bash-on-regardless" type. Absolutely regardless! One imagines, too, that she is black-haired and with a shaking mane. It would appear that there were such women in our community—years and years ago!

5. *Currach*. Tread carefully here! *Currach* has two of these meanings. It means a boggy field—one which has black, peaty soil and is often tilled with potatoes or oats. *Currach* can also mean a boat—the light craft which is still in use by some fishermen along our coast. These boats have got a new lease of life with the advent of *currach*-racing.

In fact, this word has a third meaning from which, very probably, the other two derive. It means restless, stirring. So a restless patient would be thought *currach*. (The surface of the boggy field is often *uneven*; and the boat tosses in sympathy with any ruffle of the water).

6. *Fánach* means careless. It can be used of a person or of a place. A person who has little order or method in his life is *fánach*. It's very *fánach* of you to have your children wandering about aimlessly, for instance; or your hay left in the meadows until September; or your purse left on the counter in the post-office while you have gone down the town. Then there's such a thing as a *fánach* place. "That was a *fánach* place to leave a man's scythe when you got it!" (said the man!). Unscrupulous hens lay their eggs, and careless mothers park their prams, in *fánach* places. An Irish proverb says: "It's a *fánach* place you'd find a lobster!"
7. *Fiodán* is a mountain stream. In the immediate neighbourhood it usually is called *The fiodán* and often is a mearing or boundary between villages or townlands. By a kind compensation of nature the best solvent for removing turf-stains off the hands at spreading-time, is the soft, brownish water of *The fiodán*.
8. *Gliomach* is a lobster—that is the hard-shelled sea-fish which is such a delicate food. Two kinds of lobsters are caught along the shores of the parish—in places like Oldhead, Bunowen, Carramore, Roonagh; but not in the open waters at Carrowniskey, Cross or White Strand. The *gliomach* is caught by being lured into a *pota gliomach* (lobster-pot), a wicker or wire cylinder with easy access and difficult or impossible exit. A good *gliomach* sells for ten shillings. Where to catch one?—the proverb (quoted above) is, in Irish: *Is fánach an áit a bhfuightheá gliomach*. They often turn up in unexpected places!
9. *Gruth-buí* is a food made from milk. Literally, the words mean "yellow curds". Recipe: Take one cow approximately two days after calving. Milk same into sterilised vessel and strain yellow

liquid so obtained. Measure *twice* the required amount into a saucepan and, stirring (with excitement) all the while, heat until breaking-point. Decant measures of whey into several *large* bowls; add curds to re-establish natural consistency. Submerge dessert-spoon (or table-spoon, to taste) in mixture, place to the lips, and—m-m-m! . . . That's *gruth-buí!* Perhaps, the word is in some way related to our slang word *grub*.

10. *Leisceadóir* is a lazy person. An earlier issue (*Coinneal* 1963, p. 101) gave a description of a *leoiste*. They may be said to be blood-brothers. Insofar as there is a distinction between the brothers, it would appear to be that a *leoiste* is lazy just *now*; a *leisceadóir* is habitually, and well known to be, lazy. A woman might have the misfortune to marry a *leisceadóir*. Even if she didn't, she might occasionally find her husband "of a *leoiste*" in bed in the late morning! A *leisceadóir* would draw dole. A *leoiste* might, one particular week, consider it too much trouble to go to town for it!
11. *Meas* is respect. It has overtones of admiration, appreciation, approval and regard. But, as in many other cases, this word must be built properly into a sentence. The preposition is all-important, because it must be the one used in Irish. You don't have *meas* *for* someone. You have "great *meas* *on* the Westerns" or "great *meas* *on* the people from the Side-over". Used in a negative sentence, the term can be rather demolishing: "I have no *meas* on that crowd". The superlative form is *meas madaí* ("respect of the dogs"): "He hadn't *meas madaí* on the spring people put down now"!
12. *Núdaí-nádaí* is a listless person. This is an example of a synthetic word such as Irish often uses to give, in tablet (and onomatopoeic) form, a description which would be too cumbersome in detail. A dumb blonde would perhaps be a *núdaí-nádaí*; so would any person who doesn't measure up to his position, or is unable to take his place in conversation, in activity, in giving an opinion or in applying himself to a given situation.  
E.g.: "Here, Michael, give me a hand at this". "*I cannot; I don't know how*". "How would your father do it?" "*I cannot remember just now*". "Do you think should I do it this way?" "*Maybe you could alright. Whatever you think yourself*". Michael is a *núdaí-nádaí!*
13. *Pucán* is a well-fed specimen. A protruding abdomen is the

distinguishing feature. An over-fed pup could be called a *pucán* (and would, if he had also misbehaved by taking milady's nylons for a game of snakes and ladders!). So also could a fat, little, watch-and-chain man (and probably would, if he had terminated a football game in his field, or refused a subscription for a popular cause!).

14. *Rúiteach* is uproar. Just say the word out loud again. Can't you hear it? Usually it has tossing of furniture and bodily movement associated. If a teacher leaves a class-room for a long period, *rúiteach* is an odds-on probability. It occasionally raises its ugly head at committee-meetings. And there is also a parental (domestic) variety; a boy, say, has stayed too long in town while the whole family are tying oats. Arriving at the field at sundown, he is met by a young Job's-comforter: "Where were you? There's *rúiteach!*"
15. *Síóg* is a fairy. This word has fared badly in the change of spellings in recent years. Those who read Irish twenty years or more ago would have met it as *síoeóis*. Incidentally, as far as the study of words goes, a *síóg* is a near-relative of a *bean-sí*. But we are not satisfied with the face-value of such a word; so we make it a dual-purpose one. We apply it to a girl of, say, twelve to eighteen who flits about allegedly interfering with good christian people. If you are her father, she's the one who takes to the well the very bucket you had prepared for feeding the horse; if you are her mother, she's the one that "whips" two knitting-needles to school from the jumper you have half-finished. Or if she's in someone else's house, she may well be the distraction who is casting glad eyes at the son and heir of your house. You wouldn't mind if she was the kind that could make a farmer's wife! The *síóg!*

#### Scoreboard:

All correct—Great *meas* on you!

14-11 correct—Deserving of *gruth-buí!*

10-8 correct—*Leisceadóir?*

7-5 correct—*Fánach!*

Less than five correct—*Núdaí-nádaí!*

## Saying it with Starch

PROBABLY in every community in Ireland—if not in the world—people remember the good sayings of those who lived with them. Proverbs have been handed on as the distilled wisdom of people who have been observing human events and reactions; and transmitted this common-sense to their children. The “Sayings of Poor Richard”, for instance, were a familiar feature of the school-books fifty years ago; and had a fine content of human wisdom. But there are other kinds of ‘sayings’, which—because of how suitable they were to an occasion or circumstance; or because of how unusual they were coming from a well-known character; or because they expressed a clash of opinions, or just simply summed up a situation in a graphic few words—merited the immortality which they received. The French call such a “saying” a *bon mot*; we call them, simply, “spakes”; and many of them not only are being repeated in our parish but they are still being coined to cope with new situations that arise.

One enigma arises in the appreciation or collecting of these. It is that a collector has almost to be *outside* the community to detect the many *spakes* we use. We all notice and hail the superlatives; but there is the old difficulty that by having attention drawn to what is now commonplace among us, we will become self-conscious of our expressions; and so, fewer and fewer people will use or compose *spakes*. However, this risk is balanced by another! In our age of such fast and widespread communications it is not only likely but already probable that our talk, as well as our subjects for conversation, have a same-ness with people’s talk everywhere. We are accepting an ornate bedspread in exchange for the patchwork quilt we had ourselves made! In an effort to salvage some patches from that native quilt the following *spakes* are collected in the hope that others will be remembered, recorded and composed. It will be necessary in some cases to outline the circumstances in which the *spake* was applied.

He had travelled by train from Dublin to Westport during the Second War (the *turf-train* days) and had eaten nothing when he arrived by bus at Louisburgh. Someone asked him would he take a sandwich. “Sandwich?” he said. “The *sandwich I’d want now is a bullock between two breadvans!*”

During the same period the turf-industry was a financial boon. As the woman said, “*Sure it’s England and America to us!*”

Travel has become so easy in recent times. As the man said “*London is only the next village now!*”

It’s quite a change from the time when one arrived, as an emigrant, in a foreign city without having gone to Westport ever, except *en route*. As the woman said “I was standing at the Central Station in New York *and the roof of my mouth got sunburnt looking up at it!*”

There was always hope for an emigrant’s return, however far ahead. As the mother said: “He’s gone now and he’ll be five years before he comes back. *But sure isn’t there three weeks of it gone already!*”

IT WAS in the olden times, and he was an unexpected candidate for election. But he made a speech at Killeen; and *he got such a clapping-up after his speech that the horses pulled their moorings!*

Stratford-on-Avon? “I was indeed. Worked in it!” Shakespeare? “To tell you the honest truth, I was sick and tired of the same gentleman. You went to the tavern and his picture was on the looking-glasses. You came back to your lodgings and he was looking at you from the wall. And you sat down to your tea and *he was of a maneen on top of the spoon!*”

A man explained his method of gaining indulgences for the souls in Purgatory on the November days: “First, I do a visit each for my father and mother; then I do one for any near friend or relative that’s dead. And after that I *bulk the rest o’ them!*”

Two men had a long debate on a hayrick before the whole *meitheal*. One of them continued to reduce the other’s arguments by short and funny retorts. The other eventually put his fork under his arm-pit and said: “*Thomas, you’d rot salt!*”

A young man married a widow who already had four of a family. But one of his friends was worried: “Often you’d get a lot of trouble *from them ready-made children!*”

Football verdict: "Last year didn't Mayo go within the black of your nail of beating Galway?"

Domestic economy: "In those times there was little earning. Of course every house had a pair of pigs; but your pair of pigs were going to the market to pay the rent!"

He liked all his family, but one of them was his favourite. "I was screeching fond of Petie"

She had lived her whole long life in the country—in two villages of our parish—and her last few years were spent in hospital. Was she happy there? "Arrah how could I be happy, a gradh, in here where I cannot hear the cow looing, or the sheep bleating, or the goose itself screeching!"

The spakes are great for describing a person in very few words: There was a very thin and wizened woman; as the other woman said "The cartpin"!

There was the man with a protruding nether lip; as the woman said "He could hold a shilling in coppers in his bottom lip!"

There was the reckless lady-driver of a motor-car; as the man said "She was taking the scrachloch off the rocks on the way to Bunlách!"

There were a father and son who were so much alike that, as the woman said, "they're like you'd split the pratie!"

There was the he-man who was so strong that "if that man hit you on the Square of Louisburgh, you'd be pulled for speeding going down at the church-gate"!

But there was another telling of that; as the man said "You could praise him sitting down!"

Cutting slits in springtime is a delicate job because one must take care to have an 'eye' in each slit. The men of one house came back from the field and criticised the way the lady of the house had cut the seed-potatoes. "Arrah," said the lady, "couldn't God burst out an eye in a potato anywhere he'd like".

## SEANMÓIR NA NAITREACÁ NAORA

This poem was written down from William O'Malley (R.I.P.) native of Bouris who lived in Feenone and who at the age of ninety-eight recited it from memory. It was collected in 1946. It is a short summary of our salvation—with emphasis on the Passion of Christ. —Editor

'SQUALA TÚ SEANMÓIR NA NAITREACÁ NAORA  
NÓ AN PÁIS MÓR O'FULAING CRIOSTA  
A' SÁBÁIL SIOL ÉABA AR NA PIANTAÍ  
AR IPREANN SALAC NA NODAMHAN SIORAÍ?  
'AÉAIR Ó, 'SQUALA TÚ UAMHAR AN AINGIL  
NUAIR A ÉUS MÉ AN LÓCRANN DÓ AS MO DEAS-LÁM,  
NUAIR A RINNE SÉ SMAOINEAD ZRÁNNNA, SALAC,  
ZO MB'FEARR É FÉIN ZO MÓR NÁ MISE,  
AGUS TÁ MÉ RÉRÓ LEIS ZO OTÍ LÁ AN BREITÍUNAIS.  
ACÉ LEIS AN SCÉAL SIN A BÁNAÍO D NA FLAITEIS  
NUAIR A CUIREAD LUÉT NA SEACÉ N-AIMSEARA AMAÉ AS;  
TRIAN SAN AER ACU AGUS TRIAN EILE SAN UISCE,  
SUS TRIAN EILE IN IPREANN NA NAOM-AITREAC  
AGUS TRIAN EILE(!) I BPRÍOSÚN ÚUB, ÚORCA, SÁLAC.  
'AÉAIR Ó, ZOIRÉ'N UUAIS NÁ SÁSÚ  
A GLACAS TÚ AR SON SIOL ÉABA A SÁBÁIL?  
NAC BOÉT AN SCÉAL É 'OTIOCPAD IS 'OTÁMIC  
"A UGINT ZO HPREANN AR DEAGÁN ÁBAR?  
"NÍ GLACPAID MÉ," AR SEISEAN, "UUAIS NÁ SÁSÚ  
AR SON SIOL ÉABA UUIZ A SÁBÁIL  
ACÉ FUIL MIC RÍ ZAN COIR ZAN ÉÁINEAD  
'ÓOIRTEAD AR A SON, SAIL A BPAZA SIAO PÁROÚN."  
"CAITPÍO SIAO SIN FÁIL, 'AÉAIR, ZRÁ ZEAL,  
MÁS NÍ ZUR FÉIOIR ÚUIMNE 'DEÁNAM."  
ACÉ SIÚO A ÉÚRLING A' PÉARLA MAR TIOCPAD AINGEAL AS PÁRÉAS  
MAR TIOCPAD SOILLSE DE ZAC ZRÉIMNE LÁ BRED AR A' BPAZAIZ  
ZUR ISLIZ SÉ PAOI OÍVEAN PAOI BROINN NA MAIZOINE ZLÓRMHAIK  
ZUR FULAIK SÍ É NA TRÍ RÁITE ZO H-UIMAL, POIZOEDÉ, CÚÉAL,  
NÁIREAD;

Ad níorb fáda ansin gur táimic réamh an oíche breá sin,  
Gur tóg sí lóiscín go suarach sa' stábla,  
San tine, san còinneal, san bean na truaige  
Go bhfuair sí a h-don-mhac naofa, beannaíte, ar uaigneas,  
Níorb fáda ansin go raib Muire buartha  
Gur éirigh sí heróio amach agus a sluaite.  
Marbhais sé na mílte naoimh an uair sin  
A' súil go bhfaod sé Críosta ina scuallaic.  
O'imigh Muire an naoú h-oíche  
Agus a h-don-mhac naofa beannaíte, ar uaigneas.

Níorb fáda ansin go dtáimic Críosta i scéill máit 's i  
otuiscint  
'Siúl na tíre—É féin agus na h-aspaic.  
Ad o'imigh sé uachtú ó á pícead la ar a bhásais  
Gur leanas a' t-don-mhac naofa, beannaíte,  
Gur táimicead suas leis faoi óláas gan peacú.  
"Imigh uaim" ar Seisean ve glórta baois' sciota, "agus ná  
fanaisí lom,  
"Tá mé braitte agus beiré mé gabta gan magad."  
"Ná h-abair coíche é a' máistir beannaíte  
Go séanfaim tú—ná na h-aspaic!"  
"Ó cuir ó vo óccas, a pheadair.  
Séanfaid vo beal trí h-uair mé saic a oí máirim."  
Cuair sé ven ré sin istead sa gáirín  
Gur léig sé oíbh, an t-don-mhac naofa beannaíte.  
Góit Eoin agus pheadair; agus góit sé féin go mór-mór  
Ós aige bí ábar!  
Níorb fáda ansin go dtáimic lúas gránna istead sa gáirín,  
Agus tug sé pós óó—agus ní le grá óó!  
Níl don péist acu 'á otugad an srannú  
Nac otugad an vornán feola amach ón scéim leofa.  
"Acair ó, ní féadaim féin an páis mór futaing  
Ar méro an sciúrseal' geobas mise 'máiread."  
"A mic, nár góit tú an páis mór futaing  
Ar son Síol Éada uilig a sábháit  
Ar bhantáí Iprinn agus na tinte láir?"  
"Ó góitais, 'Acair, a grá góit.  
Más ní gur féidir úimne beánam  
Ad go ngeoba síad máirínas ó pheadair go grástaí.

'Eoin, fásaim ort cúram mo mátar  
Mar tá paitíos mór orm go bhfuil a' bás orm."  
O'imigh Eoin ins an áit a raib Muire.  
M.:] "'Eoin, a bhaca tú mo leanbh?"  
E.:] "'Connaiceas é, a rí-bean beannaíte, tá sé i lámáí a namhad  
gabta."  
O'éirigh Muire anois go h-uimhál, foighead agus go misniúil;  
Níorb fan sí lena cóiríú na lena sochrú,  
I mbealaí uaigneada i bhfad ó tíoréaí  
Ag iarraid ó 'sábháit ar bás na h-aoime.  
Níorb aigh sí clocaí na mbóitire gá gortú  
Gur táimic sí san áit a raib an gároa gá sochrú.  
Tic Muire faoi na clocaí;  
Bí a roiscí míne ag sílead fola,  
Gur tóig Eoin ar a beas-lám suas í.  
Cuir sí ualad mór 'rte is lasar.  
"'Eoin, cé hé sin tuas i gcrann na páise?"  
"Nac h-aiéniomh tú vo mac, a mácair?"  
"A liadcaí lá is oíche éaic tú 'muig liom  
Vo ceann imo brollad ag úil mo éice  
Agus ag síul na tíre, tú féin agus na h-aspaic;  
Nac voilig vomsa anois m'adon-mhacín 'aíne;  
Nac bhfuil a ceann gearrta agus a beal briste  
Agus a' tsráio seo uilig lán dá cuio fola?"  
"Ó éist a mácair," ar Seisean, "is ná góit go cráite.  
Níl doimne góiteas, a mácair, trí braon fám' páis mór  
Nac bhfuigpíro cuio ve mo écair naofa;  
Is ní baol vo Ipreann go brád!"  
Amén a Tíarna.

#### THE IRISH LANGUAGE IN LOUISBURGH

"... With the exception of the districts between points 52 (Louisburgh) and 53 (Curraun), native Irish speakers can be found around the Mayo coast in isolated pockets. In point 52 (Doughmackeon, . . . near Louisburgh, . . .), I had to rely entirely on one subject, a man of over eighty years. His daughter, who is a school-teacher, told me after that she had never known that her father knew so much Irish. This is an indication of the time which has elapsed since Irish was spoken in this area. No native speakers seem to be left in the stretch of country between Louisburgh, Westport, Newport, and almost as far as Mallarany . . ."  
—HEINRICH Wagner. A linguistic atlas and survey of Irish dialects. Article in *Lochlann*, a review of Celtic Studies, vol. 1, Oslo 1958.

## "Tom the Cobbler"

PADRAIC BURKE, L.S., CH., F.S.

My memory of the cobbler  
Brings happy thoughts to mind:  
He doesn't cobble now at all.  
Those days are all behind.  
In bygone days when school would end,  
And, sent down to his house,  
I knew he'd have a kinder word,  
No grumble and no grouse.  
"I want those shoes half-sole'd", I'd say,  
"As soon as e'er you can".  
"Alright, come down on Saturday,  
"I'll have them done, young man".  
"Tell me how is yer this-and-that?"  
He'd inquire about the lot;  
"Sit down and take the fire's heat—  
" 'Tis cold weather that we've got".  
He'd even let me smoke a cig.,  
And not pretend to see;  
But I often caught him (well, once or twice)  
Looking over his specs at me.  
He'd sit there on his little stool,  
With leather-aproned waist,  
The only cobbler in the town:  
His work must be in haste.  
I'd love to see him work again,  
His lips full of fittie tacks;  
He never missed to tap each one—  
He seemed to have some special knacks.  
Long sheets of leather there to choose,  
Shoes in red and black—  
Well, Tom, it's just like yesterday,  
These memories all roll back.  
Now people rush to posh heel-bars,  
With stiletto heels that crack,  
To get them glued by big machines  
Far from your *tickety-tack*.  
I think of you and all your work,  
And wish you long years of rest,  
For no matter what machines can do,  
The cobbler still is best!

## Passing of a Story-teller

I SHALL miss him. Especially I'll miss him on Sunday: it was obviously *his* day of the week. When he walked down the middle of the street after Mass with his own independent air and confident, measured step; or when he stopped here and there to exchange weekly remarks with an adult, or make his own small-talk for a child, one often felt that it was more like a scene from some dramatic work which could not be real *now*. Yet there he was, scanning the whole spectrum of life's ages: a man born on September 6, 1868 who lived, as his father did, for ninety-eight years. He died on September 22, 1966.

To say he was unique is too easy a description; still, there are very many senses in which there was just no other one like him. Not just those clean-cut features, the neat navy-blue suit, the distinctive necktie, the soft fawn-coloured hat, the trim moustache, the expressive and ever-changing face-lines, and the particular kind of Irish he spoke—which always reminded me of the tasty, crisp and wholesome crackle of *caiscín* bread; it was the collection of all these that made him so different to others; that and the great *life* that was in him, keeping him always happy and giving him the gift of a great story-teller. Happiness, I do believe, paid a big part in his living so long and being so active to the end.

He was a storyteller of quite remarkable talent. I shall not exaggerate: it is my firm opinion, after having seen him make some tape-recordings of his stories, that he would have made a most successful television personality and that it was unfortunate—for us—that that invention came too late for him. His voice recorded exceptionally well with clarity and resonance; and what was visual—his hands, fingers, eyes, eyebrows, the inclinations of the head—all added rewarding dimensions to the tales he told. Often, indeed, these were couched in extravaganza, but the imagery, the art and the nuance gave entertainment and pleasure at many levels. One had only to study his impact on children to see this—but then one seldom did, for you too were captured and drawn into his audience.

Inevitably, there were people who did not appreciate his gift and

his way. One doesn't walk down the middle of the road in Louisburgh (or, I presume, any of the other Louisburghs of the country) without inviting remarks, sometimes even *magadh*. I particularly like to remember that he was impervious to that: he "didn't care a tráithnín"! In an age that was notable for *béal bocht* I remember him as the best example I knew of the *béal saidhbir*. His land was the "finest in the parish"; his turf was always *cloch-mhóin*; the wild-duck he shot were always a great burden for a man to carry!

I shall miss him. I have the tape-recordings of course. Not many, but very typical; and priceless now. Occasionally I tune in: "I was within in Westport, in John Jay's, one day and I met this man . . ." or "Coiglim a' tine seo mar do choigil Naomh Seán . . ." or "Bold Robert Emmet, you're the darling of Ireland . . ."—a fine rendering of that ballad when he was ninety years old. But especially I like to return to one recording:

Michael Burke is my name: Ireland is my nation;  
 Doughmackeown is my dwelling-place, and Christ is my salvation;  
 And when that I am dead and gone and all my bones are rotten,  
 These few words will tell my tale when all others are forgotten.

I gcuimhne Dé go rabh sé!

—Editor



"There was once living in this parish . . . . . as far as Doolough, and farer . . ."

## A Story for Bedtime

(Preserved in the actual words of the Storyteller)

THERE was once living in this parish, in the village of K——, a doctor of the name of Doctor Foranan, with his wife. At that time all the country was covered with trees from K—— away back until you'd come to the Killary; and a man could walk on the tops of the trees from Bunowen as far as Doolough; and *farer*. The woods were full of wolves and wild animals of every class; and the trees were that thick that a man would get lost if he went into them. Even the cow that'd go wandering through the woods would be *looin*g for a person to milk her or a calf to suck on her, before her elder would burst, from milk.

Well, this evening Doctor Foranan was sitting in his kitchen, himself and his wife, looking from them; and what should they spy, coming to them from the woods, but a wolf! The wolf was coming to them; moving on three paws, and a paw slinging, until he made straight for the house and threw himself down on the doorstep. "Ora well surely," says Doctor Foranan to the wife, "we're in the stone jug now, anyway. If I go out to him, he'll eat me; and if I don't go out to him, he'll come in and eat the two of us!" "Go out to him," says she. Out he went.



" . . . he'll come in and eat the two of us . . . ." " . . . rubbing the doctor's clothes with his paw, the creature! . . ."



Your wolf was stretched on the broad of his back on the doorstep; and when he seen the doctor coming he stretched to him the paw—the one that was slinging; and what did the doctor see in it but a stump of a thorn, like it would be stuck in the palm of your hand. Well, sorra bit be done but to call the wife. “Bring me out the tweezers.” he said. She brought it to him, and he took the paw in one hand and the tweezers in the other and started pulling. The wolf was *grinning* with the pain, and wrestling on the doorstep—but he never let on!—and the doctor was pulling, pulling until he drew the length of your finger of a thorn out of the foot. Well, the wolf started rubbing the doctor’s clothes with his paw, the creature. “Bring me the vessel!” he says. She brought it to him, with hot water; and he washed the paw and fixed it up for him with all sorts of bandages, and cotton-wool, and sticking-plaster; and let him off. The wolf straightened himself, and then he looked back at them like he’d be winking; and then he made off for the woods again. Very well!

’Twould be about three weeks after that, Doctor Foranan was in his kitchen with his wife, of an evening, looking from them; when what should they see, coming to them from the woods out, only the wolf. And him driving the ten finest wethers of sheep that was loaded with wool and shaking fat! Well he drove them on and left them at the gable at them, as much as to say “Let ye have them, anyway.”

And a few days after that again, Doctor Foranan was sitting with his wife and they seen your wolf coming from the woods again. And him driving, this time, the five most famous *riabhach* cattle; with their elders swelling and their teats standing out, with milk; and left them at the gable at them. And the breed of them *riabhach* cattle is in the parish to this very day!

#### REMEMBERING SION . . .

*Some time ago I noticed that a contributor to the Irish Independent referred to the time when wolves were exterminated in Ireland as being “four hundred years ago.” I had the temerity to tell him that wolves were to be found in Ireland much later than four hundred years ago. I had it on the testimony of that rare character, John Tiernan, N.T. (R.I.P.) of Cregganbawn that there was a wolf in Iar Umhall a little over two hundred years ago. He told me of a man who was journeying from Drummin to Cross in Iar-Umhall and who, having arrived in Cregganbawn, met a friend there who was going to Drummin. He gave his friend the scian fhada which he had brought to protect himself from the wolf in the woods. He himself was now clear of the woods, but at Derrygarve the wolf caught up with him and killed him.—JOHN O’DOWD*

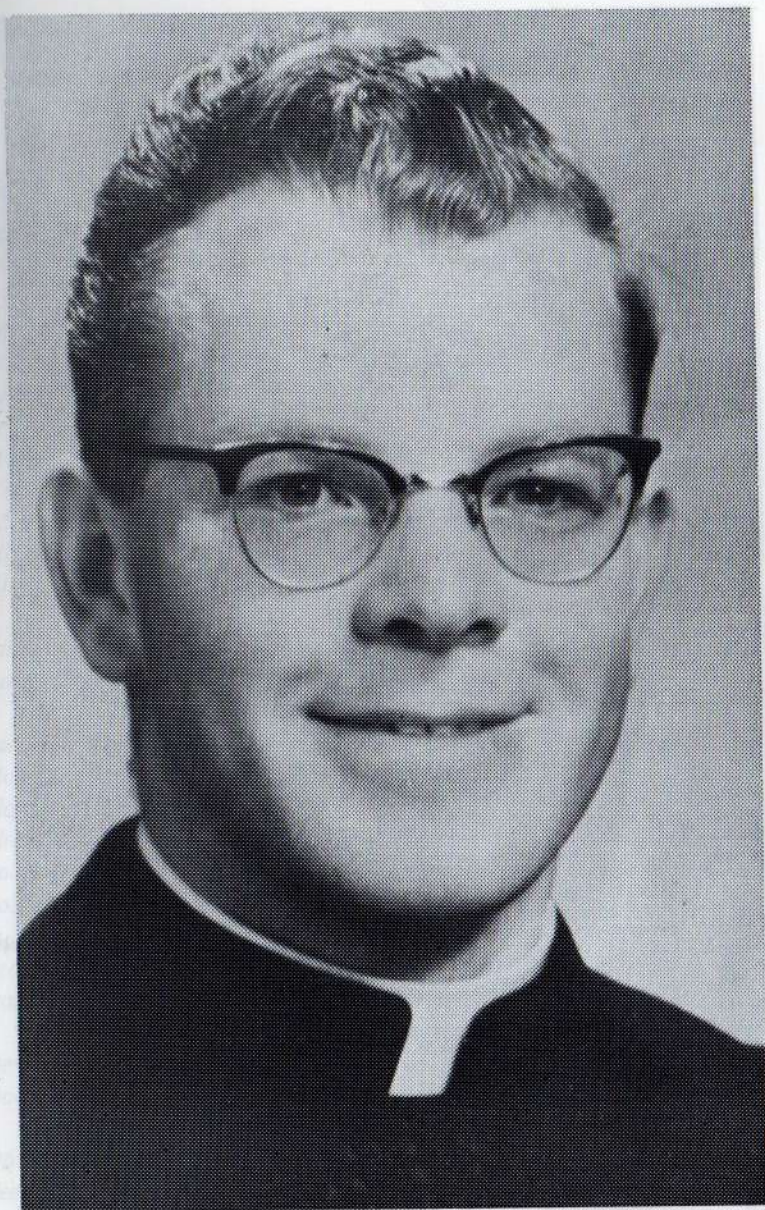
## Parish Review



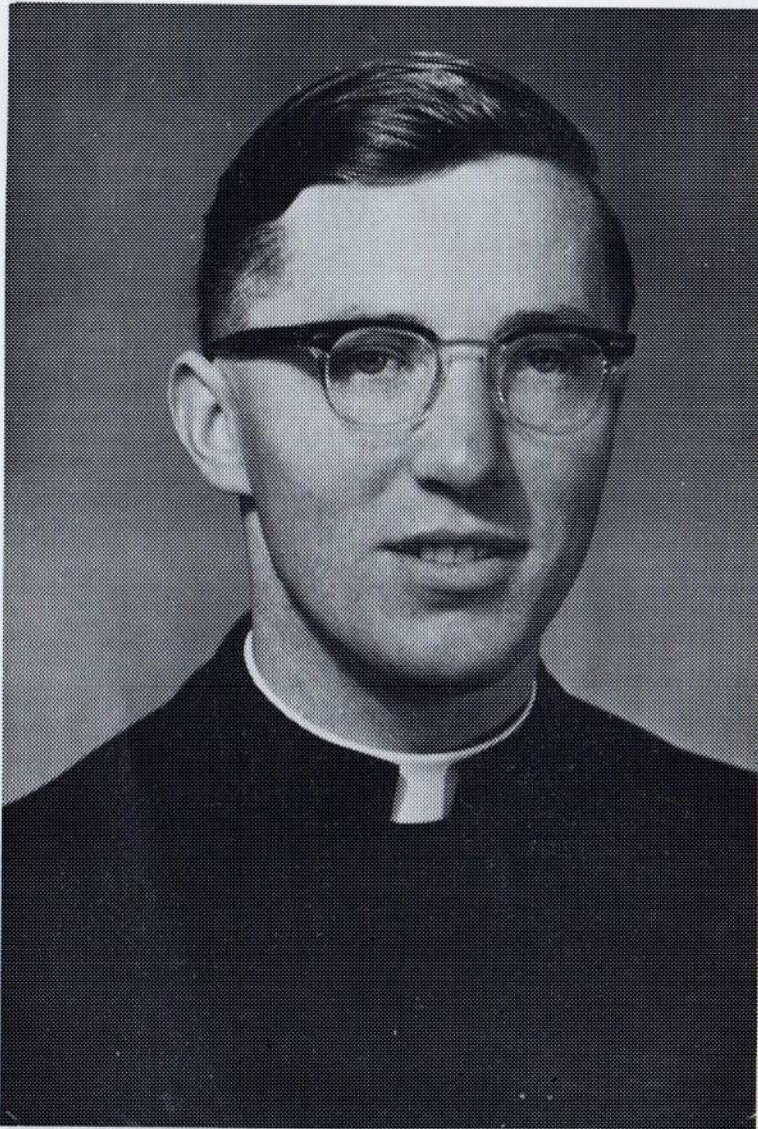
Father Austin Fergus blessing his uncle, Bishop James Fergus, in Maynooth on the day of his ordination.



FATHER GERARD HARNEY: *Born in Louisburgh, son of Thomas and Laurena (Lynch) Harney. Educated at Louisburgh Boys' School (1946—54); Sancta Maria (1954—59); Mungret College, Limerick (1959—61) and Saint Kieran's, Kilkenny. Ordained in Kilkenny 6 June, 1965 by Most Reverend Dr. Birch. He is now a curate at Saint Peter's, Doncaster, Yorks.*



FATHER AUSTIN FERGUS: *Born in Cahir, son of (the late) Michael and Annie (Joyce) Fergus. Educated at Louisburgh Boys' School, Saint Jarlath's, Tuam and Saint Patrick's, Maynooth. Ordained in Maynooth 20th June, 1965 for the archdiocese of Tuam. He is now a curate in Inisheer, Aran.*



FATHER WILLIE DAVITT: *Born in Curra, son of Patrick and Mrs. (Gavin) Davitt. Educated by Mr. and Mrs. MagRael at Cregganban School. Attended Sancta Maria School, Louisburgh for five years. Studied philosophy at Mungret College, Limerick; and theology at Saint Kieran's, Kilkenny. Ordained in Kilkenny 11 June, 1967 by Most Reverend Dr. Birch for the Diocese of Salford (England). He is now a curate in Saint Thomas More parish in Middleton, Manchester. Father Willie is the forty-ninth priest of the parish of Kilgeever now living.*

## The Place - Names

*The place-names of the parish have, undoubtedly, every one of them, some meaning which refers either to the formation of the land there; or to some event connected with the place; or perhaps to the name of some person. However, what meaning—or which meaning of many possible ones—a certain place-name has is often a matter of conjecture and will very probably remain so. We have been asked to give some of the meanings of names of our villages and townlands, and below we set out the more likely meanings for the list selected.*

*The editor wishes to express thanks to Daithi Uasal Mag Rael, O.S., who has gone to the trouble of analysing the place-names in the following list.*

- Aillmore—AILL MÓR—Great Cliff; perhaps Fál (or Fail) Mór—great wall or foot-ring<sup>?</sup>*  
*Barnawan—BEARNA BÁN—White Gap (in the sand mounds)*  
*Bunlehinshe—DUN LEIT INSE—Meadow or grassland about river mouth (See inis in Dineen)*  
*Carranisky—CEATRÚ AN UISCÉ (?)—Watery Quarter*  
*Cloonaghmanagh—CLUANAC MEÁNAC—Middle Meadow*  
*Cloonlara—CLUSIN LÁRA—Middle Meadow*  
*Cloonty—CLUAINTÍ—Meadow lands*  
*Corragawn—CARAGÁN—Pillar-stone (coirithe) land*  
*Corrigstewawn—CARRAIS STÍOPÁIN (?)—Stephen's rock*  
*Currah—COIRE—Mountainside hollow*  
*Cross—CROS—A cross (?)*  
*Dadreen—DÁ OTRIAIN—Two-thirds (probably of some holding no longer remembered)*  
*Devlin—DAIMTEANN—Cattle enclosure*  
*Dooaghtry—DUIÑA EÁCRAÍ—Horse mound; perhaps Dubh-uchtai—the black breasts (of rocks)*  
*Dowoolra—DUIÑA IOLRA—Eagle mound*  
*Feenune—Woodlands (?); Fiodh=wood*  
*Kelladoon—COILL Δ' OÚIN—Wood of the fort*  
*Kilsallagh—The traditional pronunciation here is Kell Salach (Coill Salac). Although salach has an unmistakable meaning*

in Irish, Kilsallagh people will be relieved to know that the word can also mean a willow tree; or, as we say, a "sally".

The first part of the name is not *kill* (a church) but *coill* (a wood);

*Kinnadoohey*—Ceann na Duimáí—Top or end of sandy lands

*Kinnakellew*—Ceann na Coille—Top or end of wood

and so it is most likely that the name means The Wood of the Willows; (and anyway, that sounds much more poetic than any other meaning!)

*Leckacheely*—Leic (leac) a' éadlais—Flat of the rods (see *Caolach* in Dineen)

*Roonkeel*—Rón Caol—Small, flat-topped hillock

*Roonith*—Small, flat-topped hill

*Six Noggins*—Sé Cnaigín—(see Dineen: *cnaigín*—a land measure)

*Tallabawn*—Talamh Bán—Green (grassy) land



"... as much as to say: Let ye have them anyway ..."



"... is in the parish to this very day ..."

## Louisburghman in Peru



IN JANUARY 1966, Father Justin Morahan (Main Street), left Shannon for missionary work in Peru, South America. He has volunteered for five years' service there with the Society of Saint James—a society of diocesan priests sponsored by Cardinal Cushing of Boston for missionary work among the people of South America, who are so much in need of priests. Father Justin is at present stationed in North Peru—at Abancay.

*The following letter has been received by the editor:*

Father Justin's departure for South America is of an importance that people of our home district of Iar-Umhall do not recognise.

While I lay awake this morning, I was thinking of the fact that, when Saint Patrick left Ireland, escaping from slavery in Mayo, (most probably near our own mountain of Cruach Phádraic) he later on saw, as in a dream, the people beside the western sea calling him to return from Europe and bring them the light of the Gospel. Now I see the inevitable sequence of history—the people of Peru calling out to Iar-Umhall for a man to bring the Faith to them.

I think this is a wonderful privilege that Iar-Umhall is sending a priest there; and there should now be a getting-together of the people in Iar-Umhall to get them to adopt the parish to which Father Justin is eventually going. South America is the most critical spot in the world at the present moment in the war against the Church. The souls of two hundred million people are in peril. The least we can do is to go to Mass and Holy Communion once a month to help that mission.

JOHN D. O'DOWD

Falduff

## Louisburgh Agricultural Show Results 1967

THE ANNUAL SHOW was held in the grounds of the Boys' National School on Wednesday, August 16. The main awards were as follows:

**Garvey Cup (for best cow)**—Richard O'Malley, Main Street

**Durkan-Philbin Cup (for best bullock)**—Michael Sweeney, The Square

**Furmoyle Cup (for best breeding ewes)**—John Kilcoyne, Furmoyle

Other awards:

**Cattle**—Pádraic O'Toole, Mooneen; John Philbin, Bridge Street; Richard O'Malley, Main Street; John Durkan, Bridge Street; Noel Hawkes, Cahir; Kieran O'Reilly, Chapel Street; Michael Sweeney, The Square; John O'Malley, Main Street; Pádraic O'Malley, Bridge Street

**Horses**—Patrick Gallagher, Cahir; John J. McDonnell, The Square; Michael Keegan, Collacoön

**Donkey**—Peter O'Malley, Main Street

**Sheep**—Hugh Kelly, Brackloon, Westport; William Bennett, Shraugh; J. Scanon, Furmoyle; T. Scanlon, Furmoyle; John Tiernan, Doughmackeown

**Poultry and Eggs**—Liam McNamara, Chapel Street; Jim O'Malley, Main Street; Mrs. O'Toole, Aillemore; Mrs. S. Costelloe

**Cookery**—Noel Hawkes, Cahir; Mrs. S. Costelloe; Anne Gray, Chapel Street; Eileen McNamara; Deirdre Keane; Anne Keane, Bridge Street; Mrs. McConville, Main Street; Mrs. T. O'Malley; F. Keegan, Collacoön

**Garden and Farm Produce**—Ger Gibbons, Askelane; Mrs. S. Costelloe; Pat O'Malley, Main Street; Ger O'Malley, Main Street; Tom Langan, Aughagower; Andrew Durkan, Bridge Street; Pat Berry, Carrowniskey; Joe Fergus, Cahir; Pat Keegan, Collacoön; Mrs. T. O'Malley, Aillemore; Eamonn O'Malley, Bunowen; Pat O'Reilly, Shraugh

**Fruit, Honey and Flowers**—Rosarie O'Toole, The Sycamores; Teresa O'Toole, The Sycamores; Tom Langan, Aughagower; James McEvelly, Bunowen; Evelyn Coughlan, Cahir; Mrs. N. Dunne, Bunowen; Miss E. Cox, Main Street; Eileen Durkan, Bridge Street; Elizabeth Aldridge, Bunowen; Pat McHugh, Main Street.

**Home Crafts**: Mrs. Cannon, Chapel Street; Mrs. T. O'Malley, Aillemore; Mrs. Costelloe, Knappagh; Mary Fergus, Cahir; Concepta Ball, Tooreen; Anne Maxwell, Ballyhip; Mrs. Mary Murphy, Westport; Maureen Heaney, Bunowen; Mrs. Eamonn O'Donnell, Leenane Road; Mrs. P. Cox, Main Street; Mary Durkan, Westport; Mary Sammon, Askelane; Marie O'Toole, Mooneen; Mairin O'Donnell, Main Street; Mrs. Maura O'Toole, Roonagh; Mrs. O'Malley, Aillemore; Mrs. McConville; Una Gray, Chapel Street

**Other Sections**—Pat Cox, Main Street; Patrick Gallagher, Falduff; Pádraic Durkan, Belclare; and Rose Love, Main Street



"If the judges would only come now . . ."—Michael Gallagher (Aitinaveen) and John Scanlon (Brackowney) with others, await the decision



V.I.P. treatment for Paddy Maxwell! The reception committee officer is John McDonnell.

## Grainne-Uaile Hand Crafts

EARLY in 1967 Father McDyar of Glencolumbkille, County Donegal, well known for his enthusiasm in *saving the West*, was invited to give a lecture in Louisburgh. In his lecture he outlined three ways which, in his opinion, would be of benefit in the "Defence of the West" campaign. These were: (1) increased agricultural output; (2) tourism; and (3) handcraft industry. Subsequent to Father McDyar's visit, committees were formed to deal with these three aspects of the campaign in our locality.

On March 15, at a meeting presided over by Father J. J. Moran, a committee was selected to take charge of the *Gráinneuaile Hand Crafts*. The committee was comprised of: Co-ordinator—Father J. J. Moran; Chairman—Joseph Broderick; Vice-Chairman—Miss Nora Lyons; Secretary—Mrs. M. McConville; Assistant Secretary—Mrs. K. O'Malley; Treasurer—Charles Gaffney; Quality Control—Miss A. Fergus.

The knitting and crochet is done by the women in their homes; the committee arrange for sales and for mail orders. Garments produced by the women include children's, ladies' and men's Aran knit sweaters and lumber jackets; crochet blouses and jumpers; Irish crochet collars with traditional design; mitts, socks, ski-caps and crochet berets. Many tourists have bought and ordered Aran knit wear; and it is gratifying that there have been several repeat orders.

A look at the order-book reveals that goods have been mailed to California, Chicago, Clinton, Nebraska, New York and Colorado Springs in the United States; and in England to Hull, Plymouth, Essex, Cornwall and Surrey.

At the present time the committee cannot cope with all the orders as fast as they arrive; but it is planned that more work will be done during the long winter nights so that a big reservoir of stock will be on hand to meet the demands of the 1968 tourist season.

*Gráinneuaile Hand Crafts* has its own distinctive label and note-paper. Some Louisburgh-born people, visitors to their home town from their new homes in America, were really thrilled to see on the garments they purchased:

Gráinneuaile Hand Crafts, Louisburgh

Made in the Republic of Ireland

Main Street.

Mollie McConville



Una Grey, Evelyn O'Malley, Evelyn Coughlan and Mary McNamara rival their prize-winning displays at the Show



Relaxing (?) in the display room: Dolores Cannon, Marie O'Dowd, Marie O'Toole and Mary O'Malley



MR. AUSTIN CAWLEY, *Sligo*, and his  
bride, MISS VERA CANNON, *Shraugh*

## LOUISBURGH



MR. JOHN SHANAGHER, DIP., DY., SC., *Elphin, Co. Roscommon* and his bride  
MISS YVONNE MCKEOWN N.T., *Main Street, Louisburgh*. The marriage was in  
*Saint Patrick's Church, Louisburgh* on 11 August, 1966, (officiating priest—Fr.  
*James Gibbons, C.C., Mayo Abbey*). The reception was at *Breaffy House Hotel*;  
the honeymoon in *Yugoslavia*.

## WEDDINGS



MR. HUGH MCKENNA, *Batbriggan*, and  
his bride, MISS MARY B. GIBBONS,  
*Cloonlaura*. The marriage was in *Louis-  
burgh Church* on 30 June 1965



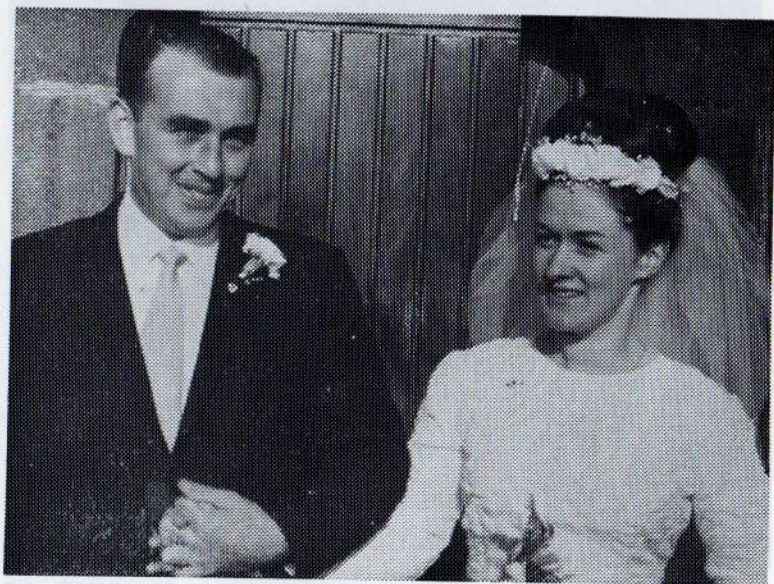
MR. SEAN MCEVOY, N.T., *Toomore, Foxford*, and his bride MISS VERA O'MALLEY,  
N.T., *Leachta, Louisburgh*. The marriage was in *Saint Patrick's Church, Louisburgh*  
on 15 July, 1965. Officiating priest—Father James McDyar.



MR. JOHN FRANCIS KERR, *Derry*, and his bride, MISS EILEEN M. DUNNE, *Bunowen*. The marriage was at the Church of the Epiphany, San Francisco on 11 September 1965. Officiating priest was Father Gerard McEvilly



MR. JOHN DUANE, *Athenry*, and his bride, MISS FRANCES MERCI DUNNE, *Bunowen*. The marriage was in Louisburgh Church on 11 August 1965. Officiating priest: Father Gerard McEvilly

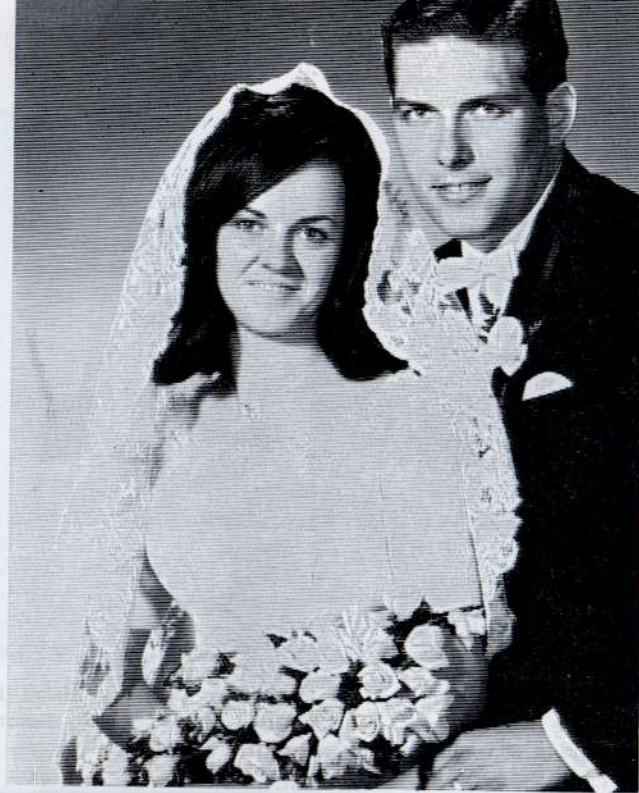


SERG. MICHAEL J. NEEDHAM, *The Colony*, and his bride MISS PATRICIA O'CONNOR at Mantua Church, Castlerea, 9 November 1966



MR. MICHAEL BALL, *Ballyhip* and his bride MISS MARY JOSEPHINE O'TOOLE, *Thomhill, Lecanvey*. The marriage was in Lecanvey Church on 28 September, 1966. Officiating priest—Father John Ball.





MR. WILLIAM MICHAEL CURRAN, C.F.I., Ohio, and his bride,  
MISS SALLY ANN O'GRADY, Kilgeever. The marriage was in  
Saint Mark's Church, Cleveland, on 15 April 1967



MR. PATRICK J. GALLAGHER, B.A.,  
H.DIP.ED., Aitinaveen, and his bride,  
MISS GERTRUDE O'GRADY, Kilgeever.  
The marriage was in Louisburgh Church  
on 17 August 1966

## MARRIAGES IN THE PARISH CHURCH

- 1965    **30 June** Hugh McKenna (Balbriggan) and Mary B. Gibbons (Cloonlaura)  
           **15 July** Seán McEvoy (Toormore, Foxford) and Vera O'Malley (Leachta)  
           **22 July** Thomas J. O'Malley (Tallabawn) and Mary B. Ryder (Falduff)  
           **9 August** John Duane (Athenry) and Merci Dunne (Bunowen)
- 1966    **11 August** John Shanagher (Ballaghadereen) and Yvonne McKeown (Louisburgh)  
           **17 August** Patrick J. Gallagher, B.A., H.Dip.Ed., (Aitinaveen) and Gertrude O'Grady (Kilgeever)  
           **20 October** Michael Joseph O'Malley (Tallabawn) and Mary Kilcoyne (Shrawee)
- 1967    **10 April** John Francis Beirne (Halifax) and Mary Brigid Sammon (Carramore)  
           **9 August** James O'Malley (Roonith) and Noreen Jordan (Carrowniskey)  
           **14 August** Patrick J. Corrigan (Belturbet) and Gertrude O'Reilly (Shraugh)  
           **26 August** Thomas K. Toolin (Dublin) and Kathleen O'Malley (Cahir)  
           **5 September** Cecil Horkan (Belclare, Westport) and Sal Prendergast (Accony)  
           **4 October** Edward T. O'Reilly (Cashel, Islandeady) and Julia V. Cannon (Doughmackeown)

## *Congratulations also to . . .*

MR. M. J. O'TOOLE, Co. C., (Mooneen), who was elected Chairman of the Mayo Agricultural Committee,

MICHAEL J. LYONS and his brother JOHN (Main Street), LORCAN GEOGHEGAN (Bunowen Road) and WILLIAM McNAMARA (Chapel Street)—all of whom got their B.A. degrees.

JOHN GIBBONS (Accony), who qualified as a national teacher and also won an All-Ireland (under-21) Football medal with Mayo.

PADRAIC MCKEOWN (Main Street), who was been called to Drumcondra Training College.

NURSES MARY FERGUS and ANNE O'MALLEY, recently qualified.

MICHAEL J. O'BRIEN (Main Street), who was awarded the Henry Hutchinson Scholarship at University College, Galway.

GARDA PATRICK JOYCE, recently trained, now appointed to Sligo.

REDMOND LYONS and PADRAIC O'DONNELL, (Main Street), who have passed the Gáarda entrance examination and are now training at Templemore.

# Parish Survey

THE DATA presented below have been collected as a result of a survey held by the Defence of the West Committee. Questionnaires were sent to all householders in the parish except those living in the town. This was because of the rural bias of the questions and the nature of information which was sought. The survey was made in Spring, 1967, so returns entered for crops, manuring, etc., refer to the year ending December 1966. Some of the questionnaires were not returned: 333 out of some 380 were returned. Of these some were not fully filled, hence discrepancies will appear if totals are compiled.

Table A—Householders

Over 60 years old	40—60 years old	Under 40 years old	Totals
119	174	40	333
Married—69	Married—99	Married—17	M.—185
Single—29	Single—59	Single—21	S.—109
Widowed—21	Widowed—16	Widowed—2	W.—39

Table B—Occupants and their houses

Male	Female	Children at school	finished School and at home	family members away	
				in Ireland	elsewhere
741	613	332	166	159	313

Houses with running water—140; with Bathroom—113

Table C—Valuation

Less than £5	£5—£10	£10—£15	£15—£20	£20—£30
157	126	30	9	3

Table D—State of Farms; Acreage, arable acreage etc.

No. of farms less than 15 acres	15—20 acres	20—25 acres	25—30 acres	30—40 acres	over 40 acres	Total
99	67	47	45	25	45	328
arable acres: 672	692	437	608	461	1090	3958

No. of acres (a) needing reclamation	(b) needing fertilizer	(c) suitable for forestry	(d) tested in last five years	(e) rented from Land Comm.	(f) rented from neighbour
3480	4914	4373	1084	300	291

The survey showed that there are sixty-one shareholders in Co-operatives. To the question *When did you last lime?* 120 replied "Never"; 190 had limed within the last ten years. Fifty farms had no fertilizers put out in 1966; the total amount put out is returned at 490 tons which seems an exaggeration. To the question, *Will you co-operate to get lime and fertilizer?* The replies were: Yes—281; No—25.

Table E—Tillage (in acres)

Potatoes	Barley	Oats	Roots	Total
175	37	281	22	515

Table F—Animals

Cows	Cattle over 1 yr.	Cattle under 1 yr.	Ewes	other Sheep	Sows	other Pigs	Horses	Donkeys
1,355	1,474	1,251	4,016	2,941	11	84	126	237

Sixty-six farmers sold milk to the creamery: 262 did not.

Table G—Machinery

Tractors—14	Grinders & Crushers—3	Cultivator—1
Trailers—8	Manure Distributors—2	Potato Digger—1
Mowing Machines—21	Threshing Mills—2	Drainage Equipment—1
Sprayers—23	Milking Machines—2	Reaper & Binder—1

In view of an undertaking given of treating the survey in confidence no further break-down of the figures is attempted here. Some further facts and conclusions however will be of interest.

The number of milk-supplier has been kept constant and at peak-period some six-hundred gallons of milk leave the parish daily. Suitable (moist) weather gave prolonged season this year which may be difficult to repeat.

Besides, although the tonnage quoted for fertilizers used in the parish (490 tons) last year may be in excess of the facts; it is true that during 1967 a definite increase of from 33% to 50% was registered in the amount of fertilizers, sprays, weed-killers, etc., put out on farms compared with the actual amounts in 1966.

One disappointing table of statistics is that showing the acreage of tillage—a mere 515 acres was tilled out of an arable acreage (according to the survey) of 3958 acres. This has been pointed to by observers as the basic defect in the economy of the parish as it stands. The milk industry is obviously an encouraging and remunerative one and has not at all reached the number of farms, that with an effort it could. It has already been a success beyond any doubt. But for its economic potential to be fully realized more foodstuffs must be raised at home; at cost price. This is especially true of winter foodstuffs (for the milch cows) which if bought over the counter will probably cost more. The importance of raising crops on the farms will be realized more clearly if one considers that some £8,000 to £10,000 leave the parish *annually* for animal foodstuffs alone.

Other statistics:

Sub-district population	2,800	Townlands	- - - -	120
Town population	325	Schools	- - - -	9
Registered unemployed	300	Hotels (including two on Clare Island)	- - - -	6
Area of subdistrict	67,000 acres	Dance-halls	- - - -	3
Public Houses	16			

Two schools, Tully and Bundorcha, closed during the last year. The pupils there are being accommodated in Louisburgh and Leenane respectively; and are conveyed by minibus, to and from, each schoolday.

Rainfall statistics for the parish show that this year the rainfall (so far) has been heavier than the corresponding period of last year.

# Tidy Towns Competition

Bord Fáilte has supplied the following report on the town's entry for 1967:

Name of Town: LOUISBURGH, CO. MAYO

<i>Maximum Marks</i>	<i>Actual Marks</i>
35 Effort involved	23
35 General cleanliness and tidiness (20)	
Absence of Litter (15)	20
15 Condition of streets and sidewalks and open spaces	7
15 Appearance of public, private and commercial premises	10
10 Colour, colour harmony and general appearance	6
10 Planting, gardens, trees, shrubs and flowers	6
10 Condition of hedgerows, verges, footpaths, kerbs, gutters, etc., on approach roads	5
10 Standard of fences and paved and grassed areas	5
10 Absence of unsightly objects	5
150	87

### *Adjudicator's Remarks:*

*Approaching from the Westport direction:* the walling on the left-hand side of the road here tends to be rather untidy and the hedgerows on the opposite side, while they have received some attention, could have received more. Further on, the grounds of the Convent on the left have received a fair amount of attention but the grounds of the Church adjoining looked rather neglected. The small rusted gate into the Church did not improve the situation. The grounds of the Grotto just opposite have not received the same attention as in former years and the railing around this Grotto was rusted and in need of redecoration. The grounds of the Garda Station on the right here looked very well indeed and had a very fine display of flowers.

*Continuing on into the town (Main Street\*):* some of the properties here looked very well indeed and a number had been brightly painted. However, there is still room for the use of quite a lot more colour. A good deal of litter was noted along here.

*Turning left in the centre of the town (Chapel Street\*):* the properties here have been well maintained and a number have been redecorated. However, there was quite a large amount of litter to be seen in this area. Further on the right there is a most untidy open space which has been used for dumping and the adjoining site between this and the new school was very much overgrown. Grass was noted growing from the kerbs and from the base of the wall on the left-hand side here. The new school building here looked attractive indeed but it was a pity to see the grounds completely neglected.

*Returning to the centre of the town and continuing straight on (The Square, towards Bunowen\*):* the properties here looked well and the grounds of the guest houses on the left have been well looked after. Further on, however, the margins on both sides of the road here looked most untidy indeed and the Church grounds on the left have not received sufficient attention.

*Returning to the centre of the town and turning right (Bridge Street\*):* again a large number of the premises here have been well maintained although again it was noted that quite a lot of litter was to be seen. Further on, the area in the vicinity of the bridge here looked very poor indeed and has been completely neglected. This is indeed a pity as this area, with a certain amount of work and some imagination, could look very attractive indeed. Some flyposting was noted on the walls of the bridge itself.

*Summing up,* Louisburgh does not appear to be maintaining its position and it is obvious that the same preparation has not been made for this year's competition as in former years. Particularly disturbing this year was the large amount of litter to be seen throughout the town."

\*The identification of streets has been added—EDITOR

#### REMEMBERING SION . . . .

*We were at school in Killadoon on a July day in the 1880's—the day after the Pattern of Louisburgh. Some of us had been at the pattern the day before. One boy had got permission to go to the school-yard; and as he had not returned after a long time, our teacher, Mr. Maguire, became concerned and went to look for him. He found him in the yard, innocently engaged in arranging a double-line of pebbles in the form of a cross. When asked what he was doing, his reply—which I often recall—was: "I was making Louisburgh, sir"!*

—COLLECTED

## PARISH COMMITTEES

### MUINTIR NA TIRE:

*Chairman:* Dr. Columb McHugh  
*Secretary:* Michael Gallagher  
*Treasurer:* Seamus O'Dowd

### TOWN PARK COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* Joseph Staunton  
*Secretary:* Dick O'Toole  
*Treasurer:* Richard Lyons

### DEFENCE OF THE WEST CAMPAIGN

#### (a) CRAFTS COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* Joseph Broderick  
*Vice-Chairman:* Miss Nora Lyons  
*Secretary:* Mrs. M. McConville  
*Treasurer:* Charles Gaffney  
*Assistant Secretary:* Mrs. K. O'Malley

#### (b) TOURIST COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* Seamus Durkan  
*Secretary:* Miss Rose Donlon  
*Treasurer:* Patrick O'Malley

#### (c) FARMERS' COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* Anthony McHale  
*Secretary:* John Tiernan  
*Treasurer:* Brendan Lyons

### GAELIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION:

*Chairman:* Patrick O'Malley  
*Secretary:* Michael Philbin  
*Treasurer:* P. J. Keane

### I.C.A. COMMITTEE:

*President:* Mrs. Eileen McNamara  
*Secretary:* Mrs. M. McConville  
*Treasurer:* Mrs. Mary Duffy

### MACRA NA TUAITHE:

*Chairman:* Pádraic O'Malley  
*Secretary:* Eileen McEilly  
*Treasurer:* Anne Keane  
*P.R.O.:* Breta O'Reilly

AGRICULTURAL SHOW COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* J. J. Philbin  
*Secretary:* Michael Gallagher  
*Treasurer:* Seamus O'Dowd

PONY CLUB COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* John J. McDonnell  
*Secretary:* Louis Heneghan  
*Treasurer:* Michael Sweeney

ANGLING CLUB:

*Chairman:* Seamus Durkan  
*Secretary:* J. J. Philbin  
*Treasurer:* Austin Lyons

GUN CLUB:

*Chairman:* Josie Lyons  
*Secretary:* Thomas McHale  
*Treasurer:* Brendan O'Donnell

LEGION OF MARY:

*President:* Michael Gallagher  
*Secretary:* John Tiernan  
*Treasurer:* Patrick Moran  
*Spiritual Director:* Father Sammin

KILLEEN N.F.A. COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* James Gallagher, Dadreen  
*Vice-Chairman:* Thomas Morrison, Kinnakellew  
*Secretary:* Owen McNally, Feenone  
*Treasurer:* Anthony Gibbons, Aillemore

COMMITTEE FOR THE BLIND:

*Chairman:* Oliver P. Morahan  
*Secretary:* Mrs. A. McDermott  
*Treasurer:* Miss Annie B. Casey

COMMITTEE FOR MENTALLY RETARDED:

*Louisburgh Delegates on Westport Committee:* Mrs. J. J. Philbin, Mrs. A. Lyons,  
Miss Annie B. Casey

KNIGHTS OF MALTA:

*Acting Corporal:* Michael Gallagher  
*Secretary:* Miss Ita Prendergast  
*Treasurer:* Patrick Moran  
*Chaplain:* Father Sammin  
*Medical Officer:* Doctor McHugh  
*Ladies' Branch:* Nurse Hannon

F.C.A. COMPANY:

*Lieutenant:* Thomas Duffy  
*Corporals:* Liam Grealish, Michael Philbin

KILLEEN I.C.A. COMMITTEE:

*President:* Mrs. B. Morrison  
*Secretary:* Mrs. O'Malley (Cross)  
*Treasurer:* Mrs. Sammin (Cross)

CARROWNISKEY RACE COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* Michael Gibbons (Roonith)  
*Secretary:* Michael Gibbons (Carrowniskey)  
*Treasurer:* Jim O'Malley (Roonith)

SHEEP BREEDERS' COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* Thomas Morrison  
*Secretary:* Patrick Jennings

PIONEER TOTAL ABSTINENCE ASSOCIATION:

*Chairman:* Patrick Ball  
*Secretary:* Patrick Gallagher  
*Spiritual Director:* Father J. Moran

TULLY N.F.A. COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* Patrick Kitterick  
*Secretary:* Owen Grady  
*Treasurer:* Patrick Cannon

LOUISBURGH PARENTS' COMMITTEE:

*Chairman:* Doctor Columb McHugh  
*Vice-Chairman:* Patrick Duffy  
*Secretary:* Oliver P. Morahan  
*Treasurer:* Patrick Duffy

## Bits and Scraps

I AM never lonely when I have Croagh Patrick over my shoulder. I am not a Mayo man: there is not a drop of Mayo blood in me. And yet each year and often twice a year, when I set out for Mayo, I have a feeling that I am coming home. . . My heart sings as I fish along the Bunowen or when, in the harvest time, I look at the fields of grain so ripe and burnished in the sun that I expect to see the whole crop go on fire. . . .

Need I say that I love Mayo? . . . I have walked out of Louisburgh to the sandhills right down to the waves breaking on the shores and listened to the evening wind whispering like a lover in the bent. I have kissed Carrowniskey river at the point where she flows under the lonely road made sociable by the single telephone line; and I have walked with her down the hilly fields and stayed with her until she lost her beauty and vigour in the wide estuary that meets the Atlantic. And there, on the shore I have marvelled at the power of the great rollers, ten or twelve feet high, smashing their snow-white foaming strength on the beach.

—GEORGE BURROWS: *The Charms of Mayo*

(In *Moonlight in Mayo*, a handbook published by Muintir Mhuigheo).

*Gone West*: We have heard both corn-crakes and grasshoppers constantly in Louisburgh for the past month, so [your correspondent] . . . could find all he wants of them here. They must have gone West.

Bunowen, Louisburgh. R. W. WANN  
—letter in *The Irish Times*, 31/7/1967

A RUMOUR rife in Louisburgh among handball enthusiasts is the restoration of the ball-alley situated in Carramore, just outside the town. Some years ago this was one of the best ball-courts in the area and but for lack of enthusiasm and maintenance would still compete with the best. If estimated repairs . . . are not too high there should be a complete revival of the sport in Louisburgh—*Connaught Telegraph*, 30/3/67

THE County Mayo district, hauntingly beautiful and replete with legends of Saint Patrick, was and is known by the Gaelic name of *Cluain Cearbán* . . . With a population of 600 (*sic*)—and other hundreds of sons overseas—Louisburgh sits beside Clew Bay, which has an island for every day of the year. Life moves at an Irish pace. You could shoot the proverbial cannon ball down the main street on a Monday morning without hitting anybody. But on Saturday evening the street is full of hurtling little people as children's races are held—they roll beer kegs or carry eggs on spoons for added excitement.

—JOSEPH MCSWEEN in *The Canadian Press*, August 1966

Thirty days hath September,  
April, June and the traffic offender!  
—Traffic sign in Louisburgh,  
Mississippi

*Thirty-five years ago*: Rev. Patrick O'Malley, formerly of Killary Farm, Louisburgh, was raised to the priesthood by the Archbishop of Edmonton, Canada, for the Diocese of Alberta.  
—*Mayo News*, 22/5/1965

LOUISBURGH Guild of Muintir na Tire have again entered the town for the Tidy Towns Competition. Last year the town got second place in Mayo with 71 marks.

—*Connacht Telegraph*, 26/4/67.

SHEEP-BREEDERS in the Louisburgh area are very satisfied with the splendid lambing season now coming to a close . . . . The big drive made last Autumn by the farmers to improve their flocks by purchasing premium sheep had certainly paid dividends.

*Connacht Telegraph*, 26/4/67.

THE INDUSTRIAL display of home-crafts in Louisburgh on Sunday last was a success beyond words . . . . The display was opened by Mrs. G. O'Sullivan, Co-President of the I.C.A. who said . . . that Louisburgh had a lot to be thankful for in having in their midst people like Father Moran, who had fostered industry and matured it to its present proud position. She also lauded the work of the tutor, Miss Fergus.

—*Mayo News*.

At a meeting of the Louisburgh Muintir na Tire Guild, letters were read from the Posts and Telegraphs authorities saying that the telephone line was to be extended from Killadoon to Tallabaun with a few intermediary branches.

—*Western People*, 3/12/66.

THE FOLLOWING members received their first-aid certificates (at the Order of Malta function): Michael Gallagher, Richard Lyons, Michael Scott, Billy

Burke, Padraic O'Donnell, Thomas J. Gallagher, John F. Tiernan, Patrick J. Moran, Michael J. O'Grady, Breta

O'Reilly, Mary Jennings, Ita Prendergast, Eileen McEvelly, Mary Morrison, Evelyn Coughlan and Maureen Heaney

—*Connacht Telegraph*, 13/7/67.

MR. JAMES MORRISON, Proprietor of the Morrison Beach Hotel, Killadoon, Louisburgh successfully applied at Westport Circuit Court for an extension of his licence to cover the area of a new £18,000 addition to his premises.

—*Mayo News*, 19/11/66.

UNDER the auspices of the Louisburgh Development Association and before an eager and appreciative audience in the Parochial Hall, Louisburgh, members from Westport outlined the working of a Credit Union. It is hoped that, from this inaugural meeting will spring, in the near future, a credit union of which the people of the parish can be proud.

—*Connacht Telegraph*, 25/6/67.

LOUISBURGH scored a narrow victory (208 marks to 199) over Balla in the Mayo Muintir na Tire Public Speaking Competition at the Parochial Hall, Louisburgh. The following were the Louisburgh speakers: Pádraic O'Donnell ("Trade Unions"), Mary O'Brien ("Why are Mayo's Rates so high?"), and Mary Brady ("Back Seat Drivers")

. . . . . The question-time competition was won by Straide, who beat Louisburgh (62 marks to 60).

### REMEMBERING SION . . .

*My father told me that from old leases in his possession it was clear that the most of Iar-Umhall was under forest except along the sea-shore and the banks of the rivers.*—JOHN O'DOWD

## *Muintir na Tíre Band*

IT WAS Saint Patrick's Day in Louisburgh, 1966. People were coming from the Church after second Mass: there were the usual wishes, weather-comments and complaints, and the exchange of local and overseas news. Then somewhere in the near distance a drum sounded; a flag appeared, and to the music of Irish marching airs thirty uniformed schoolboys sallied into view. The Muintir na Tíre Boys' Band had made its public debut.

The Band is comprised of boys from the primary schools of the parish and of Sancta Maria Secondary School. It has its own Band committee which looks after its financial problems and arranges its social functions. The provision of drums, cymbals and their accessories cost £100 odd; and the uniforms (blue trousers, saffron shirt and matching cap) were paid for by the individual members helped by a Muintir na Tíre subsidy of fifteen shillings per uniform. At present the musical instruments are accordians (eight) and tin-whistles, which have been bought by the members themselves. The organising of the band—sponsored by the Muintir na Tíre Guild—has been done by their entertainments officer, Mr. Basil Morahan, who has seen to the musical training. Mr. Morahan says: "The success of the Band is due, in the first place, to Muintir na Tíre who sponsored it; to the children's parents—who took such an active interest in its work as to supply free transport when this was needed; and to the committee members, some of whom carried the heaviest burdens of work. In all this was a heartening reward to an admirably united effort".

The Band has had regular public parades in Louisburgh, Killeen, Lecanvey and Westport. Perhaps its most noteworthy outing was at the 1916 Commemorative ceremonies in Westport at Easter-time 1966. An annual event is the musical reception given to "Santa Claus" on his arrival in Louisburgh at Christmas-time.

The present Band Committee members are: John O'Brien, John O'Dowd (Mooneen), William Lyons, Gerard O'Malley and Patrick Cox. Their enthusiasm will, we hope, not wane with time. Very



*Louisburgh Boys Band, at Westport, Easter 1966*

probably these boys do not now realize what a talent they are cultivating and storing for their future lives; what memories they are making for themselves for times to come; or what a joy they provide for the people of the neighbourhood for whom the excitement, the display, and especially the music, have an everlasting appeal. For music

“ . . . gentlier on the spirit lies  
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes.” (Tennyson)

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*Mrs. Julia (Carr) Donnelly, Framingham, sends the following poem which she states was written by a schoolteacher in Louisburgh.*

—EDITOR

In Louisburgh town near sweet Bunowen,  
Her sons are fair and her daughters too;  
And oft her sons have gained renown  
In places near and far from view.  
And though, alas! from you I part,  
In memory fond I cling to thee,  
And sometimes think with gladsome heart  
That you again one day I'll see.

How oft I've wandered through the town  
And blessed the hour that gave me birth  
So near to you, O sweet Bunowen,  
To me the dearest spot on earth.  
Ah! cruel laws that make me part  
From home and friends so dear to me,  
But with you all I leave my heart  
Till I return again to thee.

What grander scene than sweet Bunowen  
At summer's eve of lively May,  
To watch the silver sun go down  
In richest robes to kiss Clew Bay!  
Oh! may I live to see once more  
The sweetest spot on earth to me!  
My dear old home, ochóne astór,  
I bid a fond adieu to thee.

## The “Playboy of the Western World”

(Written almost a hundred years ago by a Louisburgh emigrant)

*He came from County Mayo, and the laugh of him was sweet  
As winds of morning rollicking across a field of wheat;  
“The Playboy of the Western World” we called him, just for fun,  
Though, faith, the title fitted him as sunbeams fit the sun.*

*The way he'd sing a Gaelic song would draw an angel down,  
And sure his old “Come-all-ye's” were worth half of Boston town;  
For when the frost was in our bones, and snow was mountain high,  
'Twas Jim could always raise a laugh and make the hours slip by.*

*His clothes were often threadbare and his shoes were bad, we know;  
But sure the lad was helping out a home in far Mayo;  
And the way he'd say “God save ye lads”, when we would part from him  
Would leave us craving for the home that made a man of Jim.*

*We liked him for his kindness, and we liked him for his smile:  
For all the homely ways he brought across from Erin's isle;  
But when he flung his life before a foe we could not dare,  
We loved him for the soul that God set, to shame us, there.*

*'Twas on a night when Boylston Street was shaking for its life,  
And every man to fight a fire was racing to the strife;  
When men and women leaped to death from flames above, below,  
'Twas then the Playboy showed us what they raise in old Mayo.*

*He wasn't in the city's pay, he wasn't glory mad;  
He only loved a chance to help, like any Irish lad;  
He had the valour in his blood—the call to do and dare,  
But when the blazing pile fell in, we lost our Playboy there!*

*We gathered what was left of him when fire and flood were gone  
And laid him to his sleeping like a King of Ireland's son;  
There wasn't much—a few charred bones, a chain from Louisburgh town\*  
And a little convent medal of a cross that waits its crown.*

*It's just a common story: you can read its like today,  
Where Irish lives are paving still the joys of God's highway.  
He was one other Mayo lad, a “playboy” from the West,  
Who gave the world the best he had; and left to Christ the rest.*

\*The chain was the remains of his rosary beads.



## Requiem for a Fellow

"MICHAEL O'GRADY of Louisburgh died on 4th July, 1962. He had never married and his family had pre-deceased him. He lived, during his later years, in a small dwelling which was built for him through the instigation and work of the local Muintir na Tire Guild. He took on odd jobs of work for people in the town and its vicinity; and his lone figure, standing—in the early morning or late evening—by the corner of the old barracks on the Square, is a memory of him that will persist. He was poor in this world's sense of that word; he was rich in all the qualities of a gentleman—in his manner, patience, good taste, kindness, humour. Especially, despite his severely limited share of the world's comforts, he had a commendable degree of self-respecting pride.

Many of us are the better for knowing him. One emigrant on hearing of his death wrote: "May his star soon fall: poor *fella*, he probably saw more of the stars than anyone else in Louisburgh!"

May God rest his soul!

The following paragraphs of appreciation appeared in *The Mayo News* after his death and are reprinted here by kind permission of the editor:

"Michael O'Grady has won his transfer to a permanent and perpetual peace. To those of us who knew him, there is none to take his place for Michael was a man apart. Stranger to all the so-called luxuries of this life, he realised ample compensation in the gift of a hearty sense of humour. Indeed there is scarcely a roof-top or chimney-top in Louisburgh from which his sonorous perennial laugh has not pealed forth a didactic melody to worried housewives and brooding businessmen alike. Some of us remember him as a kind of phenomenon who lived in tree tops—for Michael was an expert climber.

Yes, at quite a young age we learned to look up to this man and his social and moral principles through life demanded that we should continue to do so, even when his aged limbs hinted reluctance to the ladder rungs. No one can accuse him of a derogatory remark about friend or enemy. He had no enemy. To him everyone was 'Fella,' and to all he became known as 'Fella', or companion. Which of us could scan our spoken word in print without a blush? Michael had no such fears and he was prompt in reprimanding, in his own effectively calm way, any of us who fell to practising a brand of speech which he euphemistically termed unsuitable. Yes Michael O'Grady was unique.

We in Louisburgh and our returning emigrants shall miss him. One of the foremost props of our environment has been removed and no adequate replacement is available.

And now that this grand soul has passed on our eyes are again instinctively turned Heavenwards, for we feel that Michael has climbed from the chimney-pots and tree-tops on to the next Landing. Or perhaps, it is that he has taken up position in the long queue and that a little Spiritual remembrance from us here below could well hasten the invitation at the Gate—"Step inside Fella, we have a place for you."

M."

## REMEMBER O LORD . . .

THESE PARISHIONERS died since our last published list of June 1965:

1965	2 June	Mrs. Brigid Burke, Askelane
	7 June	Mrs. Brigid McGreal, Tallabawn
	26 June	Mrs. Nora Gavin, Derrygarv
	31 July	Patrick Sammin, Carramore
	1 August	Anthony McHale, Louisburgh
	26 August	Michael Hastings, Cregganroe
	2 September	Thomas Cannon, Doughmackeown
	11 September	Michael Reilly, Leachta
	17 October	Thomas Staunton, Curradavitt
	7 November	Martin O'Malley, Shraugh
	10 November	William Burke, Doughmackeown
3 December	Mrs. Catherine Berry, Carrowniskey	
1966	17 January	Mrs. Nora Burke-Scott, Louisburgh
	21 January	Mrs. Mary Geraghty, Doughmackeown
	26 January	Thomas Gallagher, Cahir
	31 January	Ellen Gibbons, Accony
	22 February	Annette McGirr, Louisburgh
	3 March	Mrs. Mary Geoghegan, Derryheigh
	8 March	James Hestor, Falduff
	26 March	Mrs. Mary Corrigan, Falduff
	30 March	Mrs. Anne Durkan, Bunowen
	4 May	Mrs. Mary Heneghan, Louisburgh P.O.
	5 May	Thomas Tonra, Devlin
	15 May	Mrs. Anne O'Malley, Curra
	23 May	Katie Donnelly, Cahir
	26 May	Mrs. Mary Corrigan, Woodfield
	3 June	Walter J. Heneghan, Louisburgh
	22 July	John Kerrigan, Louisburgh
26 July	Anne Tonra, Devlin	
13 August	Mrs. Nora O'Malley, Kilgeever	
28 August	Mrs. Mary Burke, Askelane	
31 August	Mrs. Margaret Flanagan, Dereen	
4 September	Mrs. Mary Tiernan, Doughmackeown	
7 September	Walter O'Toole, Doughmackeown	
19 September	Mrs. Kate Prendergast, Cloonlaura	
22 September	Michael Burke, Doughmackeown	
26 September	Mrs. Maria Berry, Carrowiskey	
27 September	Mrs. Anne Gibbons, Doughmackeown	

- 30 September** Michael Gibbons, Accony  
**12 October** William Ferins, Brackowney  
**23 October** Mrs. Mary O'Donnell, Louisburgh  
**4 November** Patrick Jordan, Carrowniskey  
**11 November** Mrs. Sarah Kerrigan, Louisburgh  
**10 December** Mrs. Mary Philbin, Louisburgh  
**11 December** Mrs. Margaret Hastings, Leachta  
**16 December** James Gill, Askelane  
**28 December** Father John Burke, Parish Priest
- 1967**
- 1 January** Mrs. Mary Fox (of Swinford)  
**21 January** Michael Gallagher, Aitinaveen  
**22 January** Mrs. Nora Gill, Ballyhip  
**25 January** Mrs. Honor Prendergast, Accony  
**31 January** Mrs. Alice Garavan, Devlin  
**18 February** John Duffy, Ballyhip  
**2 March** Mrs. Mary Mitchell, Leachta  
**21 March** John McKeown, Accony  
**25 March** Austin Carty, Falduff  
**21 April** James Kilcoyne (Creggenban)  
**19 May** Joseph O'Donnell (Louisburgh)  
**30 May** Maria McNally (Ballyhip)  
**1 June** Brigid Mitchell (Leachta)  
**15 June** Patrick O'Malley (Louisburgh)  
**5 July** Mrs. Margaret O'Malley (Feenone)  
**7 July** Margaret Kilcoyne (Tully)  
**15 July** Edward Hallinan (Kilgeever)  
**22 July** Mrs. Nora Jennings (Kilgeever)  
**15 August** Mrs. Mary Lyons (Furmoyle)  
**4 September** Mrs. Mary Morahan (Louisburgh)  
**11 September** John McConnell (Shraugh)  
**22 September** Mary Agnes Moran (Falduff)  
**24 September** Patrick Durkan (Pulgloss)

#### EMIGRANTS' DEATHS

THE DEATHS of these people who had left the parish were announced since our last publication:

- 1965**
- June** Mrs. Mary Hussey (Grey, Louisburgh), in U.S.A.  
 Anthony Joyce (Collacoan), in England  
**August** Mrs. Annie Devine (Prendergast, Kilgeever)  
 Edward O'Reilly (Louisburgh), in Dublin  
**September** Margaret Gibbons (Doughmackeown), in U.S.A.  
**October** William McNamara, Carramore (Bronx, N.Y.)  
**November** Mrs. Delia McNiff, (Burke, Derrygarv), in Boston  
 Sara Scott, Accony, in U.S.A.

- 1966**
- January** Austin Duffy (Askelane), in England  
 Mrs. Mary E. Burke (Carramore), in Worcester, Mass.  
**March** John Durkan (Askelane), in England  
 Joseph O'Malley (Doughmackeown), in Manchester, Mass.  
**April** Thomas O'Malley (Bridge, Louisburgh), in Chicago  
 Mrs. Delia Flatley (O'Malley, Shraugh), in Philadelphia  
**June** John Duffy (Falduff) in Worcester, Mass.  
 Joseph O'Malley (Cahir), in U.S.A.  
**July** Mrs. Annie Scanlon (O'Malley, Louisburgh), in Worcester, Mass.  
 Patrick O'Malley (Askelane), in England  
 Michael Glynn, (Louisburgh) in Scotland  
**August** Patrick Grady (Falduff), in Worcester, Mass.  
**September** Mrs. Annie Corrigan (Sheridan, Askelane), in Clinton, Mass.  
 Mrs. Anne Gallagher (Pulgloss), in U.S.A.  
**October** Michael Coyne (Aillemore), in Balrath, Navan  
**December** Catherine O'Malley (Roonagh), in Chicago
- 1967**
- January** John O'Toole (Roonagh), in U.S.A.  
 James Gallagher (Cahir), in U.S.A.  
 Mary Kilcoyne (Cregganacoppol), in U.S.A.  
**March** Patrick Gibbons (Kinnadoohey), in New York  
**June** Thomas Ryder (Falduff) in Worcester, Mass.  
 Mrs. Kate Howard (Sammon), Carramore, in U.S.A.  
 James McEvelly (Bunowern), in U.S.A.  
 Mrs. Annie O'Malley (McNamara, Devlin), Liverpool  
**July** Michael Patrick O'Malley (Cahir), in Boston  
 Sister Mary Joachim (Mary O'Grady, Kilgeever), in Fitchburgh, Mass.  
 Thomas O'Malley (Shraugh), in Philadelphia  
**August** Niall Grey (Louisburgh), in Zambia  
**September** Patrick McHale (Emlagh), in U.S.A.  
 John Ferrins (Brackowney), in England  
 Mrs. Kate Coyne (Burke, Askelane), in U.S.A.  
 Ann Sammin (Carramore), in Westport  
 Mrs. Bridgie Foy (Accony), in U.S.A.

Trí urgarta bíd: a chaithem cen altagud, a chaithem d'éis óiged,  
 a chaithem réna thráth cóir.

*Three prohibitions of food: to eat it without giving thanks; to eat it after a guest; to eat it before its proper time.*



IT IS A favourite piece of children's fancy that the most important events in history took place within their own horizon and memory; and so they often re-stage the great happenings mentally against the backcloth of familiar, local scenes. I knew well, one time, where the Garden of Eden was. I saw and climbed the tree: I sprained an ankle off the rock where Eve was sitting when the serpent wriggled up to her: I built a "house" in the shade where they hid themselves from God's justice: and I can *nearly* remember (I know that there was thunder-and-lightning, anyway!) the evening that the Archangel expelled them and bolted *our* garden gate forever. In the same way I could, as a boy, point out at which opening in the banister of "The Courthouse" Pilate put out his hands to wash them; and without being told we all knew, somehow, that the Agony in the Garden was across the river in Collacoön; in the quarry, opposite the moon. The images were not all religious: I saw Brian Boru's tent on Carramore Green on a day before the races, but I was afraid to peep in. I used to milk a cow in the very part of the stable where Robert Bruce lay watching the spider: and often we took our "evening tea" in Bunowen at the stook from which Cathal Mór had—some time before that—shouted "Farewell, reaping-hook: now for the sword!" . . .

Such fancies are, of course, part of the barter for our maturity; but it is consoling to feel that one such image, probably because it is less fanciful, remains. For I am still quite confident that, if the Resurrection is heralded by a trumpet-blast, Gabriel will appear across the hill to circle about the two graveyards of Kilgeever. And even if I were to be disillusioned in that fancy, too, I know that my regard for Kilgeever and for its sense of finality will remain. All of us realize that, in a real sense, part of us is already in Kilgeever; and, looking forward to the end, we all like to return there.

\*

It is just gone mid-day. I saw the news in this morning's paper and was able to travel; but not in time for the funeral Mass, so I have taken a short-cut at Oldhead. I arrive at Kilgeever before the funeral and when I go to visit the old graveyard I am, in a way, walking into the past. I sit on a gravestone near the ruined abbey and it is easy to let the winds of memory blow pages backwards: to recall the old-time funeral scenes.

There were the funerals of thirty-or-more years ago, not *very* different, perhaps, from those today; and yet the picture has a remoteness, a dimness which lets me remember in faded colours—mainly of faded white and brown. At the wakes there were white pipes with brown tobacco; there was a brown habit on a white bed; white fingers on a brown beads. At the Church there were white candles about a brown coffin which later would be tied on a brown side-car with white ropes. Occasionally there was a horse-drawn hearse from Westport; and the stable at "The Wicket", where the horses were fed and harnessed, was always for us a place of awe. For us the hearse-jarvey was eerie, almost unreal; (was he or was he not a proof of the *cóiste bodhar*?) and we were sure that the horses wore birettas as we formed a sidewalk bodyguard for the empty hearse on its way to the Church.

Soon the bell was ringing in single strokes, and men standing on the Square buttoned their coats and touched their caps, while some moved undecidedly towards the Church. Doors were being closed along the streets while, against the dumb noise of following feet, the crunching of loose stones beneath the iron wheels announced the entry of the coffin into the public street from the church yard.

There was a sea of faces, old and new, turned towards the church-gate and towards the mourning family; people blessed themselves; heads were bare. In and out through the crowd one heard a prayer spoken loudly and quite naturally; and we, as boys who were until then enjoying an occasion, looked and saw the earnestness in an adult face and felt then that something serious was afoot.

The town was in silence as the church-bell rang again. Windows were shuttered to a definite pattern (with the middle shutter not in place) while the procession moved along the dusty street. There, walking behind the coffin, were the young men who were the chief mourners. A motor-car or two had been hired and was following with the women-folk; and choking the sidewalks was a moving mass of people on foot. Here and there outside the Church a man was being helped into a saddle or was backing in a mare to give a *cúlóg* a chance to mount. Side-cars were thinning into single-file in the procession, while we scanned the line for the most likely one to give a 'lift'; and as the coffin turned by the corner, or disappeared back the town, young men bent beside the stone wall outside the Church to fit their cycling-clips into the wide folds of striped trousers—brown trousers with white stripes—and with fin-like flaps walked with their bicycles until they had left the town.

Slowly the procession moved along the Tooreen and Kilgeever road: the horses bent forward to climb the *brae* at "Needhams", and a motor-car—much to the confusion of its driver—was stopped like a rock amid the passing stream of pedestrians and of wavering cyclists, while it remained back to 'take a run to the hill'. A tributary trickle of people joined the stream at the boreen from Mooneen; there was a trickle-off at the short-cut; and eventually came the stiff and winding road to the summit, where the more daring young cyclists gave challenge with their strength until at last they fell sideways, one leg on the bank, and pulled their machines up to the hill-top.

I can see the careful descent with a side-car to the old graveyard as clearly as if I were walking down that wet roadway after it now. The side-car always stopped outside the stile; the ropes were loosened; four men raised the coffin onto their shoulders while someone held their hats or caps; they always gave one slight "chuck" to make the coffin steadier and then, with the rhythm of a ploughing team, they moved carefully along. There was the stile to be

negotiated: "Easy! easy!": then the slow and timely stepping about the blessed well; and the people followed the pall-bearers on their winding course while we ran across the grassy mounds to have a position near the grave. There, a spade and shovel were crossed on one corner of the open grave. To one side was a heap of brown, stony clay; and here and there we noticed a piece of timber or a faded mounting—the remains of a coffin of a former generation. Occasionally a human bone was uncovered and when the grave came to be closed it was laid reverently to rest beside the new coffin, united again to its own stock and breed.

My memory of the funerals in Kilgeever is focused so clearly that all kinds of irrelevant but attendant details fill in the picture and recreate the whole atmosphere for me. There were many fine days, it seems to me, days when tethered horses stamped to keep away the flies; there was the discomfort of a slatey stone in one's shoe; the nettle-sting on a bare leg; the cool feeling of the water of the blessed well; the many blackberries (was it wrong to eat them?); the pilgrim medals left on the stones. It was strange to find oneself within the ruined abbey without knowing exactly how; to notice people in their "Sunday" clothes on a week-day; to see men from "back the West" whom we saw only at fairs and funerals; to hear old men explain to each other "*whose* grave that would be". Then there was silence, torn by the rattle of stony clay upon a coffin; an aged man making a ritual walk over the closed grave of his wife; and yet, through all, a genuine gladness among people to have met each other even here. . . .

But these are only pages and pictures of a past. Old Kilgeever has now, to all intents, been closed; and a new age has its own new customs. There is now, too, a more unusual kind of funeral—from a Dublin hospital, from the Dún Laoire boat because of an accident in England, or from a trans-atlantic plane at Shannon. There is, in these, a very strong sense of loyalty evoked when the mourners meet the first cars from home along the way; the long line of red tail-lights reflected in the waters of the bay; the foggy shafts of headlights around Oldhead hill; the slowing pace at Carrowclaggan; the sight of the same faithful faces formed up like a string of beads—a rosary of bright eyes in the dark—who seem to meet every funeral and never seem to die; and then again the single strokes of a familiar bell explaining that another child of the parish is returning to the

baptismal font and is "Home . . . home! . . . home!" to stay.

\*

As I cross into the "new" cemetery—on the same side of the hill—there to await today's funeral, I think of how much of the spirit of the old has crossed the road into the new. Today, in town, there will be men and women in from "the West" again. After High Mass there will be a haphazard collection of people on the Square. When the funeral bell rings they will bless themselves and begin to move towards the Church again; and as the motor-hearse oozes its fluent way through the gates onto the tarred street, town women will push, or their men will pull their doors closed. Windows are not shuttered now, but there is a silence, emphasized now by the purr of engines or by boys' subdued arguments as to whether there are fifty-five or fifty-six, and whether the hearse should be counted as a car! The pace of the funeral will be the same, and people will think it an irreverence if some city driver fails to abide by this tradition. There will be few cyclists now, but business-men will walk with the cortege as far as Tooreen, where they will unobtrusively siphon off and then replace their hats and amble home. Needham's *brae* will now cause no difficulty; people might again join in at the boreen; and since a lower, easier road makes the graveyard more accessible, the hearse will drive almost to the grave. . . .

In a short time fact takes over from these fancies. I see a few men coming by the short-cut, and presently the noiseless funeral enters at the gate. Inevitably, one's thoughts turn to *whose* funeral this is and what kind of character he was. An old person, maybe; another leaf of a stately tree withered and fallen. As I see beneath the coffin this man's four sons—my boyhood companions, three of them come back from other homes abroad—I feel again what a challenge it is to us to live our lives like "this mighty race of men and women who lived by faith and by their vision of eternity". While the priest is opening his book and looking for the page, the people are converging on the open grave and it is a joy to see them doing casually the same things that were done of old. Their eyes jerk from the grave to the coffin, to the priest, to the chief mourners. Around the coffin there are circles of kinship, nearer as they are nearer in blood. The sons of the family stand like companion volumes on the shelf

of the grave, and their sisters—some in crêpe or mourning veil—are gathered in a cluster or are being consoled by the whispers of an elderly relative. About these in wider rings are those whose presence here displays an old bond of friendship or of loyalty hitherto hidden but now "showing", just as roots are uncovered by the unearthing of a tree. And on the outside, tiered on the surrounding graves and parapets and tombstones, are "the people"—those who come to a funeral out of a sense of "decency" and essentially as a work of mercy.

Again, to watch these people is to realize how little has changed. Bare heads are gauntly silhouetted against the mountain (in Killeen it would be against the open sea). If it rains, a bare-headed man turns sideways to the rain and holds his hat aloft at an angle which is a compromise between reverence and common-sense. A relative of the dead holds the holy water while the priest blesses the corpse. The coffin is lowered and the chief mourners instinctively move forward to follow; the priest sprinkles clay three times: *Dust you are and into dust you shall return; but the Lord will raise you up again on the last day.* The holy-water bottle slips into the grave; and as the brown clay of Kilgeever falls upon the bare coffin-lid, visitors may wince, but it is again the simple echo from Ash Wednesday; of a city that does not last. A prayer for the dead is prayed aloud: *O God of mercy and compassion, we humbly beseech thee to be mindful of thy servant, Patrick, whom thou hast now called from this life. Bid him to be borne by thy holy angels to his true home in Paradise, that as he has believed and hoped in thee, he may there enjoy everlasting happiness; through Christ our Lord. Amen.* The noise of clay upon a coffin has no terror against the plain truth and faith of such a prayer. There follows a prayer for the bereaved: *O Lord Jesus Christ, God of all consolation, whose heart was moved to tears at the grave of Lazarus, look now with compassion on thy servants who are sorely grieved by their loss. Strengthen in their hearts the spirit of faith to accept this cross from thy loving hands. Give to their troubled hearts and to the hearts of all men the light of hope, that they may so live as one day to be united again where tears shall be wiped away in the kingdom of thy love. Amen.*

A decade of the Rosary is said; many people disperse to visit "their own" graves, and when they come back the grave is practically closed. An old man is dictating to the younger workers how the last

few *scraws* are to be settled; and they, perspiring freely, glad of a legitimate rest, listen and obey. A further prayer is said and as the main crowd leave there is a queue of sympathizers. Before me in the queue are an old man who shouts his sincerity and a youth, balanced between boy and man, who is learning to be responsible, but is quick to get it over and finds it awkward to make an exit when he is done. My turn comes. (What do we mean by "I'm sorry for your trouble"? For that matter, what do we mean by coming to a funeral at all? I think that in coming and in sympathising, we are saying: "You have suffered a loss that I, too, feel. In your hour of sorrow, I am here to be counted as a sharer in that sorrow". It is an opportunity and an instance of Christian charity lived out into the details of human life).

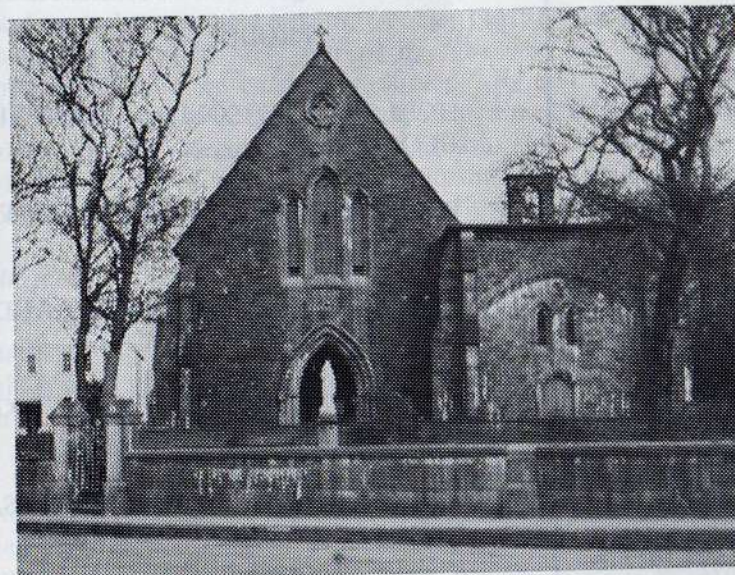
As I leave Kilgeever, I again feel a real hope that we will all hold on to the ways—even the trivial ways—of our traditional burials; that our long-distance funerals will always make the ritual round of respect by the Church at Westport, and that our funerals at home will continue to be as large as they have been noted for until now; that families will adhere to their own particular burial-ground—Kilgeever or Killeen or Murrisk; that no pseudo-progress will induce people to make their funerals impersonal social functions influenced by customs that are not founded in our faith. I feel the hope, too, that we will continue to shake each other's hands in sorrow, even if the word-formulas are age-worn; and that we do not seek the emotional solace of a pall of cloth or of hay upon a coffin, but that we rely—as we have always done—on the true consolation of our Christian faith.

For, with faith, there is something grand about a funeral—grand, I mean, in the old-fashioned sense of that word: grand, in that it is a parish occasion; grand, in that it brings out the good nature in people; grand especially, if one considers the human sadness of a drowning when there is no funeral; and grand, too, in that this is final and fitting. Few of us express it so roundly as one constant attender at Kilgeever: "I love funerals!"; but we are all aware that our daily rounds are bringing us nearer to the Abbey, and we look to Kilgeever with the same loyalty as the exile girl from the parish who, during the scare of "three dark days" in 1960, kept repeating her testament: "Remember, Michael, you're to bury me in Killeen". For Kilgeever outlives our growing and our ageing. A whole life-time cannot shed its silent, almost parental, influence; and it takes

just one life-time for each one of us to acquiesce. Perhaps we hear that silence more in our morning and evening than in the heat and glare of noon. But in our life-perspective Kilgeever is always the vanishing-point; and always there is the abiding thought, regularly surfacing, that this will be the nest after our life's hoverings; that Kilgeever is our terminus on this transient shore.

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## Holy Land Journey

*Pressure of space compels us reluctantly to compress a very lengthy  
and graphic record of a visit to Palestine—EDITOR*

. . . THE SUN had set (6.30) as we set out for Nazareth and, as the twilight is short in this latitude, we could not see very much of the country through which we were passing until we were nearing our destination. By then a beautiful moon had arisen in the east and it was much brighter than what we were accustomed to in Ireland. One could almost read a newspaper by its light. The guide explained that we were passing through the Kibutzim, i.e., community farms which were worked by Jews who had returned to their homeland from persecution abroad. By dint of hard work, reclamation and irrigation, they had transformed this whole area, which includes Megiddo (or Armageddon), into a fertile region which produces in places four crops in the year and is popularly called the "breadbasket" of Israel.

### Nazareth

Nazareth is about 1,500 feet above sea level and on the last stages of the journey we climbed in zig-zag fashion to our hotel, which overlooked the town, resplendent in electric light and bathed in soft moonlight. Because of the great height, the night is cool with a gentle breeze, so that one can easily sleep.

On the following morning we had Mass at the Grotto of the Annunciation. It is underground, approached by many steps, and has two altars. Because of lack of space, concelebration was impossible here. I, as the senior priest, had the privilege of saying Mass in the Grotto. The other priests said Mass in the Basilica of Saint Joseph nearby, which is built over the home of the Holy Family. This we visited later and were rather surprised to find that it consists of an underground cave approached by steps. Our guide explained that most of the ordinary people in the time of Christ, lived in this fashion. It was cooler in summer and warmer in winter than living overground. Later we strolled through the town (now

much larger than it was in Christ's time). We were full of wonder at the sight of the Arab robes, brown skin, donkeys, Hebrew script on hoardings and shops, and many unaccustomed sights, sounds and smells. We visited Our Lady's Fountain, believed to date to the beginning of the Christian era and most probably used by Our Lady.

In the afternoon, we went to the Mount of the Transfiguration. We had to leave the bus half way up and complete the journey in cars, over a winding road with about eighteen hairpin bends. It was unnerving for anyone with a bad head for heights, but the view from the top was breathtaking. There we had Benediction in the Basilica which is really a triple church ("One for Thee, one for Moses and one for Elias"). Afterwards we were shown around by a tall, black-bearded, Indian Franciscan priest, who was a student at the Biblical Institute at Jerusalem. His Biblical scholarship was evident in his lucid and learned explanations of the significance of this place. On returning to the bus, we met a group of Arab boys who were minding their sheep and goats on the mountain-side. Some of the group took photographs and the boys asked to have copies sent and gave their address: "Indur, Mount Thabor, Gallilee" (where Saul met the witch of Endor). We noticed that all the sheep were white and the goats black and could now see the point of Our Lord's description of the great separation at the Last Judgment. On the way back, we passed by the little village of Naim, where the widow's son was raised from the dead.

#### **Around the Sea of Gallilee**

Our visit to the Sea of Gallilee on the third day took us from 1,500 feet above sea level to 600 feet below. En route, we stopped at Cana and visited the church built on the traditional site of the wedding feast. We arrived at Tiberias, a fine modern town and favourite winter resort. We got on board a pleasure boat with very many others and crossed to Ein Gev on the far side. At this low level it was almost unbearably hot. Although it is only a short journey from Ein Gev to the Mount of the Beatitudes, where we were to concelebrate, this strip of the Sea of Gallilee is Syrian territory (and the scene of the many shooting 'incidents' we read about). So our bus met us and we drove south, on the east shore of the lake, across the Jordan, up through Tiberias again and so to the lovely Church of the Beatitudes, where we concelebrated.

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This church, which is octagonal in shape, has glass all around and affords a glorious view in all directions over the Sea. After lunch in the convent of Italian nuns, who had charge of the church, we visited another church on the site of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, where wonderful mosaics of the third century have been uncovered. Then to the small church of the Primacy, on the lake shore. Here in the sanctuary is a white, flat rock on which Our Lord is traditionally believed to have stood when, after the Resurrection, He said to Saint Peter: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." We saw a large photograph of Pope Paul kneeling and kissing the stone—the first Pope to stand there since Saint Peter! On our return, we visited Magdala and Capharnaum—now only uninhabited ruins. We saw the remains of the house of Mary of Magdala, of the house of Saint Peter, and a second-century synagogue which stood on the site of the synagogue where Our Lord so often preached. All around were very many household corn querns. Some of the millstones were quite large and reminded us of the fate of the scandal-givers. Back to Tiberias for a swim in the lake and there we met a Commandant O'Donnell from Ireland, who is serving with UNO, and who had come with his three children for a swim.

#### The Holy City

Next day we set out for Jerusalem. As in the case of Nazareth, we again found ourselves climbing, this time to a height of 2,000 feet. The final stage of the approach road is through newly-planted forests, one of which has been dedicated to the late President Kennedy. As we came in sight of the city, the guide handed over the bus microphone and we sang the *Holy City*, all joining heartily in the chorus. The section of the city which is in Israel contains fine modern buildings—blocks of flats, university, library and museum, etc. We went to Mount Sion, where we concelebrated in the Church of the Dormition of Our Lady from where she was assumed into Heaven. The church also contains the tombs of Saint Joseph and Saints Joachim and Anne. It has beautiful mosaics depicting the end of Our Lady's life and her glorious assumption.

From here we walked by many steps up to the Room of the Last Supper. It is now, unfortunately, part of a Mohammedan mosque which stands on the traditional site of the original Upper Rooms which of course, would have disappeared in the great destruction of 70 A.D. After lunch we visited Ein Karem, passing by the valley of

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Gehenna. Here we visited first the church on the site of the house where John the Baptist was born; and nearby the church of the Visitation, where Our Lady visited Saint Elizabeth. Here the *Magnificat* is inscribed on the wall in all the languages of the world. We found the Irish version and recited it in our own language. This was to be our last visit to a biblical place in Israel. At 5 o'clock we arrived at the Mandelbaum Gate, where we said goodbye to our driver and guide. The Jordanian officials scrutinized our passports minutely. Any mark or stamp of the Israeli Government would have prevented our entry into Jordan—such is the state of tension between the two governments.

For the next eight days Jerusalem in Jordan was to be our abode. Here I must be very selective. If I were to go into detail about the places visited, this whole issue of *An Choinneal* would not contain all that could be written! First, a few general remarks. We found a great contrast between the economies of the two states. While in Israel we found every sign of progress due, we were told, to massive foreign aid, the position in Jordan seemed to be quite different. There was much less development and exploitation of natural resources due, no doubt, to lack of means. However, we were told that this situation is gradually improving. We came across a number of refugee settlements (really shanty towns). These refugees are Arabs who were displaced to facilitate the setting-up of the Israeli state and are the chief cause of bitter anti-Israeli feelings in Jordan. In fact, Jordanians refer to Israel as the "occupied part of our country" and whenever the papers (there are two English language ones circulating in Jerusalem) refer to Israel, they print the word in inverted commas.

#### **Inside Jerusalem**

Jerusalem in Jordan consists of the old walled city and the modern part. The latter resembles, by and large, its counterpart in Israel. Once, however, one enters the old Jerusalem by any of the five great gates, one is in an entirely different world. The present walls, which date from the sixteenth century, are about the fifth set to have been built since King David enclosed the original Mount Sinai and Mount Moriah in 1000 B.C. The present walls enclose a greater area than did the walls in Christ's time. Thus it is that the church of Holy Sepulchre which encloses the site of the crucifixion, is

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within the present walls, though we know from the bible that Christ was crucified outside the walls.

Within the old Jerusalem one is in a typical, old oriental city: narrow streets with small shops (some were niches in the walls) opening on both sides. Beside a butcher stall with meat exposed ears are assailed by a medley of tongues and cries as men and vegetables, spices, fancy foods, fish, confectionery (being cooked and prepared on the spot). One's nostrils are assailed by a combination of all the smells (and more) that one ever smelled. One's ears are assailed by a medley of tongues and cries as men and women carrying all sorts of heavy loads, push and shout their way through the jostling crowd. Most of them wear the traditional Arab robes and many women are veiled. One sees western tourists, Greek priests in their flowing robes, Mohammedan Imams with white bands round their red fezes. This denotes that they have made the pilgrimage to Mecca and entitles them to receive reverence.

Our first visit to the church of the Holy Sepulchre was at 11 a.m. on the Saturday, when we took part in the weekly solemn entry. This is usually led by a bishop, followed by clergy and laity, singing hymns. All march to the Holy Tomb, now enclosed by a marble chapel standing clear all round. It consists of two chambers—the outer called the Chapel of the Angels, contains part of the great stone that was rolled away from the tomb. One has to stoop low to enter the inner chamber, there to see the actual tomb, which is covered by a marble altar to prevent it being chipped away for relics or souvenirs. Here I had the privilege of singing High Mass, a few days later (for our group), assisted by three of the Franciscan priests attached to the church.

#### **Calvary and Gethsemane**

Just across from the tomb is a marble stairs leading to the site of Calvary. The actual spot where the cross stood is (like the Holy Tomb) in the care of the Greek Orthodox Church. Under the altar is a hole in the ground through which one can put one's hand and touch the rock at the spot where the cross stood. To the right can be seen the split in the rock, extending right down to the ground level, which recalls the rending of the rocks at the moment of the death of Christ. In the Franciscan Chapel is venerated a piece of pillar reputed to be the one at which He was scourged.

In Jerusalem we also visited the Church of Pater Noster, where

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the Lord's prayer can be seen in very many languages. We recited it in Irish. Higher up on the same hill (Mount of Olives), we visited the Mohammedan Mosque which contains the stone, with the print of a foot, from which Christ is believed to have ascended into heaven.

My most pleasant memory from Jerusalem is of the garden of Gethsemane. We concelebrated Mass there on two mornings and had a Holy Hour there from 8 o'clock to 9 o'clock on Thursday evening. This was a most touching experience. Our little group had the great church all to themselves. We gathered close to the great sanctuary, a large portion of which is occupied by the great flat rock on which Christ knelt in agony and sweated blood. Outside in the garden, "about a stone's throw away", stands the ancient olive tree under which the Apostles slept when they failed to watch one hour with Him. All of the seven priests co-operated in one way or another in conducting the hour. I happened to be suffering from stomach trouble (due to heat and food). I knelt for the hour in the sanctuary bathed in sweat and feeling far from well, but spiritually elated and feeling closer to the Master than I ever felt. We all agreed that this was the one place we would like to revisit again and again.

We went to Bethelhem by taxis and visited first the Basilica of the Nativity, where we had Mass. The actual cave where Christ was born is in the hands of the Greek Orthodox Church but right beside it is an altar of the Latin rite. The place is so small that concelebration is impossible, but I was among the lucky three who drew, by lot, this altar. The others said Mass in the nearby cave of Saint Jerome, where he lived and translated the Greek bible into the Latin Vulgate. Later we visited the lovely church in the shepherd's field, where the angels first proclaimed "glory to God in the highest"; and also the tomb of Rachel.

#### **Down to Jericho**

Another memorable experience was our visit to Jericho, Jordan and the Dead Sea. It is no wonder that the bible speaks of "going down" to Jericho. Although the distance is only fifteen miles, the descent is one of 3,000 feet; from Jerusalem, at 2,000 feet above, to Jericho 1,000 feet below, sea level. About half way down we stopped at the Samaritan's Inn (*cf.* the parable) still used as a shelter for

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animals but not for humans. First we called to a Franciscan Monastery in Jericho to get vestments, bread and wine for Mass, on the banks of the Jordan. As one enters Jericho, one is greeted with the words "Welcome to Jericho, the oldest inhabited city in the world". Later we visited the site of the old city where excavations carried to a great depth, through many levels, have proved that it was already a very old city when captured by Joshua about 1200 B.C. and thus justifying the claim on the signpost.

Overlooking the town on the north side is the Mount of Temptation, where Christ was tempted by the devil; and a Greek Monastery perched on the cliff-side half way up. To the east across the Jordan, can be seen the mountain range from which Moses viewed the Promised Land and where he was buried. To the south can be seen the cliffs which contain the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered some years ago. Some of these we saw in the Museum in Jerusalem.

#### Passing remarks

Meantime, as we drove from Jericho to the banks of the Jordan, we ran into one of those irritating incidents which for a moment looked serious, and which is typical of Arab countries. The road was under repair and we came up against a sign which apparently announced in Arabic "No road". Our leading driver and the ganger in charge of the men had a heated argument with much gesticulation, but finally the barrier was pulled aside. However, our troubles were not over. Beyond the barrier the road was torn up on both sides, leaving only a single carriageway in the centre. Soon we came up against a big truck. The two drivers got out and after noisy altercation, the other driver sat on the side of the road, indicating no surrender. We had to reverse to the barrier, thus losing round one. Off we went again and this time we met a bus filled with Arabs. Another battle of words resulted in a win for us. The bus reversed, but in the process left the road and very nearly went right over on its side. This for me, was really a very anxious moment. First of all, the time was approaching midday and at the low level, without the breeze created by the car's motion, the heat was nearly unbearable. Further, if the bus had gone right over, there was the risk that all the passengers might turn on us. And they were in the majority!

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Λυάεαμμα Σαφα

ΤΡΑΔΟΜΑΡΚ: "ΑΗ ΕΡΥΑΟ"

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However, we eventually reached Jordan and there at the spot where Christ was baptized, we concelebrated Mass in the open with a canopy over us to protect us from the fierce sun. Later we had a swim in the Dead Sea, although one could hardly call it *swimming*, because it contains 27% salt and other chemicals. It is impossible to sink, so one just lies back and floats, being careful not to splash the water into one's eyes. It is terribly bitter to the taste and will sharply scald any cut or scratch on the body. Afterwards a shower of ordinary water is provided to wash off all the salt.

### **Samaritan Country**

Another day was spent touring Samaria. First we concelebrated Mass at Emmaus, where Christ had supper with the two disciples after He appeared to them on Easter Sunday, on the way to this town. Later we visited Jacob's Well, where Christ spoke to the Samaritan woman. It is still exactly as described in the bible, very deep. A dropped stone takes nine seconds to "plop" onto the surface, and women still come with great pitchers on their heads to draw water. Further on, we visited the big town of Nablus where a small community (about 400) of Samaritans still survives. (They have always been regarded, by the Jews, as renegades from the true faith). There, in their synagogue, the son of the High Priest, showed us their greatest treasure—a copy of the first five books of the Old Testament (the only part they accept)—which they claim is the oldest book in the world. We also visited Bira, which tradition marks as the spot where Our Lady and Saint Joseph discovered that the twelve-year-old Jesus was missing; and Betherl, where Jacob had the vision of the ladder and slept on a stone pillow. The guide told us that this stone is now under the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey—there is an ancient legend that it came to Tara, where it was known as the Lia Fáil.

### **Via Dolorosa**

On our final full day in Jerusalem (which was a Friday), we joined in the traditional way of the Cross, which starts at 3 o'clock every Friday and, led by the Franciscan Fathers, follows the traditional last journey from the Pretorium to Calvary and now ends at the Holy Sepulchre, in the church of that name which contains the last five stations. One sees groups, carrying large wooden crosses, and as the procession winds its way through the narrow

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streets of old Jerusalem, described above, bystander Arabs look on indifferently or go about their business with complete disregard for what goes on. However, there was no sign of the hostility and hatred that followed the first and momentous procession along this hallowed way. Afterwards our group was received by the Father Custos of the Franciscans, who welcomed us to the Holy Land, and presented each with a rosary made from olive stones from the Garden of Gethsemane, and a wooden cross. Later we were received in audience by His Beatitude, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem (also a Franciscan) who spoke of the great faith of the Irish people.

#### **Worthwhile journey**

As we winged our way back over the Mediterranean, what thoughts were uppermost in our minds? What was so special about the country we had just visited? Perhaps we can best express it in terms of the various ways in which God can be present to men. As Creator and Conserver, He is everywhere. He is present when His Word is proclaimed in the Liturgy. He is present in a special Sacramental way in all our tabernacles, but there it is the Risen and Glorified Christ that is present. In Palestine alone, was He present "in the days of His flesh", as Saint Paul expresses it. Only there did He live and experience all human sensations and emotions like every other man. Only there was He weary, hungry and thirsty. Only there did He weep at Lazarus' tomb and over Jerusalem. Only there was He angry with a human anger as He cleared the temple or rebuked the Pharisees. Only there did He suffer, die and rise again. We may say the same about His Blessed Mother. Though we may believe that she appeared at Lourdes, Fatima or Knock, in these places it was the assumed and glorified Virgin. Only in Palestine did she live, suffer and end her life like any other mother who travels the pilgrim road on this earth.

The travel agent's brochure had described it as "the holiday of a lifetime" and certainly in retrospect one can fully admit his claim. A visit to the Holy Land must surely be among the cherished ambitions of any sincere Christian.

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## Index to Five Issues

As THIS is the fifth issue of the magazine, we feel that readers will be interested in having a complete list of the articles which appeared in all five. Copies of the 1963, 1965 and 1967 issues are still available from the secretary at Louisburgh; copies of 1959 and 1961 issues are limited and are being reserved for foundation members.

### NUMBER ONE — 1959

Muintir na Tíre in Louisburgh	- - -	Doctor Columb McHugh
The Master	- - -	Father Leo Morahan
Frozen Moments	- - -	Mrs. John J. Philbin
Music in School	- - -	Father Pat Prendergast
Eist le Fuaim na hAbhann	- - -	Clementín Bean Uí Laighin
See How They Grow	- - -	Andrew Durkan
Croagh Patrick	- - -	Father Joseph Moran
Old Head—a Recollection	- - -	Bernard J. Gallagher
Carramore Trefoil	- - -	Father Vincent Kelly
Three Men in a Boat	- - -	Basil A. Morahan
Keep Your Word		
Those Were the Days	- - -	P. S. Mac Conmara
Caher Island	- - -	Father Liam Durkan
An Gleann inar Tóigeadh Mé	- - -	Peigí Ní Scarláin
Fairyhill	- - -	Bernard J. Gallagher
Second Mass	- - -	Father Leo Morahan
Symposium: What is Louisburgh's Greatest Need?	- - -	Father Pat Prendergast, Robert J. Nicholson, Father Patrick Gill, Anthony O'Malley, Oliver P. Mora- han, Michael J. Durkan, Mrs. R. O'Toole, Austin McDonnell

From Cluain Cearbán to Louisburgh  
Statistics, etc. Editor

### NUMBER TWO — 1961

Archbishop's Address (in Louisburgh Church)	- - -	Most Rev. Joseph Walshe, D.D.
Saint Patrick's—Our Parish Church	- - -	Father John Burke, P.P.
Patrician Pilgrimages—Croagh Patrick, Kilgeever, Cahir	- - -	
Tóstal Phádraic i gCaisleán a' Bhar- raigh	- - -	Micheál S. O Flannagáin
Croke Patrick 1961	- - -	Father Leo Morahan
A Swiss Looks at Louisburgh	- - -	Rudolf Baeschlin
A Louisburgh Recollection	- - -	Father William Tiernan
Inside Ghana	- - -	Robert J. Nicholson
Keep Your Word!		

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San Francisco, 1906	- - - -	John D. O'Dowd
<i>Christmas on Killary</i>	- - - -	Edward Gallagher
The Kelp	- - - -	Father Pat Prendergast
Photography in the West	- - - -	Father William Tiernan
Recipes for a Day	- - - -	Mrs. Sean T. Morahan
A Man's Game	- - - -	P. S. Mac Conmara
In Blighted Times	- - - -	Father Vincent Kelly
Drama	- - - -	Father Joseph Moran
Are We Peasants?	- - - -	Stephen Fahy and Michael O'Brien
Venerable Archdeacon Prendergast	- - - -	Father Leo Morahan
Mrs. Mary O'Toole	- - - -	Father Pat Prendergast
Father Thomas Gibbons	- - - -	Editor
<i>Caoineadh</i>	- - - -	Seán Mac Conmara
Epitaph	- - - -	from a Kilgeever gravestone
Father John O'Reilly	- - - -	Father Liam Durkan
Sancta Maria Secondary School		
Statistics, etc.		

### NUMBER THREE — 1963

We Are Observed!	- - - -	Editorial
Laying the Foundation Stone	- - - -	from <i>The Telegraph</i> , 10 September 1856
Louisburgh and Its Name		
<i>Song of a Louisburgh Emigrant</i>		
Caher Pilgrimage	- - - -	Father Pat Prendergast
Symposium: Activity and Economy	- - - -	Correspondent in <i>The Economist</i> Liam Maher ( <i>Irish Press</i> ) Michael Gallagher Michael O'Toole Anthony Jordan Father Justin Morahan Mrs. Mollie McConville
<i>The Irish Lay Sister</i>	- - - -	Father William Tiernan
Memories of My Father	- - - -	Miss Helena Berry
Gráinneuaile—Atlantic Queen	- - - -	Jarlath McHale
<i>Louisburgh in County Mayo</i>	- - - -	Seán T. Morahan
Hedge-schools of the Parish	- - - -	Father Vincent Kelly
<i>Clew Bay's Western Land</i>	- - - -	Father William Tiernan
Railway Journey	- - - -	P. W. O'Toole
Blúirin Charraigin	- - - -	Sister Jane Anthony
The Belfry Watches	- - - -	Peter Gibbons
<i>Killary Revisited</i>	- - - -	Edward Gallagher
Keep Your Word!		
O'Toole Cup Ahoy!	- - - -	Father Martin Gleeson
Letter from Home	- - - -	"Mother"
Monsignor Thomas Scahill	- - - -	Father Leo Morahan
Michael O'Halloran of Inishboffin	- - - -	Father Pat Prendergast
A Word from the Editor		
Statistics, etc.		

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NUMBER FOUR — 1965

A Sense of History - - -	Editorial
S.O.S. - - - - -	Father Patrick O'Malley
Symposium: A Community Observed -	Francis O'Malley, Father John Burns, Sister James, Pat Berry, Michael Gallagher, Brendan O'Donnell, Robert Davis, Pádraic Burke, Father Justin Morahan, Father Pat Prendergast

Keep Your Word!	
Floating Cross - - - -	Father Anthony Wallace
Letter From Home - - - -	"Mother"
Letter from Seán	
Haggis Hunting - - - -	Nicholas Watson
<i>An Chuilfhiomm</i> - - - -	collected
The "Wasting of Tallabawn" - - -	Una O'Malley
The Professional Fiddler - - - -	Anthony Jordan
History Spelled in Ruins - - - -	Mrs. John J. Philbin
Down Memory Lane - - - -	Mrs. Mollie McConville
Oecumenical Stride - - - -	Father Vincent Kelly
Scattered Showers - - - -	Father Leo Morahan
Recollections of My Early Boyhood -	James Berry
Statistics, etc.	

NUMBER FIVE — 1967

Astir!; Candle to our Shames? - - -	Editorials
Father John Burke, P.P. - - - -	J.G.
The People and Their House - - - -	P. W. O'Toole
Journey Into History - - - -	John D. O'Dowd
Diluted Dilemma - - - -	Sister M. Philomena
<i>Schoolday Memories of Oldhead</i> - -	Martin J. O'Reilly
Letter from Home	
Keep Your Word!	
A Few Hours on Clare Island - - -	Claude Kosmann
Encounter on Croagh Patrick - - -	Michael Scott
"Tales of the West of Ireland" (review)	Etienne Rynne
Saying it with Starch	
<i>Seanmóir na nAithreacha Naofa</i> - -	collected
<i>Tom the Cobbler</i> - - - -	Pádraic Burke
Passing of a Storyteller - - - -	Editor
Story for Bedtime - - - -	Michael J. Burke
The Place-names - - - -	Dáithí MagRael
Requiem for a Fellow	
Terminus - - - -	Father Leo Morahan
Holy Land Journey - - - -	Father Pat Prendergast
Survey, Statistics, etc.	

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