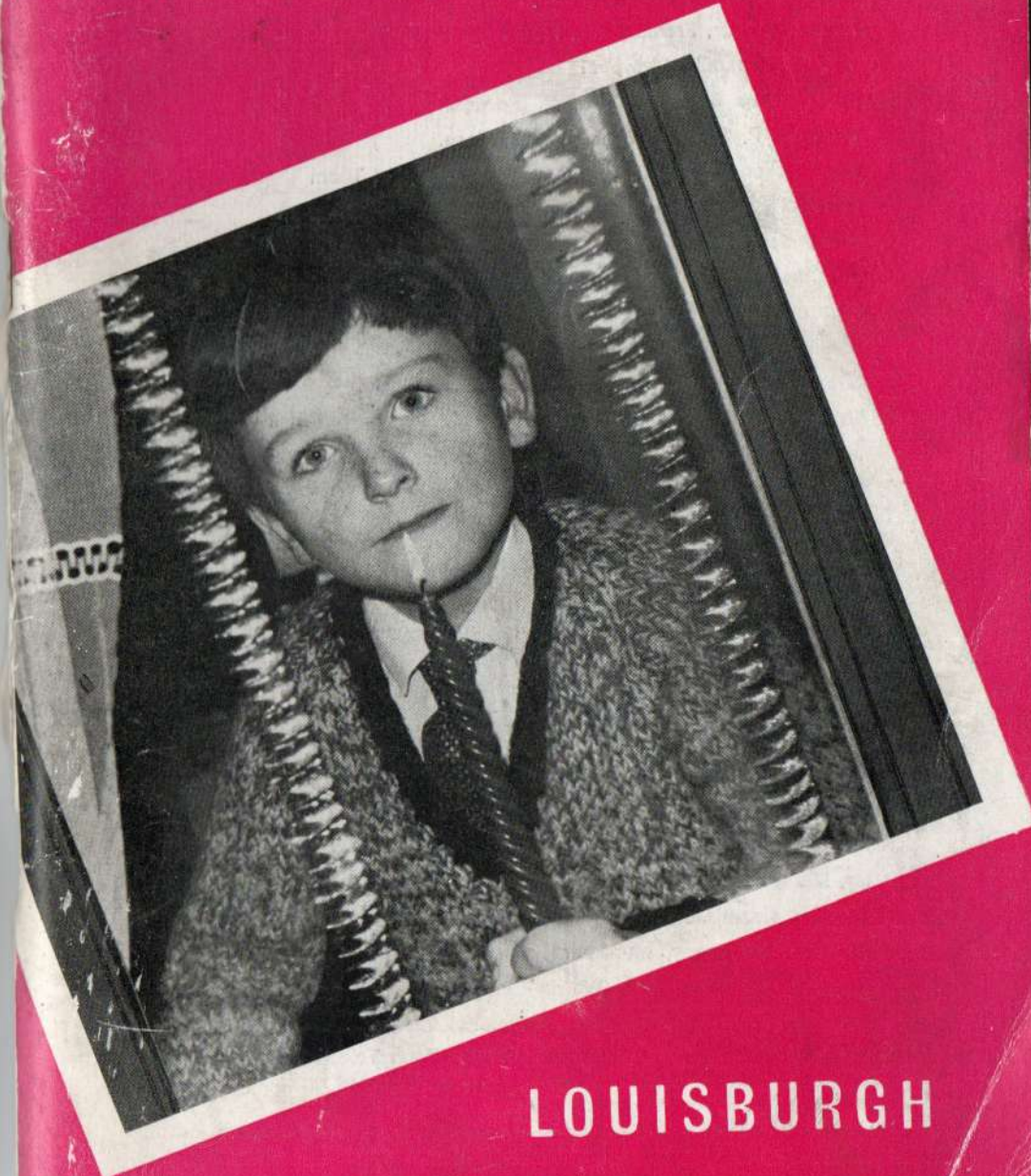


An Coinneal



LOUISBURGH

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~~~~~  
**What of the Future?** — Our cover-picture shows Tommie Durkan — heir to a great Louisburgh family tradition — and symbol of many for whom our parish is worth preserving.  
~~~~~

AN ÓIINNEAL

AN CHOINNEAL is a periodical of Kilgeever Parish. It has appeared in alternate years since 1959.

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Letters to the Editor

I am interested in the history of Louisburgh and how it got its name. Can you recommend any books or literature which would fill me in on the details?

Mary McQuillen, Ayer, Mass.

The belief (not conclusively proved) is, Mary, that the name came from Louisbourg Nova Scotia, by reason of a link between the How family who fought at Louisbourg in 1758 and the Browne family who built Louisburgh in 1797-1800. The theory is argued in the first two issues of this magazine.

I was interested in your publication because as an economist and planner I am engaged in research on Clare Island, I would be interested to know whether you have published any material on the subject of that island, Inish-turk or the mainland area around Boonagh and Carramore. I would be much obliged if you could assist me, as conceivably this work may be of benefit to the island.

Padraig Mac Eon, Clonskeagh, Dublin

Readers will, we hope, pool any information on the subject. Meantime a letter by Micheál de Búrca in this issue (page 31) will interest you.

I am very interested in getting your 1965 issue which had the article "The Wasting of Thallabaun" My great-great-grandfather had a farm in Tallabaun in the early 1840's, and I am anxious to know more about it. His name was Michael O'Malley, Thomas O'Malley who lives at Aillemore is my second cousin.

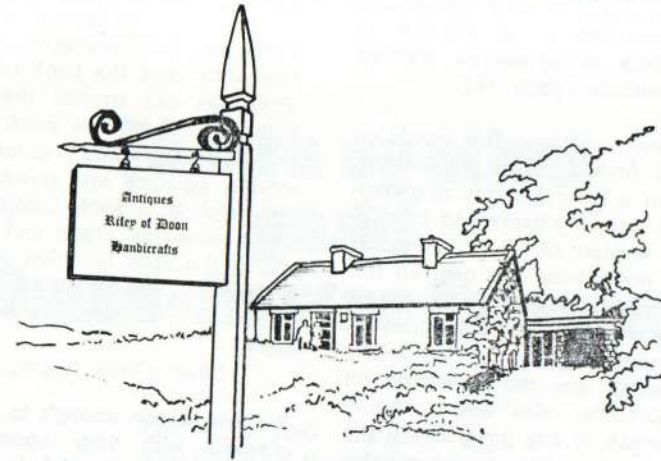
Mary M. Harper San Antonio

There was a great gathering of Louisburgh people at my installation as pastor last December. My uncle, Anthony Wallace, from Woodfield, and my brother Martin (who was reared there from 1913 to 1920) had a part to play. How delighted we were to have Father Michael from Biafra. Some relations came all the way from Boston; but, sad to say, my dear mother was not well enough to venture out on such a bad day.

Father Anthony T. Wallace,
New Rochelle

Sister Anthony asked me to thank you sincerely for **An Choinneal**: she was very pleased with the cover and with your comments on page sixty-eight of that issue. The magazine really lit up a few days for her this week, and she enjoys the extracts read for her ... She has not forgotten Louisburgh and its people. She asked me to congratulate you on the whole lay-out of the magazine: it is certainly all Father McDyer said, May I offer a suggestion? You have no articles by teenagers and I'm sure there is some talent for writing among the secondary/university boys and girls in Louisburgh. Some are capable of writing poetry, stories, etc. which would astonish you. I am sure also that this would increase the sales and ensure that when the present contributors wish to retire (!) there would always be kept up the high standard at present reached. Congratulations again on this wonderful achievement, from Sr. Anthony and all the sisters who have seen the magazine.

Sister M. Genevieve, Tuam



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Your suggestion is so worthwhile, Sister, as to need no comment. We are launching a "youthmove" in this issue to encourage teenage contributions (page 18).

I am penning these few words on a 'bus from Croydon to Camberwell on a busy Monday afternoon I was very impressed by your latest edition of "An Choinneal" — in my opinion the best so far. The fact that so many people from at home and abroad contributed was indeed heartening. Particularly interesting was the panegyric on Mr. O'Toole, who was a grand gentleman. It was good to see the pictures of so many young couples who got married recently and those like Kathleen Friel, Sylvester O'Donnell and Geoffrey O'Grady who have entered the religious life. In all I can see that Louisburgh is far from dead! The interview with Guard Hannon was terrific. To have maintained such an active interest in life even in a rather dull job must have required Trojan qualities I wish you every success with all future issues and hope that the next one will be even better than the last.

Frank Murphy, Surrey

Some time I hope to write a letter to the Editor of "An Choinneal" in praise of the west and of this "lucerna in tenebris hujus mundi" Long may your candle burn — and may the 'ordlach" remain steadfast in endurance. It is a credit to you and to your people at home and throughout "ceithre ranna an domhain"!

Séamus Ó Duilearga

Irish Folklore Commission

Mrs Cabot and I very much enjoyed reading the latest "Coinneal" and in particular the contri-

butions by Sister Philomena, Una O'Malley and the Letter from Home. "An Choinneal" is a remarkable parish magazine and we frequently read the back numbers when we can borrow them. We both hope you will continue to print contributions about the stories, customs and goings-on of the area. It is such contributions which make us proud and nostalgic of the area in which we have chosen to settle. We enclose a contribution to help with the good work.

David Cabot, Carrigskewann

We are human enough to be very pleased with your appreciation, David. If it is not unfair to suggest it now, we would welcome an article from you in our next number.

Thank you for your donation.

Tell the editor I think it is a great little magazine. I read the copies you send me over and over again. They bring me back to those wonderful days I spent in Ireland in '65. Are there going to be any more? I do hope so.

New York reader

Days, or magazines? There will be many more of both, God willing.

I very much appreciate your willingness to help my project, but it would be most unfair for you to be out of pocket because of it I feel that in supporting the "Coinneal" I should be contributing to a 'good cause' in which I have a considerable interest.

Alan Bliss (U.C.D.)

I spend many happy hours reading this magazine and I keep the back copies handy so I can re-read them too.

Michael O'Malley, Massachusetts

Tá Éire ag athrú go dtí Bainc-Aontas Éireann

Tá níos mó daoine ag athrú go dtí B.A.E.

Is fíor. Agus is de bharr nach le hairgead amháin a bhíonn plé againn.

Bímíd ag plé le daoine. Daoine mar tú fhéin.

Daoine a bhfuil níos mó ná cuntas bainc agus seicleabhar uathu.

Gheobhaidh tú an rud breá úd — seirbhís — le B.A.E.

Agus sin é an fáth go bhfuil Éire ag glacadh le B.A.E.

Déan do ghnó ag an gcomhartha seo ...



Bainc-Aontas Éireann

NÍ BHÍONN TU RÓFHADA AR SHIÚL Ó OIFIG IN AON CHUID á ÉIRINN

"An Choinneal" arrived safely : it is a splendid little parish magazine. Although my parents were born in America, I have always had a great love of Ireland and loved it even more after my visit in 1965. My maternal grandmother left Louisburgh in 1847-'8 (in the famine times). It was she who unstilled in me her love for Ireland by the many tales she told me of her home in Louisburgh Many thanks to the producers of "An Choinneal" for many joyful moments of reading.

Helen Reidy, N. Y.

To let us know of such reactions is to assure us that this magazine is fulfilling one of its main purposes.

My sincere thanks to the Editorial Board of An Choinneal for the copy of the current issue. It keeps up the very high standard of previous issues and is an outstanding example of community effort. I enclose cheque, please make me a foundation member.

Joseph Cunnane (Archbishop of Tuam)

I love the book. You would be surprised at the number of people who have read it here and are anxious to be enrolled in An Choinneal. I always like to keep in touch with home.

(Mrs.) Ellie O'Brien, Athlone

Send them on, Mrs. O'Brien, the rolls are wide open still!

Happy to receive the latest issue : I know I will have happy hours reading it through.

Ann Carr, Framingham

I am very thankful for the latest issue, which I think is better than ever — and that is saying a lot. The continued production of it is a great credit to you all. I enclose a donation to the ciste.

James Fergus, Bishop of Achonry

If you have some of the appeal form; for Foundation membership please send me some : I feel I could get five or six foundation members among my friends in America and elsewhere. It would be a great pity to let this magazine die.

John D. O'Dowd

God rest you, John O'Dowd : "An Choinneal" has had few supporters as active, as appreciative, as loyal.

I enclose herewith a short poem composed by a parishioner of Monsignor Scott's, shortly after his death on December 18, 1968. My thought is that this should be preserved for posterity by publication in "An Choinneal". I have an affection for your publication in as much as my good friend Monsignor Scott interested me in it several years ago and I look forward to its coming.

Clem A. Ryan, Minnesota

Many thanks. We are glad to publish Miss Kinney's tribute (on page 91).

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Bits and Scraps . . .

One of the most welcome post-holiday arrivals on my desk was the sixth edition of the Louisburgh parish magazine ... which must be unique in its price as it is in the quality of its contents mixes a distinctive blend of old and new parochial trivia and profound precept in a magazine that has a range of interests far outside the parish confines of Kilgeever. My own favourite is "Saying it with Starch" in which some of the rich imaginative sayings of Louisburgh are preserved in the verbal richness in which county speech abounds There is a grand piece of nostalgia from John D. O' Dowd on "The Homes of Iar-Umhal".

—Tatler Two, "Western People"
6/9/1969

If archaeology is your particular interest, a visit to Louisburgh is quite essential, because that area is extremely rich in archaeological remains. The Louisburgh Association provide a detailed list together with a map of the sites of the local monuments It all leaves you a little breathless, doesn't it? If you asked Basil Morahan what his profession is, he would tell you that he is a secondary teacher ... He plays the guitar and a half-a-dozen other instruments He is the author of a three-act comedy, "A Problem Solved", is the founder of a thirty-nine piece boys band in Louisburgh, and has resurrected and organized a pattern for that town based on the old traditional ones which ceased

some thirty years ago.
Sonia Kelly, "Irish Press" 2/8/'71

There are several strands within easy striking distance of Louisburgh smooth and firm, and endlessly washed by white-topped, un-polluted atlantic breakers. It refreshes one merely to look at them. In weather such as this they outdistance Mediterranean beaches off the Costa Brava and the Pacific beaches off Santa Barbara.

Desmond Rushe
Irish Independent 9/7/1971

I am sure your readers will be interested to know that on the evening of the 19th April I heard the first call of the cuckoo in the lovely stretch of coast lying between Louisburgh and Killary. I am told that the bird is about a week earlier than usual in these parts.
J. A. Egan (County Engineer)
Letter to Irish Times, 23/4/1971

Cardinal Terence Cooke has announced the appointment of Father Anthony J. Wallace as pastor of Blessed Sacrament Church, New Rochelle. Father Wallace was born in New York City. His parents had come from Louisburgh Co. Mayo in the early 1900's and were married in St. Patrick's Cathedral shortly after their arrival. Some few years afterwards when the father, Thomas, passed away, Mrs. Wallace returned with young Anthony

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and his brother, Martin, to the home of their paternal grandparents, near the foot of St. Patrick's Holy Mountain in County Mayo. Father Wallace recalls: "For the next seven years I attended the national school where Master Tiernan taught not only the usual primary grade material, but also the more advanced subjects. It was during this period that I remember the news of World War I being discussed around the fireplace, as well as the events of the Irish insurrection of 1916.

Parish Magazine, New Rochelle

The sound of the bells of Beverley Minister, one of the oldest churches in the East Riding of Yorkshire, may soon be ringing out in Co. Mayo. It will be a sequel to the holiday spent recently in Louisburgh by Hull businessman, Mr. Tim Timings, and his meeting with a local hotel owner "who keeps the keys" of the small Protestant Church in the town. Mr. Timings approached the Minister and

authorities, and arrangements were made for a tape-recording of the bells, which has now been completed and may shortly be on its way to Louisburgh, in time for Christmas and the New Year.

Irish Independent 7/12/1970

The wandering angler like myself sees the lead-and-treble poacher at work at unexpected times. In County Mayo, on the Bunowen river, I watched a rather adept performance. The poacher looked like a farmer, most probably was a farmer. Certainly he was "making" the hay, gathering it into small heaps before stacking. He had the rod and line hidden under loose hay. Frequently, when he got tired of hay-making, he drew the rod and went five yards or so to the nearest pool, and started to stroke-haul with a vigour which, if he had otherwise shown it, would have had all the hay stacked in a few hours

George Burrows

Irish Times 31/1/1970

The Editor wishes to record his indebtedness and gratitude to **Father Martin Coen** (Galway) for many historical notes, including

the report on pages 80—81; and to **Farrell's Photography Service** (Galway) for help with the cover picture.

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Our Contributors

Mr. Micheál de Búrca is a Roonkeel farmer who has a lively interest in past and present parish affairs. He has written in an earlier issue.

Mr. Frank Fahey is a Maynooth student who, in the course of social work during vacation, spent some time in Louisburgh last summer.

Miss Gertrude M. Horgan, a professor at Aquinas College, Michigan, has edited the famous "Jamesey Berry" stories; she was the prime mover in having the American summer school in Louisburgh in the parish last July.

Mr. Herbe Kuehne is a student researcher in anthropology; living in Kentucky.

Mrs. Clementine Lyons teaches at Carrcwnisky School; she is secretary of *An Choinneal*.

Mr. Dáithí Mag Rael has just retired from Cregganbán School. An accomplished scholar of the Irish language, he has a deep understanding of the history of the parish.

Mr. Basil Morahan teaches at C.B.S., Westport. Because of his musical and organisational talents he was appointed to take charge of social functions in the general tourist programme and was responsible for the re-birth of "the pattern".

Mr. Justin Morahan served for some years as a missionary in South America. He now is a secondary school teacher in Dublin.

Mr. John O'Dowd who has died, wrote the present article as a footnote to an earlier one in this magazine. His many contributions in former issues were a most welcome feature of *An Choinneal*, in which he had a particular interest.

Miss Una O'Malley (Kinnadoohy) has many times written personal or folk-memories for our readers.

Mr. Martin O'Reilly is a member of a well-known Louisburgh family, who now lives near Claremorris where he is married. He has contributed a poem to the 1967 issue.

"**Seán**" is a (real live) parishioner who has emigrated to Worcester and wishes to reply to our "Letter from Home". We would welcome more of the family from elsewhere.

Sister M. Philomena (Scanlon) continues in this issue her memories of a childhood in Bridge Street. Unfortunately, it is her last article. She died in Mulranny Convent last year.

Mrs. Nora Sek was formerly Nora Lyons of Furmoyle. After many and wide travels, she has a very real appreciation of the good things of home. She and her husband, Stanislaus, live in Chicago.

Father Kieran Waldron has replaced Father Moran as curate and teacher in the parish. He continues a good tradition, especially in connection with the Macra na Tuaithe guild.

The editor again thanks **Mr. Liam Lyons, Westport**, for his generous help in providing many prints for this issue.

Second-Best

In this ready-made age of ours it is easy to become satisfied with the second-rate; to settle for the material or article which we even admit to be inferior—and to do so on the plea of practicality; that as we say in the idiom of our own parish "it'll do for a turn!" There are people for whom packaged soup, or ready-made suits or cellophaned carrots have more appeal than their more wholesome home-produced counterpart, because (they argue) the counterpart is dirty or slow, or troublesome, whereas their choice is clean, quick and "handy". Indeed "handiness" seems to be the final yardstick: time, not quality, appears as the supreme criterion. The proverb, "Ceannaigh an droch-rud agus beidh tú gan aon rud",* has been pushed aside because the "droch-rud" will "do for a turn". And life easily becomes just a series of "turns"!

One should be slow to give unqualified appraisal to the quality as against the time-factor involved. Time is certainly important, for it is the measure of our life-span here. The second-best does often save time; but the real test of time in such a context is not how much of it we save, but what we do with the extra time so purchased. For it is not time itself—not the mere movement of the hands of a clock, but the exertion of our hands and minds against the clock—that is of value.

The people of our parish — as of nearly all Irish parishes—were until relatively recent years living at the other extreme. It was quality all the way irrespective for the cost in time. Country butter was made in the kitchen without any questioning of the labour cost: wool was grown, shorn, carded, spun and finally woven into cloth or knitted into garments, without even a comparison with shop-materials. Was it that people believed in quality? Or was it perhaps that the shop-article cost money, and that people had no money? It was, perhaps, inevitable that, with the advent of more ready money, the more time-consuming chores would be jettisoned, but have we now gone too far? In a contribution to the present issue, a parishioner makes the observation (page 32) :

" . . . our fields are laid waste, and there is no tillage whatsoever. Long-distance lorries bring us potatoes and turnips; Spanish onions, and English or Australian apples are widely bought . . . "

One cannot but lament those waste acres which should have produced such foodstuffs within the parish. Prices will be quoted to justify the new trend. We submit that there is

*If you buy what is inferior, you are left with nothing"

here a fallacy. For instance, a cart which at one time carried turf supplies to town householders is now seen to carry gas cylinders from the town to the turf-villages. "Gas is cheaper" is the explanation—and the economics of cutting and saving a lorry-load of turf seem to justify the theory. We submit that this theory forgets that the man-power is now unused: to put it crudely, men must still be fed and clothed for doing relatively nothing; and if they are put into the economic scales they will upset the easy answers. And this is to leave aside the very real problem of what life becomes for someone without a quotient of challenging work, for no thinking person can be happy about the rich content of people's lives which is now dying because of the choice of the quick second-best.

Well within the memory of our middle-aged parishioners, a normal topic of everyday debate and conversation here was the "gaisc" — the feat of work — which a man did at one time or another and won himself acclaim: the stack of turf that was cut in three days; the Irish acre that was mown in one long day; the lifting and tying of so many stooks of oats; the competitive sheep-shearing on "The Farm". Men thought well and worked well — and in the deep sense lived well — in such times. It is our firm belief that one unfortunate factor has imposed on our people, gradually but definitely, a more ignoble attitude to their work. Perhaps it will best underline the sinister effect of that unhappy factor if we leave the factor un-named here: this will at least emphasize the cold truth that its effect is well recognised as bad by our readers. But after years of pointing out the existence and the result of this cancer, we may well continue to ask: when will it be arrested? For, to prolong a metaphor, the cancer has by now affected the back-bone of our people. We put it bluntly to our readers that farm implements are rusting in this parish of ours while at the same time human muscle and sinew are deteriorating for sheer lack of exercise. A cynic might summarize the decay of a people in three short acts:

Act 1 " . . . just to get the form signed, Sergeant."

Act 2 " . . . Yes, Doctor; and my stomach too, at times."

Act 3 " . . . He was, God rest him! And a great worker in his early days."

The whole course of life seems to have turned individually inwards: and self-preservation, far from including propagation, becomes merely a passive existing — a deadly second-best. Where, we ask, can the cycle be broken?

Fortunately, the young people of the parish have shown the spark of hope: as a guild of Macra na Tuaithe they have tackled a problem of our society; and theirs was no second-best. The excellence of their project merited top national

award. Their project (which deals with tourism as a growth industry in the area under the headings: beaches, scenic routes, shore and river fishing, harbours, ancient monuments and off-shore islands; and which is backed by copious statistics) is itself so exhaustive that it has been published as a separate booklet. We have made the point in the last two issues of "An Choinneal" that tourism is not in itself a basic industry; and that for the parish to live, rather than merely exist, on this industry it should produce the main foodstuffs for tourist menus. However, within their chosen field of research our young team have done a thorough and accomplished service.

It is perhaps, unfair to spur the willing horse; but our guild of Macra na Tuaithe has the potential which our community needs. Could we hope for a future project analysing the quantity and kind of actual work done in the parish; the number of man-hours of real work compared with the number of able-bodied men; and compared, too, with the allocations of public money for unemployment. Is it to far-fetched to hope that in our community — which, one generation ago, prided itself on its standards of honest work — these same monies could, by special arrangement, be allotted to the same people, not for idleness but for any constructive work for their own personal benefit on their own personal farms. Is there some great flaw in such an elementary remedy that it has not been tried long before now?

If our Macra na Tuaithe guild could blue-print such a development they would — apart from results of a competition — have pioneered another Irish first and refused again to live at ease with something that is second-best.

A Family of Achievements!

An Choinneal rejoices to note the exceptional successes attained by the Heneghan family of Bridge Street — sons and daughters of Mr. and (the late) Mrs. Patrick Heneghan. Apart from their basic achievements which have qualified each member for a professional career, the following recent distinctions are note-worthy:

Dr. Walter D. Heneghan has recently qualified as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in Canada;

Father John F. Heneghan has been awarded a Doctorate in Church Law; and

Mr. Louis Heneghan has recently passed his B.C.L. degree examination.

A proud parish congratulates such a talented family!

Youth - move

Readers all over the world will join with us in congratulating the boys and girls of Louisburgh Macra na Tuaithe guild who have been awarded first place in Ireland for their project, and were presented with the Citizenship Award in Louisburgh on 24th September 1971.

Youth is on the move in the parish; there are even greater things to come. Excelsior!

The Editorial Board are happy to offer a cash prize of five pounds for a youth-essay in the next issue of this magazine : It is open to any Louisburgh boy or girl who attends any post-primary school when the essay is presented to us.

The subject chosen for this commemorates one of the most famous natives of our parish, and it is hoped that this will make his life better known in the parish of his birth. The title is :

Father John Heneghan,
Louisburghman and Martyr.



NATIONAL CHAMPIONS 1971

1 John O'Brien 2 Nuala O'Rourke 3 Emer Gaffney 4 Patrick McHugh
5 P. J. Heraghty 6 Teresa Cox 7 Catherine Keane 8 Andrew Durkan
9 John O'Dowd.

Detached Observers :

(a) An Anthropologist Visits Louisburgh

For eight weeks during the summer of 1970, Louisburgh acted as host to a young researcher in the study of sociology and anthropology. This man chose to live among the people of Louisburgh in an effort to learn first hand about their customs, habits, cultural patterns of behaviour and unique flavour of Christian living. The following paragraphs are a contribution which the young researcher offers as a way of renewing friendships and acquitting a debt of gratitude to the people of Louisburgh who treated him so well.

Anthropology is a relatively new science, and people generally associate it with studies of ancient civilizations and primitive peoples. When I arrived in Louisburgh and identified myself as a novice anthropologist, local folk winced and wondered if I thought they were ancient or primitive. Actually, I knew they were neither, and I went to Louisburgh to do a type of survey which does not match the popular image of what an anthropologist does.

I was a cultural anthropologist, and I was hoping to do what is called a "community study". Colleagues of mine spend their days teaching and studying. The "community study" which we do is an attempt to understand human behaviour in the context of a living, dynamic and frequently, highly literate people. My stay in Louisburgh was such an attempt, and I was fortunate to find that the local people were willing to help me especially after they realized that I was not a bone-digging archeologist nor an outdoorsman scholar looking for spear-throwing jungle people.

I chose to go to Louisburgh for a very specific reason. My chief ambition in life is to follow in the example of St. Thomas Aquinas, who blended his Christian theology with the modern science of his day. I want to bridge the Gospels with the insights of modern science, so that Our Lord's words will be more easily understood and believed by an increasingly more educated humanity. For this reason, I am quite interested in studying Roman Catholicism across the world. In one sense the Christian way of life is the same around the globe; in another sense, however, every nation and people practises it differently. I went to Louisburgh to see what insights I could learn from the local Irish way of practising Roman Catholicism.

Louisburgh had two specific features which attracted me. The first was its vocational record which is considered

uniquely grand around Ireland — some fifty living priests and a comparable number of sisters and nuns. The second was Louisburgh's proximity to Croagh Patrick and the coincidence of my visit with the annual July pilgrimage. The pilgrimage provided an opportunity to study an extraordinary aspect of Irish religious practice and belief. Comparisons and contrasts between the "Reek", Lough Derg, and the devotions at Knock helped me place the more ordinary religious practice of Louisburgh in perspective. A number of insights resulted which I found extremely valuable for my personal faith as well as quite interesting for my academic work.

I spent the summer talking with as many Louisburgh residents as I could. I attended Sunday Mass, visited schools, climbed the "Reek", went to dances, watched the Carrowniskey Strand races, enjoyed the scenery of Doonough Pass, raked hay and visited pubs. I learned much about Louisburgh and its people, and through the experience of living in the area I learned much about my science and the work of studying human behaviour. In short, the summer was a success and what I learned will help me when I teach. Towards the end of my visit to Louisburgh, a number of locals asked what I thought of the town and the people. I found myself repeatedly lost for words, mostly because my work inclines me to accept whatever I see without judging or criticizing. Besides that, however, I liked my stay in Louisburgh, and I felt that I was beginning to feel for the local way of life, at least somewhat. As a result, it was difficult to describe impressions and I left Louisburgh saying the usual polite things that visitors are inclined to say. I knew, though, that Louisburgh locals would like to know my "real" feelings. And so, after I left, I tried to reflect on my impressions and to set them down in writing. I have only the following to offer, but I give them with the hope that they will satisfy the normal curiosity of those friends who asked for my impressions.

First, Louisburgh is a small town with many small shops and lots of very personal service. I really liked that aspect of the town. Originating from Chicago in America, I was accustomed to the larger and more impersonal life of the metropolis. The adjustment to Louisburgh was challenging at first, but once I made it, I enjoyed the style of life. I even drew accustomed to working according to the unique (and humorously discussed) Louisburgh concept of time!

Second, Louisburgh people both trusted me and confided in me, even though they did not understand my work. I found the trust gratifying, and I know that it helped my work. Better than that, however, it made me feel

part of the local scene. That experience is the ambition of every anthropologist, and needless to say, I was grateful for being given it.

Third, Louisburgh people were extremely intelligent and knowledgeable. I found myself continually humbled by the depth of local insights, local humour, and the rich cultural tradition which Louisburgh people draw from their Irish cultural heritage. I was amazed by the number of people who could recite verse for me, sing songs at the "drop of a hat", so to speak, and draw illustrations for discussion out of a wide range of literature and history. Not everyone in Louisburgh had all of these abilities, of course. But I believe it would be difficult to find someone who did not have one or two specialities. Modesty usually inclined many to hide their talents, but I was pleased to find that a little good-natured encouragement was all that was needed generally to get a local to demonstrate his or her particular forte.

Those were some of the things which pleased me most about my stay in Louisburgh.

Anyone who does the kind of work I do, however, also uncovers lots of the problems and difficulties which abound in communities around the world. It would be wrong for me to suggest that I did not find any such in Louisburgh. I did find some, but I must confess that the local "dirty laundry" did not seem any dirtier than that found elsewhere. In fact, I would suggest that it was a whole lot cleaner. I am not one who delights in hanging clothes lines with other people's problems, and I prefer to skip over the few difficulties which I discovered during my short stay in Louisburgh. By the time **An Choinneal** appears, some of those problems will have been solved anyhow! Two general impressions about local difficulties, however, might interest readers.

First, Louisburgh is a real "upward-thinking" town. It has problems, but my short stay made me view those problems as typical growing pains. Developing a community consciousness, shaping a strong local economy, co-operating in educating children, and learning to pray and work together as members of Christ's Church are challenging tasks, especially in an era of television and the Common Market. Men always seem to struggle as they try to improve their world. The road to better living never seems smooth. Maybe that's the heritage of Adam and Eve: maybe it is due to something else. At any rate, Louisburgh's willingness to face the challenges of the new age showed a spirit of progressiveness; and the pains and difficulties of meeting a challenge should not be allowed to dull the original vision and the dreams for the better things that can be achieved.

Secondly, many Louisburgh locals worried that continuing emigration, dwindling population, excessive concern for tourism, and the growing influence of television will destroy the rich personal life of the Louisburgh area. Changes will certainly occur. This cannot be doubted. But I believe Louisburgh will always be able to maintain something of its unique way of life. The reason for this projection lies in Louisburgh's geographic setting. Louisburgh and its farmlands are surrounded by natural boundaries that do not yield to change. The mountains and the sea are beautiful and the countryside will certainly become a tourist attraction. But the mountains and the sea do not change much. Louisburgh is a sheltered community, and the protection which the natural surroundings afford will probably always preserve a unique character for the area. That protection offers a great opportunity to the local population, and it would be my hope that the opportunity is used to benefit Ireland, almost in the same sort of way that Ireland once benefited the rest of Europe in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries.

Such then are some of my "real" feelings and observations. I enjoyed the people of Louisburgh. I found their way of life different than my own, and I recognized many of its fine values. These values need never be lost amid modern changes.

And so — to the friends whom I left in Louisburgh. I say once again: "Thank you for your helpfulness, co-operation and hospitality. Every best wish to you. May God bless and keep you always — as the fine hopeful and happy people I once had the privilege of knowing.

Lexington, Kentucky

Herb Kuehne

(b) Cambridge Tribute

FROM SEDWICK CLUB June 14-28th

When we arrived late at the Sycamores to begin an official two-week mapping course, we found a very bored-looking crowd of Cambridge geologists were already installed in the lounge reading local literature. But we all immediately joined in praising Louisburgh for its good timing in organising its Festival for the whole period that we would be there; and our first evening was celebrated on the beach throwing pebbles at pieces of floating driftwood.

"Louisburgh is a geologist's heaven", we were told but, it wasn't until the first rainstorm over the Reek made us rush down to Campbell's Bar at Murrisk, that we really appreciat-

ed this quotation. Many hours we spent in this bar during the first week, and occasionally American tourists, sorry for our damp feet and mad occupation, would buy us a drink. However, when the rain stopped and we resumed our mapping on the side of the hill, all discomforts were worth the magnificent view of Clew Bay and its islands which make some of the finest coastal scenery I have ever seen.

The discovery of Gaffney's Bar was inevitable for those geologists not assigned to the study of Croagh Patrick, because these worthy fellows confined themselves indoors at any hint of bad weather. (There were hints of bad weather almost every day!) This venerable establishment was eventually to provide the main centre of entertainment for the whole party, and since every member of the geologist's choir (formed during an Easter field course in Pembroke-shire) was present, the piano could not fail to cause the whole gang to burst into song. The magical appearance of soup and sandwiches was something we English had never experienced, and the generally late Irish closing hours seemed to be an incredible glimpse into a far-away golden age.

The festival itself was great fun. In the evening's dances we could, none of us, remember how to jive, though we enjoyed improvising even if it was not compatible with the locals' skill. We lost the running part of the pint race, but our glasses were always full that night! And of course we will never forget the Harp Lager Singing Competition, so well rehearsed beforehand, but such a disaster in performance that I am sure we deserved a prize for the biggest flop ever presented to the inhabitants of Louisburgh.

The most important single thing that compelled us to stay was your great kindness towards us. No one could walk far along the road to Westport without being offered a lift. We were continually asked by Mrs. O'Toole if we were comfortable despite her perfect sleeping arrangements; and it seemed, too, that the later we came in for supper, (maybe after climbing a mountain) the larger was our helping of food! I can simply finish now by extending the following specific good wishes:— to Lady Harman for giving us a splendid lunch; to Campbell's at Murrisk for helping our geological studies; to the O'Toole's and their staff: to Duffy's for keeping a late supply of chocolate; to Jack for being always there; to Fiona and Emer for dancing and entertaining us so well, and to Mr. and Mrs. Gaffney for the baths and everything else.

Finally I can be sure you will hear sung again "Maids when you're young", "On Urely Moor", and "Ten sticks

of dynamite" — you may even see the Irish jig danced in the Bar. But I do not think "Cwm Rhonda" will waft over your pint of Guinness until we or our ghosts return to Louisburgh once more.

(c) *Máirnéalaigh Mhuire*

"Sometimes our hearts were shaken with great joy ..."

Dear Editor,

We would be very grateful if you could include these words of thanks to the people of Louisburgh for a truly wonderful week spent there in August. For our leadership course we were fortunate in having selected Louisburgh as our centre; more fortunate still in the fact that the good Sisters put the old Parochial House at our disposal, and most fortunate of all in that we were accepted by the people there in Louisburgh, with a readiness and an openness not always found elsewhere.

The purpose of the leadership course was not to come and survey and criticize what we found there; but rather to look for, and seek out, those things that are lovely and good in people, and to encourage it to come to the limelight, if only for a passing while. Above all, its aim is to bring forth the leadership qualities in others. These qualities were not lacking, either in the younger or the older people in Louisburgh. I think immediately of these young lads and girls who did so much to make the Sports on Bunowen Strand such a happy event. I am deliberately (and painfully) avoiding mentioning any names as it would occupy pages to recall all those involved in the week's happenings. And in the end I would probably leave out someone that should not be left out.

The lines of Pearse come into my mind, for our hearts too were "shaken with great joy".

Yes. The streets of that little town. What qualities of leadership those two "Tidy Town Troops" displayed: (Sorry lads, for not giving your names, but I must keep to my word above). Memories of chewing-gum scraped off the footpaths, pavements mopped up, Sister adjudicators almost swept off the earth (certainly given the brush-off) for dropping litter, the old car removed, counter-attacks on the 'enemy' for excursions with litter 'bombs' into enemy territory... yes, "all sorts of everything remind me of you".

The quality of cooking displayed by N. and Co. had to be eaten to be believed. Leaders with such qualities would

have no difficulty in finding followers, even if it was only for the scones, flans or applecakes! We thank you for the discussions, the forfeits, the songs, that filled up our nights. We thank you for your gift of laughter and good humour, even when sitting in pools of water in a tent after climbing the Reek. The Reek will be an abiding memory. You are so lucky to have at your doorstep, this tremendous symbol of Ireland's heritage, and we were lucky to have been in that community where the heritage was lived.

Thank you, too, all those who came to Bean a' tí's concert the last night — young, old and not so old. I could not help comparing them to the vase of flowers in the room that night. The Máirnéalaigh (Máirnéalaigh Mhuire is the official title given to the leadership course) had gone out and gathered the wild flowers that were growing unappreciated along the road or the banks of the Bunowen, and had arranged them in a beautiful bouquet. They, too, like the people were just ordinary flowers. The talent, the happiness, the goodness and the love of people seemed to form another bouquet that night, far more lovely than the one of flowers, beautiful and all though that was. Thank you for the poems, the songs, the film, for making the concert a real house party.

Thank you for all these things, and many many more as well. We hope that none of the good things that we found there "will pass and change and die and be no more", in an age when the commercial and the 'canned' and the 'superworld' tends to destroy them.

Needless to say, on the Sunday
"we went upon our way, sorrowful".

Yours sincerely

Maynooth College

Frank Fahey
(On behalf of Máirnéalaigh)

(d) *American Summer School*

For this we made available a modern school building complete with library and local librarian, provided accommodation (farm-house accommodation as far as possible) for the students and professors engaged in Summer School here.

We also organized evening entertainment which included lessons on and displays in Irish Dancing and Singing and we arranged a series of evening lectures dealing with the different aspects of life in Rural Ireland to-day.

I would like to mention here that all this hard work was not done in one day or in one week or in one month — we worked steadfastly on this project from as far back as Sept. 1970. However we feel that our efforts were crowned with great success — the holding of the summer school, here brought a nominal sum of £2,000 into the parish, it also ensured that Louisburgh got a lot of varied (and mostly favourable) publicity both in local and national press. It also extended the tourist season in the area — when other places were complaining of a slack season, Louisburgh was humming. Another important factor evolving from the summer school in Louisburgh was the very, favourable comments made by the students themselves on their impressions and experiences during their short sojourn with us. The following is an extract from a letter written by one of the lady students to a friend in Louisburgh, after she got home to Ontario.

"The highlight of my summer was the time I spent in Ireland, but especially that spent in Louisburgh: your hospitality and friendliness as a community to us as visitors was really great and is something we will never forget."

Somewhere in the background of that letter there is the influence of people from our parish who were their own good, generous, Christian selves in dealing with and greeting the author of that tribute. I have noticed that the whole experiment of the summer school was materially a great boon to the parish; but in view of such a reaction from one of the students one could feel that we gave more — in ways that mean more. And in so doing we also enriched ourselves.

Clementine Lyons

(e) *Report*

REPORT TO LOUISBURGH TOURIST ASSOCIATION —
By Gertrude M. Horgan, IACI Resident Director

A. SUMMARY OF PERTINENT POINTS ON STUDENT EVALUATION FORMS

Twenty one returned of Twenty seven distributed — all anonymous

1. Housing :

- (a) Physical comforts — excellent—ten; good—nine; average—one; very poor—one;
- (b) Food ... excellent—ten; good—seven; average—one; poor—two; very poor—one

- (c) Family relationship — excellent—fourteen; good—one; average—two; very poor four
2. Community relationships :
- (a) Local contacts — excellent—nine; good—nine; average—one; poor—one; very poor—two
- (b) Knowledge of community life — excellent—six; good—six; average—three; poor—four; very poor—two;
- (c) Evening lectures — excellent—two; good—three; average—ten; poor—three; very poor—three
3. Classes
- (a) Total educational exper. — excellent—eight; good—ten; average—two; very poor—one
- (b) Library facilities — good—one; average—six; poor—seven; very poor—seven
4. Field trips — excellent—one; good—three; average—twelve; poor—two; very poor—three
5. Over-all value of total experience — excellent—thirteen; good—six; average—one; poor—one.

B. SUMMARY OF TYPICAL STUDENT COMMENTS ON EVALUATION FORMS :

Housing — “For a maximum learning experience, a limit of two should be set on the number of students in each home.”

“I was very disappointed that I didn't live with a family.”

“The classes and living experience in Louisburgh have given me a knowledge that could not be gained in a college environment.”

“My family was lovely. I think it is very important for all students to be placed with a family. Family life is definitely the high point of my experience.”

Community relationships — “Meeting the people as individuals and talking to them in shops and pubs gave me many insights.”

“The people of Louisburgh were warm, friendly, and willing to share their ideas and feelings with us frankly.”

“I learned more from the activities at the lectures and from chats over tea afterwards than I learned from the evening lectures.”

“The evening lectures were too long, too formal; small, informal group discussions would be preferable, with ample time for questions.”

Total educational experience and over-all value of this programme; —

“History reference material was in short supply, especially in comparison with books and pamphlets in literature.”

“I've done a lot of growing up in Louisburgh, learning through living with a group of people. There is so much to learn just being placed in a new life-style, and it is important to understand that one's own is not the only way of life. I came to love the town, the people, the relaxed atmosphere.”

“Don't have a group larger than ours, and don't choose a town larger than Louisburgh for similar programmes.”

“Keep the session in lovely Louisburgh, by all means! The people, the scenery, the classes, the whole atmosphere — Louisburgh is ideal!”

“I think it is important to the students that they get out of their own small groups and visit with the people. Perhaps everyone should also have a study project which involves interviewing the townspeople and becoming very familiar with all sorts of community resources.”

“I know right now that the total experience in Louisburgh was of inestimable value, and I anticipate that as the months go by, I'll find that the memory of this summer in Louisburgh will become even more important to me.”

“For a maximum learning experience in another culture, no more than two students should be placed in a local home.”

“The field trips are good in theory, but the bus we had was so uncomfortable, and the driver, although willing, so uncommunicative about places of interest that those 14-hour trips were exhausting. Some future field trips — on a better bus — should include attendance at dramas in Galway or Sligo.”

“I really did benefit from the whole experience, but the things that I did on my own, the people I met and talked to, proved most beneficial to me.”

“I think the evening lectures should have consisted of small, informal group meetings.”

“I feel that the experience was totally worthwhile, and would recommend it to anyone.”

“Social life in the community, including conversation and singing in the pubs, was very valuable.”

“Each student coming to Ireland for a programme such as the Louisburgh one, should have the opportunity of living with a family simply to experience what Irish family life is like.”

“Everything was done by the families to make the students feel at home. However, I wish that the family I lived with had

taken their meals with us. To me, that's part of the family life on a student programme."

"I regret that there wasn't much opportunity to meet young people of our own age who are residents of Louisburgh, but maybe most of them are away working in some other part of Ireland or abroad. I enjoyed my contacts with young children and with adults in the community."

"I appreciated the fact that everyone in the community with whom I came in contact always had time to talk and to listen, or made time for it. They never gave me the impression that I was imposing on them by asking all sorts of questions."

"Of the evening lectures, I can say that I enjoyed the ones on education and on government. The others were much too long and boring, with the speakers trying to cram everything about their very broad topic into one lecture."

"Our two professors were top-notch in the fields of Irish literature and history."

"I wish that the evening lecture on Religion in Ireland had been held in the first week of the course. As the weeks went by, it was evident that the majority of students in the group having come from Mennonite college needed more information about the topic, since religion is in the air one breathes in Ireland."

On behalf of the Irish American Cultural Institute, I wish to extend our sincere appreciation to the members of the Louisburgh Tourist Association and to Louisburgh residents for their hearty co-operation in all of the phases of this summer session.



Séamus Durkan directing John Hurst on the authentic way to ride a donkey — on location with the B.B.C. in Thallabawn.

Watching and Waiting

In the course of a long and comprehensive letter to the Editor, Mr. Michael Burke of Roonkeel makes the points set out below. Mr. Burke wrote on 19th February 1970 (very shortly after our last edition appeared), a factor which readers will please bear in mind.

Dear Editor :

I am sending you a short geographical sketch of our Western seaboard from Erin's Point (Dooaghtra) to Roonagh Point and including the islands of Clare, Caher, Inisturk and Inish Stealla (or the Splashing Island). From Inisboffin a company of monks once ventured eastwards to the mainland and built a monastery on the spot which we now call 'Doughmore'. Part of their abbey still stands. The bell which they used there for saying Mass was found by myself and a cousin of mine, Patrick Burke. We gave it to John O'Toole, the schoolmaster in Louisburgh National School and a man of great learning. As far as I knew he sent it to a museum in Dublin for preservation. But it is a terrible shame, in these so-called Christian days, that this historic abbey and burial ground — where our kith and kin lie buried together with the bones of those sainted monks — should be left so uncared-for. I think that the National Graves Association should be consulted so that they might be preserved. I believe that we pay rates for all these burial grounds; and, if so, I imagine that the Mayo County Council should take on the work of preservation.

Outside between Boffin and the mainland is a celebrated trawling ground off Freel Island where a pleasure boat got lost some years ago. Between this and the Killary lie the great clear sands off Cromp Island where, a short time back, lived the Neagh families — the best oarsmen in the Connemara coast. These miles of clear sand were trawled for many years by the Murrisk fishermen. Alas! they are now no more. There is no sail in sight, either, at Mullagh Glas or Tully; or again at Duneen of the Golden Sands, This last-named was the place made famous in song by Hughie Mc Loughlin of Bunderra.

In face of all this deterioration, this neglect of our natural wealth and resources, it is up to us to bring pressure to bear on those in power so that action is taken. We, the people, are the supreme power in this country; we have the "divine right" to speak. We are paying the piper : we surely have the privilege of calling the tune! In bygone times we had in our own Louisburgh area, men and women,

with brains and intellect, whose advice if it had been taken would have meant that the Civil War would not still continue in the Chambers of Leinster House. Before ever Casement tried to land rifles on Banna Strand we had men who landed rifles at Ceann a' Trá from a German boat. These arms were, alas, mishandled; they were never used, and so our Louisburgh flying column had merely pick-shafts to train with. Among the leading men of the area at that time were General Michael Kilroy of Newport; and Captain Mack of Carramore, whose hands blistered from the heat of his gun during one of the Mayo ambushes. There were many whose advice and warnings during the Civil War were not taken; if they had been heeded then the west could have been saved from the chain of events which led to its disastrous position today. Not long ago our Archbishop warned that he might have to preside at the requiem of the west. I ask the Archbishop to keep up the pressure for the improvement of the west; then we should all rally to his standard.

As we look at the mainland from the sea shore, what hope can we see or give for our parish? The days of five or ten-year plans are over : we need immediate action. We have the material. Firstly we have the youth, who are a credit to their native parish and to our country. What a pity that so many of our best have been exported to make foreign imperialists grow richer while the poor at home grow poorer — and this almost without one sigh. Local politicians prate at election times "We have never been better off". What a farce! Our homes are being deserted, our boys and girls leaving, our fields are laid waste, and there is no tillage whatsoever. Long-distance lorries bring us potatoes and turnips; Spanish onions, and English or Australian apples are widely bought; and yet "We were never better off"!

Secondly we have the raw materials of a few thriving industries in the parish itself. An incident in the life of Marconi is interesting. During his work at Clifden he had intended to put his main transmitters on the mountain of Muilrea; and he was disheartened by the discovery that the mineral content of that mountain was great enough to interfere with the transmitters. Years later I myself can recall an English sapper who was surveying in the area having a conversation with my father and myself. I was then about twelve years old. He asked if my father knew where the Pugal Rock was. My father said yes — but that he never knew of any fame attached to it. The sapper pulled out a large map of the area, and indicating the rock he told us that twenty different minerals were present in its vicinity — among them a form of mother-of-pearl. A few hundred yards away from the rock he showed where (as he said) is one of the best slate-quarries in Britain or Ireland, a

quarry far superior to the Blue Bangor. Outside in the sea at this exact place the largest boat could anchor in any weather; and a crane or conveyor belt could load the slates for export. But we seem to prefer to import slates from Wales, or asbestos from Widnes, Lancashire. I remember that the same sapper asked my father if he remembered when silver was mined at Sheaffrey. My father had a slight memory of hearing his mother tell about the time they lived at Claiscéim near Doolough, before they moved to Devlin, that carts travelled on the Drummin Road taking loads of silver and copper to Westport Quay. In a soft English voice the sapper said : "My dear man, there is a treasure still remaining there".

I think often of how ridiculous it is to have our native silver shipped away — as at Galway nowadays, exported to Canada and later bought back by us on the money market with Canada calling the tune! Why can't the metal be smelted at home, so that we might stabilize our currency on the natural wealth of Ireland?

The question of industry is naturally linked-up with the state of our harbours. Let us have a look first at Roonagh, where the tragic drowning of four men and a girl crossing from Clare Island is still fresh in our minds. And what has been done as a remedy since? Not a notice taken — except to get the ballet-boxes safely in before an election day. Not so long ago one of our councillors in the Mayo County Council Chamber told us that all the harbours around our coast were only for seagulls to rest on. I understand that what he meant was that there were no boats to fish from them. But though this is true, one must ask "Why?" One sad example will give us an idea. For many years there was in Murrisk one of the finest fleets in Ireland and fishermen second to none in the world. A friend of mine — Austie Burke, God rest him, — told me that for years he and the other Murrisk fishermen were petitioning Mayo County Council for a grant to improve the sea-wall. He and his mates had to go out, at all times of day and night, and even on tides so high that they washed over the quay, to try to save their boats. At that time the boats were, to the best of my knowledge, their own private property. But the Council were adamant : not one inch of leeway did they give. At last, in disgust the fishermen sold their boats and the younger men went to England. Well might our politicians now say that Murrisk pier is only for seagulls!

A few years ago £40,000 was supposedly granted for Roonagh and Clare Island piers. Before the last election (!) engineers were sent to Clare Island to take depths (although according to my marine maps the depths taken in

1883 had never altered). I wonder who draws the interest on the £40,000 during those years? And when will some facility be given to those noble island people whose ancestors fought the power of Queen Elizabeth in the service of their own Queen Gráinne. My advice to the people of Clare Island is this : when the next election comes dump the ballet-boxes into the harbour as the brave Americans did to the English tea in Boston harbour. Then someone might begin to take notice!

From Roonagh to Cross : here at one time were four or five fishermen in every house. Now, for want of a harbour, there is not one; the winged seagulls can rest undisturbed on Carraig a' Rabhar! In Bunlách the British began a break-water about 1913 : it was never finished. We have petitioned every native government : our deceased county councillors, John T. Morahan and Paddy Gibbons (God rest them both) practically lost their voices making pleas to have this quay finished. Michael Moran (later Minister for Justice) pleaded — but all pleas fell on deaf ears; and so the seagulls can now rest on yet another inadequate pier. And to make the line of inadequacy complete, the demands of the Kinna-doohy men to have something done at Ohey Mhore have been as unheeded as the winds from the Atlantic. Here we have seagulls by the score.

So, back again to Erin's Point, Dooaghtra. Since as long as I can remember, fishermen from Tallabaun, Connemara and Inishturk have been trying to get a break-water at the cove of Port Loccagh — the deepest cove on the Mayo coast. There is but one rock to blast away : a defending wall could be put up for very little cost, and then the largest fishing trawler could be anchored there in any weather.

The following lines were written by Patrick McGill, who so often pleaded in his writings for the neglected, people of all races and creeds :

What's the use in writing
Of the stars and skies that are above
The world we rhyme upon so well?
Rhyming sentimental gushes
Of our Angelina's blushes,
If our verses do no sell?

Isn't it time that our verses were prepared to sell?

Roonkeel

Micheál de Búrca

Autumn Leaves

This article arrived a few months before the writer's death. In mourning her, many readers will also miss her contributions from future Coinneals. But we are grateful for the articles she has already written. God rest her!
Editor

We were ten. I was the youngest until the twins came, they didn't survive long so I became the youngest again. Being the youngest I had to run all the messages e.g., "Run down to the Post Office for six penny stamps". "Run over to Watt Burke's for four ounces of black wool". "Here is eight pence pay for it". It was always 'Run'; but they never meant me to run; rather, waste no time.

On Friday morning I was given a penny ha'penny and told to go for "The Weekly Freeman". My father and mother were waiting in the kitchen for it. My only interest in it was The Supplement which had a picture sometimes of Bal-four, Davitt, Parnell or John Bull, with Home Rule always somewhere in the background. Often it was a picture of a United Irishman. The first one that appeared was Wolfe Tone. Next came Lord Edward Fitzgerald, then Henry Joy McCracken and so on.

They were beautiful pictures and we framed three or four, thinking there were no more to come. We came short of frames and then we put the pictures up on the wall as they were. We soon came short of walls, but the public-house kitchen was well lined with them and the men and boys who dropped in at night to enjoy a quiet bottle of stout before a blazing turf fire looked at them and discussed them and in this way learned a bit of history which they did not get in school. They had nothing else to talk about, save the crops and the weather. They would wonder now and again how did the fight go between Donnelly and Cooper. That was the big event of the day. It took three months for the news of the fight to penetrate to them. To-day we not only hear it instantly but actually see it. It must have happened in some far-away place like South Africa it took so long for the news to come. They were thrilled when it did come because the Irishman won. The result appeared on the daily paper, a pink sheet of infinitesimal print which was the daily paper of that day.

My parents sat down to read "the latest news". As they read, they exchanged the parts of the paper and commented on it. There was peace in the house while this was going on. I often wondered where they learned how to read and write as there were no schools anywhere. I concluded they must

have attended a 'hedge school'. My mother was better at the reading : he was better at figures. He could make out a problem in a peculiar way as is done now in the new curriculum. On Saturday morning I was given a penny and told to go for the "Mayo News". Another reading session followed and everyone was at peace. The Boardroom was the topic in the "Mayo News". People read about the work that went on there and regarded it as a kind of melodrama. Some members had something to contribute : others had nothing. Pat O'Donnell from Mulranny was a member, I recall. He was a scholar and a wit and could be a bit turbulent at times. He was a Nationalist.

One Saturday morning, a murky dark day, my mother complained that she could not read with the glasses she had. My father had the same complaint so I was sent up to O'Grady's for a few pairs of spectacles. I brought back six pairs and they proceeded to select a suitable pair. They turned to me and said : "How much are they?" "Three pence ha'penny a pair", I said. "Here is seven pence, pay for them and return those four pairs. Put the old ones into the drawer". Now these glasses were steel-rimmed, steel-nosed and steel eared, something like what Moses had in "The Vicar of Wakefield". Oculists and opticians would have a poor living in Louisburgh in those days!

"The Irish Emerald" came on Sundays. My brother took it upstairs and read it from beginning to end. At dinner he regaled us with the doings of Mick McQuaid.

The boys in the street were great readers. Rickie Philbin saw an advertisement where one could buy novels at four pence each. All the boys pooled their little pocket-money and Rickie wrote for the books. They got all the Waverley and Dickens novels and all of Dumas — at four pence each! They were beautifully bound and printed, a real bargain. Rickie acted as librarian and the books were passed around among them.

My father died in 1909. He had wished to live to see his son Matt ordained, but he didn't. Matt was ordained the following year. My father was 72, hence he was born in 1837, two years before the night of the 'big' wind — Oiche Chinn an Dá Lá Déag 1839 — and twenty years before the Fenians were founded. Possibly he never heard of the Fenians in his young days but he had their "gospel" when he was a man.

I knew only one Fenian. He was old William Fergus of Cahir. He was a very energetic old man with a bushy white beard round his face. He always carried a stick which he did not seem to need for walking, just twirled it round in his hand and looked as if he would love to whack somebody

with it. What he would love to whack was England, the one, whom he thought, kept Ireland under her feet. His son Joe was going to America and after bidding him good bye and giving him his blessing he said (not "Write a letter now and then and send us all you can" but) "If anything ever turns up for Ireland, be the first man to strike a blow". Joe struck the blow, but that is another story!

I remember that when we were young and running to school in the morning Fr. Hughes passed us on his bicycle and he always called us 'The Krugers'. I didn't know why. It happened I was, one day, back in my other grandfather's house in Accony and I saw a jug on the dresser with a picture of Kruger. I was sure it was my grandfather. They were so alike.

When I was nine years old I got the measles. I was out to bed for a week. It was the week after the big fair in January. My bedroom was upstairs in front overlooking the street. I heard every sound on the street day and night, horses and carts crunching the coarse shingle on the street, children playing and singing, but what I enjoyed most was the ballad singers at night. They stayed over after the fair for a few days to get rid of the "hang over". But they had to live so they "sang the town" at night. The nights were grand and long then when we had 'God's time', no putting on or back the clock!

The first singer who came was "Bluebell". She got her name from her signature tune which began "Bluebell my heart is breaking" and ended with "I will be dreaming of your two blue eyes". She had another to vary the programme. It ran :

In the shade of the old apple tree
The love in your eyes I could see;
With a heart that is true
I'll be waiting for you
In the shade of the old apple tree

A little man came after her and he sang in staccato style as he clicked his heels together :

We'll live together and die together
And travel the wide world o'er

A third one came who sang national songs :

Bold Robert Emmet the darling of Erin
Bold Robert Emmet who died with a smile
Bold Robert Emmet the darling of Erin
A hero he lived and (high note) a hero he died.

He sold ballads at a ha'penny each. I enjoyed them

thoroughly. These people followed the fairs round the county. They all stayed in an old house in Chapel Street. They had the use of the ground kitchen which had a fire and nothing more; and they sat around on a few old seats. All their doings could be seen from the street, and as some were drunk and there were rows, the boys outside enjoyed the fun.

One night they were very rowdy and some boy ran for the Sergeant just across the street. He was delighted to be called and came across at once, his coat open. He walked right into the melée, not to enforce law and order but to enjoy the fun. The thing subsided as if by magic. "Bluebell" resolved to leave the place. At the door, however, she realized she left her hat behind. The Sergeant announced in a loud voice "Hand out Bluebell's hat"! This caused great merriment among the boys outside who were enjoying the drama inside and the arrival of the Sergeant. (He was red-haired Sergeant Hawkins, loved by all).

Another character who periodically visited Louisburgh was "Long Mary Anne". She was a six-footer, with big, ugly features and feet like broad shovels. When she arrived all children went into retirement. She couldn't bear the sight of any child. More often than not she was drunk and disorderly and would often sit down and cry her daughter, Molly Bán — so that, behind all the violence and roughness, one could detect an element of refinement there. If one child shouted "Scrape", which was her nickname, she would go into convulsions of anger and fire bottles, stones and shingle at all and sundry. Another terror who came was an old lady we called "Germany". She went round begging and everyone was afraid of her.

A crowd of old women who were starving at home came into town and got a room over a stable of horses, and there they settled down. They had nothing whatever, save a ramshackle of a bed and a fireplace. There were Mary Ann and her sister Honor, Biddy Mailia and her sister, Nora. On Saturday they begged the town and got as much tea, sugar, potatoes and flour as kept them alive for another week. They suffered at home from starvation something like the man in T. C. Murray's 'Spring'. They would rather die on the roadside than go to the Workhouse. We called them the "Caill-eachs" and Mary Ann was the terror of these. It was manna from heaven when Lloyd George gave them the old-age pension in 1910. Now they were happy. Some of those old folks went back to their old homes and were received willingly.

The year 1898 dawned quietly in Louisburgh as elsewhere.

It was as if a mist was lifted off the earth and exposed or revealed in the people patriotism and a sense of nationality. The people realized they were in a historic year — the centenary of the great rebellion of 1798. They wanted to commemorate and celebrate it, but how? They knew nothing of pageants or pageantry like we had in 1966. They formed a band, got a beautiful big drum, two kettle-drums and every boy got a flute. There were three flutes in our house. They practised every night in the old church — which they called the Town Hall. They also had a bandmaster. Soon they had a very presentable band with which they could "let off steam" now and again. Every Sunday, they turned out marching four deep in military form, and playing the patriotic airs — such as "Who fears to speak of ninety eight?"

They also acted plays — "The Seachrán", "The Colleen Bán" etc. If the play were short, they amplified it with a concert to give the people value for their money. One night, when the play and concert were over, all the cast assembled on the stage to round it off with "A Nation Once Again". The gramophone had the record and they intended to sing with it. The pianist left her piano and volunteered to conduct. She gave the signal, the gramophone was turned on, the singers took their time, but the gramophone played on. Soon it was miles ahead of them, an odd singer tried to keep with it, but to no avail — the gramophone kept running. The audience laughed, the singers began to slip from the stage one by one, till there was no one left but the pianist who tried to keep pace with the gramophone. She too, failed; then she smiled, bowed to the audience, and retired. That put an end to "A Nation Once Again".

Sister Philomena

Remembering Sion . . .

I remember that our kitchen floor was often swept by a beesom. The floor was made of **do**be, and indeed we often used a branch of a nearby bush to clean it. In Summertime as we crossed to the well we and the neighbour's children gathered lots of long heather and brought it home. My mother would put the stalks together with their bushy heads down and tie the other ends together with a thick string or gad. She trimmed the ends with a knife to make them even and with this beesom we swept the floors. A good beesom would last over a month. Other, stronger, ones were made for outdoor work such as sweeping the street or the threshing barn.

It was a sign of a really well-to-do family when a man or woman came from the pattern or market carrying a new twig. Those were poor times as far as material things were concerned; but they were honest happy times of which rather than being ashamed I am sincerely proud.

"Well, my mother likes it, and the rest of them like it; so, I suppose I must like it."

"That's good," she said, tentatively; "you'll go on with it?"

"I intend to."

"Good! And when will the marriage be?"

"Thursday," said Jim, triumphantly.

"That's very soon."

"Well," he said "it's better to get on with the job,"

"Do you know her Jim?"

"No; but I saw her once. At a funeral"; and he smiled at that. "She looked alright, but I'd say she's a little bit older than myself. But, sure," with a toss of his head "she'll do!"

Perhaps Jim was thinking of the fine fortune she was getting. She was "the only girl", and her father was a comfortable farmer. It was whispered, too, that he had legacies from America and so "had the money". Jim was as fine-looking a man as one would meet in a day's walk, but he didn't seem to know that. Tall, with fine, broad shoulders, he had an athletic body and a handsome, tanned face. He had a quick word, too, and a roguish eye; so that it was little wonder that the girls always enjoyed a "crack" with him. It was a pity that he hadn't the choosing of his own wife!

"Now," he said to Mrs. Gordon "I want to get some drink for the wedding".

"Very well," she said, "What do you want?"

"I want five gallons of whiskey—"

She interrupted him: "That's far too much: three ought to do."

"I want five," said Jim, determinedly.

"Do you want to set them all drunk?"

"I do! I'll have them all drunk."

She didn't want to stir up the bit of the devil in him, so she agreed to give him the five gallons. "I'll give you three gallons in quart bottles"; and then she looked up at the bottles on the shelves. "Let me see", she said to herself. "How many quarts in a gallon?—Four, and three fours are twelve." She took down twelve quart bottles of whiskey and place them on the counter. They looked threatening. "Twelve quart bottles of the best whiskey in Ireland" she repeated.

She put the two gallons into a neat little jar with a neat little spout and a flexible cork. Jim walked out to his cart and brought in a clevee

half-full of hay, into which he packed his twelve quarts of whiskey. He secured the jar too. He returned to the battle with Mrs. Gordon.

"Now, I want two barrels of stout".

"Two"! Do you know there are sixteen gallons of porter in each barrel? Don't you think **one** would do?"

"No, I want two", said Jim, sternly.

"Very well, said she", I'll give you **two**, but you must mean to drown them with drink. "I'll get Pat to put them on the cart for you. They are there at the counter".

"You needn't bother, I'll put them on the cart myself". He did, although each of these barrels weighed well over a hundred weight. "Now I want some gingerwine or something for the girls".

She gave him six bottles of gingerwine. Gingerwine sounded like ginger-beer so he thought he had mineral waters for the girls. The girls in those days did not drink, but the older women took a little drop just "to oblige you, kinda."

"Now, how much do I owe you"?

"Let me see," said she, "five gallons of whiskey £5. Two barrels of stout Guinness XX £3. Five bottles of wine 5/- —£8 5." He paid.

"Now, I must go and get some bread".

"Let me see, will you get any mutton"?

"No, we killed two sheep".

"Well, you certainly are doing it in a lavish way".

"Once in a blue moon, it happens", said Jim.

"Are you inviting many"?

"The relatives and the neighbours. I am asking you now, won't you come"?

"I am sorry I can't, I have a touch of asthma in this weather; but Nora there may go".

Nora, her daughter, who was standing there in the shop, smiled joyfully and said she would be delighted to go. He was pleased at that and set off to buy the bacon and the bread. He called at the baker's and secured a box of large loaves, twists and "pusachans". He got his bacon too, and brought it home.

Thursday dawned, it has been arranged that the marriage would take place at four in the evening. At four, sharp, in across the bridge came the cavalcade. It consisted of ten cars with four or five people on each, and

a company of men on horseback bringing up the rear. They galloped madly through the town.

The men on horses remained outside the Church gate until the ceremony was over. Then they got into line, for it was cavalry first this time. When all had returned to their cars, and horses all in place, word was given for the start off. Baldoyle or Ascot or any race-course could not surpass the enthusiasm and excitement this race evinced. The horse that arrived first at the bridegroom's house was the best horse in parish. It wasn't an easy matter to arrive at all, with fifteen or sixteen horses on the road! It was almost night when they did arrive. Then the feasting began.

The tables were laden with plates of laughing potatoes; mutton, bacon and cabbage covered the plates round the table. Nora declared that she "was given a plate on which was a full pound of bacon, just the size of a sod of turf; or just as if you went into the shop and bought a pound of bacon and left it on your plate".

Jim did what he intended to do—make them all drunk. They sang songs and drank and sang again until daybreak when they tried to make their way home. It was a memorable event. This was the pattern of almost every marriage in those days; and best of all, they all turned out well. Divorce was not in their vocabulary at all, much less in their lives.

I am grateful for the memories that remain!

Mulranny

Sister M. Philomena

CONGRATULATIONS . . .

Congratulations to our two young priests: Father Sylvester O'Donnell (Main Street) ordained at Kilkenny on June 8, 1969 and Father Geoffrey O'Grady (Cnoc) who is being ordained (as this issue is in print) June 15, 1969. May their lives as priests be long and fruitful! Editor

A Modern Hy-brazil

The Irish legend regarding the "Isle of the blest", which was referred to by Pádraic de Búrca (an uncle of the writer of this article and a native Irish speaker from this parish) as **Shranna Mulganna**, has been handed down from the Pagan and Christian historians of dim ages. Some people believe the legend; others scoff at it; still others have no interest in it. But I am now going to describe this **Shranna Mulganna** as seen by my brother and myself when our boat was on the celebrated fishing-grounds between Clew Bay and Cahir Island (which is six miles off the Mayo coast-line.)

It was during the second world war; and on this glorious June day towards afternoon, when the sun was directly over Inisturk Island, we had dropped anchor for tea, when my brother seeming a bit excited, said to me in amazement "What is **this**?" He was pointing to Inis-stealla off Inisturk. To both of us there appeared on the island of Inis-stealla the most wonderful castle that the eye could behold. It appeared to have been built by skilled craftsmen, and the design would be very hard to describe except by an architect. The building was a stone construction; the front porch was worthy of a Michaelangelo or other famous sculptor. On either side of this castle stood two big men, noble of stature and light-footed as deer. On the south end of the castle was a large wheel connected with what seemed to be a transformer of some kind. The man on the south end walked to the wheel and gave it a turn. Then immediately both men went to each gable of the castle and seemed to pull on two strong cables, letting down a screen or door covering two-thirds of the castle in front. Another turn of the wheel and there appeared a valley of flowers, stretching over an acre in size, and so beautiful that they appeared to me like a picture I had once seen of the Garden of Eden.

By this time we had again to draw our fishing nets, and in the excitement we had not finished our tea. As soon as my brother weighed anchor the whole scene disappeared from view. The nets were again set and we again let anchor; and—believe it or not!—as soon as the stone hit bottom the beautiful sight again appeared. Another turn of the wheel and

there appeared on the north side of the island, and pointing towards Clare Island a large cannon gun—something like "Big Bertha" of 1914 war fame. During those war years (1939—'45) our Irish ports were supposed to be taken over, and the British army were on the alert across our border, so the big gun made me think of the coming invasion which we feared. I said to my brother (and this was the first time that we had broken silence since the scene re-appeared): "We are going to be invaded alright." "It looks like it," he said. Another turn of the wheel, and from the west came a large fleet of ships, cruiser-size and too numerous to count. They came straight for the island and seemed to disappear in its westerly shadow. It was then close on dusk and we had to draw our nets and were homeward bound. Again when we drew anchor the beautiful scene disappeared, everything except the lone island of Inis-stealla which seemed to me the place where the whole scene took place.

To see this "Hy-Brazil" is supposed to be an omen of ill-luck. Be that as it may I'd like to know if any scientist could give an explanation of the scenes I have described. Were there, in those war years, any such manoeuvres in the Atlantic which would coincide with this incident? I don't want to have this passed off as a mirage, or as an imagination of some kind. I understand and have seen different things on the sea during my years fishing, but this stands out on its own. It was **real** and plain to be seen, in the brightest technicolour; and there was nothing irregular in size except that the men appeared extremely tall. However their physical stature was in correct proportion and perfection.

This **Shranna Mulganna** is supposed to appear every seven years. This may give a clue for a scientific study of the event. And could it be that this was a reflection from another planet where there are men of greater size than ours? I await with interest any theories or comments in the next issue of **An Choinneal**.

Roonkeel

Micheál de Búrca.

CONGRATULATIONS ALSO TO :

Father Eddie O'Malley (of Roonith) Parish Priest of Lackagh, who was made Canon of the Tuam Chapter in November 1968

Father Michael Tiernan (Louisburgh) who was appointed parish priest of Kilmeena parish in April 1969.

Evening View

An interview with Gárda Tom Hannon who has recently retired in Louisburgh

Editor: Mr. Hannon, you have retired from the Gárda Síochána force some few months ago. With many more of the people of the parish, I congratulate you and wish you happiness in your future life. For how many years have you been a member of the Gárdaí?

Thank you very much Father Leo. I have served forty-one years in the Gárda Síochána.

Q. And where have you spent these years?

A. With the exception of a few years I spent in Murrisk, I have done all my service in Louisburgh.

Q. As clearly as you can remember, what were your reactions when you first heard that you were appointed to Louisburgh.

A. Well, naturally I was very pleased; in fact I had asked to be sent there. My wife was teaching in Louisburgh and we hoped to make our home there, which we did.

Q. The fact that you decided to make your home in Louisburgh appears now as an act of faith in the future of the town and parish. What were the main factors that influenced you in that decision?

A. Truly, the fact that my wife was teaching there and liked it; the educational facilities for children were excellent; and the situation of the place could not be surpassed.

Q. It has been said about Louisburgh, as about many other towns or parishes, that a non-native never feels fully accepted and in many ways continues to be a stranger. Did you feel this generally?

A. Well, no. I found that the Louisburgh people were to me, as they are inclined to all strangers, respectful, friendly, hospitable and helpful. I will admit however that there is a deep feeling and understanding of Louisburgh people for one another; and that they do resent a stranger being uncharitable to any member of the community.

Q. Mrs. Hannon and you have reared a family of eight children and educated all of them to secondary level (before such education became free) and many of them to the level of higher education. Did ye find it an inconvenience to live in Louisburgh and do this?

A. Yes. The majority of our children are University graduates. It was difficult enough financially to do this: we were a long distance from a University town and their board and residence (apart altogether from their University fees and cost of travelling) were very expensive. Great sacrifices had to be made by us; but it was rewarding and the children appreciated it.

Q. Having spent so many years in the parish you must have noticed many changes in the lives and attitudes of the people. Have there been many improvements?

A. I have seen a great improvement in the standard of living in my time. Successive governments have provided new, modern houses for the farmers who wish to avail themselves of them, nearly every farmer owns a car, and generally speaking they are more comfortable than they were when I came here. But, despite this, the population has dwindled to about half what it was at that time. Some people even locked up their new houses and emigrated. Marriages too became fewer, especially among the farming community. Somehow the people are not as content to stay on the land as they used to be.

Q. And what are the main failings and faults that you have noticed developing in the parish during that period? (Please feel quite free to speak frankly here: the editor takes responsibility for inviting your candid reply for the good of the parish and its community).

A. I have noticed that farmers were not interested in tilling their farms and producing even the necessary farm-produce for themselves. When I first came here I have seen the market place in Louisburgh full of potatoes, oats, pigs, and other farm-produce produced by the farmers in this area. Later, I have seen lorries of potatoes, oats, and other vegetables come from as far away as East Galway, to supply the needs of the people of this parish, as they were not producing enough themselves. As the standard of living improved, there came with it a new outlook on life and work, young men were not willing to work hard, as their fathers did, for little profit. Most of the land is not suitable for being worked by machinery and

the spade is outdated.

Q. And what would you suggest as a cure for these ills?

A. I think the great need for Louisburgh is some industry to supplement the small farms and provide work for the young men so that they could live in their homes and afford to get married.

Q. Mr. Hannon, you have kept remarkably fit and physically active; what has been your secret?

A. Hard work, regular hours, early to bed and early to rise; and being interested in life!

Q. And how do you intend now to spend your spare time? Have you developed any hobby?

A. I am interested in gardening, I have always produced my own vegetables and fuel. I am also interested in fishing, Gaelic games and all sorts of sport.

Q. And have you any ambition which you hope to fulfil in the future?

A. God has been very good to us. I have seen my children grow up and doing something useful in life; now I'd like to live to see my grandchildren grow up and do likewise.

Q. If you were given three wishes for the improvement of the parish community, what would your three wishes be?

A. (1) I would like to see every house in Louisburgh inhabited.
(2) I would like to see jobs for the Louisburgh children at home.
(3) I would like to see Louisburgh fully developed as a tourist centre so that the parish would flourish and its children would continue to bring with them their real, Irish tradition—love of faith and fatherland, learning, music, drama, dancing and everything that marks out a Louisburgh child.

Editor—Mr. Hannon, thank you for giving me (and our readers) this interview; and thank you especially for the views and opinions you have so candidly expressed. I know that our readers will join with me in wishing you happiness and continued fulfilment in the future. And, may I suggest that during the coming winter you would while away some hours by writing an article for the next issue of this magazine?

Letter from Home

Dear Austie

'Tis as well for me to write straight away before I start visiting, and before people come in to visit me. I got home high and dry thank God. I enjoyed the flight to Shannon, and Michael and Eileen were there, but I was glad enough to see the hay-barn when we came round the turn; and just took the cup of tea and off to bed straight. Not one sound did I hear until little Austie came up to the bed to waken me at nine o'clock that (Thursday) morning. I was tired then itself but the five incurs' difference, I suppose, put me out a lot. I'm back to form again, thank God, and I can only think that it's a dream that I was over with ye at all. If anyone told me that I'd be taking a holiday in America at this age of my life, I'd say they'd have seven heads. I'm thankful to God that I made it and saw ye all, but I'm thankful, too, to be back—and that's no **droch-mheas** or anything on how good ye were to me. As that Philbin boy sang at the "do" in Seán's (the "shower", as ye call it)—"It's good to see the green, green grass of home" Faith it is, Austie!

Well Dadda wasn't half as bad as they were saying. 'Tisn't right for me to say it maybe, but I think myself 'tis how he only wanted me back. He has no more of a cough than I have; less maybe. But good enough of your Eileen she kept giving him the hot milk and it kind of made it easy for him to think he was bad. There isn't a bit on him no more than twenty years ago, thank God.

Well now I know how given to the news ye are beyond, so I laid down last night before I went to bed that everyone was to think of his own share and tell it to me for this letter. Michael wrote down a few items of news on an envelope before he went out, and Eileen is going in and going out watching a heifer we have for calving; and she's giving me a bit as it comes to her.

With all my gallivanting I didn't miss Confirmation. Last Sunday it was, and better still it was in Killeen this time as well as Louisburgh. This is the first time it was in Killeen since Tommie Joe's confirmation

and all the people back were proud to have it of their own. We had the new Archbishop, of course—Archbishop Cunnane of Knock. You remember we heard it in America that he was made archbishop on Saint Patrick's Day, and Uncle Mike was boasting how so many bishops are from Mayo. This man is tall and thin with glasses, and severe-looking until you'd be up near him. But he had great patience anyway to stay outside the church talking to every blessed one (and him not knowing a sinner, I suppose) and giving them the ring to kiss. I kissed it myself; and God forgive me t'was laughing I was mostly—where Big Ellen was in the line before us and one of the young men that was sitting on the wall said "A queer **sliobar** Ellen will give the ring when she gets at it!" The collection for doing Killeen Church was stoped for a while there in the spring; but let ye all be ready when it begins again. I told Dadda about the Benevolent Dinner ye had: "Well be done of them" he said, "but couldn't they do the same thing now for Killeen and so many of them from the parish there together?" Ye could, too, maybe.

Did ye invite **Mrs. Mulvey** or the Two **Mrs. Sammins** or Mrs. Needham since? Be sure and have a night for them, they were all very kind to me inviting me around. And I had more nature for them, because they were like myself visiting from home, than I had for anyone else (But don't let on that to anyone.) Tell Mrs. Sammin (the two of them) that the Tourist Committee are pressing hard to get improvements in Carramore at the beach—in the line of improving the road, and providing litter-bins, toilets and the like. They're readying for the Festival now. It begins on June 15th but you can tell Mrs. Mulvey that I'm the first yank arrived for the Festival!

You remember the night in Seán's we were arguing about education, and I couldn't think of those who were qualified as teachers from Louisburgh last year. Eileen and myself went through them now: there was **Michael O'Malley** and **Pádraic McKeown** (from Main Street) and **Donald O'Leary** (of Bunowen Road) Louisburgh; they qualified as national school teachers. Then **Liam McNamara** and **Joe McNamara** (his brother) and **John Lyons**—all of the town; these qualified as secondary school teachers; and **Liam O'Dowd** of Mooneen got his Honours B.A. degree and has a job in industry while he is studying for the M.A. And on top of that there are five Louisburgh girls finishing in Dublin as national school-teachers in June, please God. So let ye not have yer

tongue in yere cheek if that Dublin crowd visits ye again. They're very glib.

I wasn't back when **Father Charles O'Malley** and **Father Al Morahan** went back to Australia, to Perth. 'Twas thought that **Bishop McKeown** (of Drummin) would be their bishop now, but he got a change to another diocese. The way there wouldn't be any faction, maybe. And wasn't I sorry to hear that poor **Father Dick Prendergast** died just before I came back. I heard them saying in the town that he paid a short visit to Louisburgh the very week he died. God rest him and **Monsignor Scott** of Shraugh who died earlier. Two good old men died in the parish lately, too—**Austin O'Reilly** and **Anthony Jordan**, God rest them. Many a gathering will miss them because they were two grand gentlemen, full of good nature and kin'ness to anyone they could help.

Mary was asking me about what marriages were coming off soon. Tell her **Mary O'Malley** (Main Street) is engaged to another secondary teacher **Seán O'Malley** of Kilmeena. Her sister, **Ann**, is engaged to **Frank Kiely** of Cork; and **Mercy Harney** (Bunowen) is engaged to **Martin Jennings** of Ballinrobe. So it's time for herself to be doing something, tell her.

There were a number of Louisburgh people on the television here lately. I told you about **Margaret Coyne** being one of the air-hostesses who went to U.S. for Saint Patrick's Day. (I'm as good as her myself, now!) Well, there was a group (Eileen says it was called a troupe) of dancers from Sancta Maria on the "Late Late Show" on 5 April this year, boys and girls; **Freda and Mary Teresa Cox**, and **Catherine Keane**, and **Clare Ruddy**; and **Michael Sammin**, **John O'Dowd**, **John O'Brien** and **Andrew O'Rourke**. It was **Sister Bernardine** and **Sister Gregory** that trained them; they were in the audience, they saw them on television; And we see **John Gibbons** (Accony) playing football for Mayo; and **Martin Joe O'Toole** was on, the time he was appointed to the National Committee for Stock; and **Father Leo Morahan** had programmes on "Outlook".

I was telling ye that **Tommie Love** is the clerk in Louisburgh since **Jimmy Mannion** retired. It's funny how things turn; his grandfather was the first one I ever knew to be clerk in Louisburgh. We all wish **Tommie** luck; but we liked **Jimmy** a great deal; and we'll always remember his

quiet way especially when he'd come on the stations with the priest. If a person had forgotten something, or hadn't left out the spring water or such, he had the grandest manner of reminding you. It does me good whenever I'm passing down to the church in the town to see him standing in the door.

The spring is set, thank, God and the turf cut and spread. The men have time to draw their breath, but there'll be queer running before the summer is out. The latest news now is a general election, however it'll go. This time it's not North and South Mayo, but East and West. The old-age pension is raised anyway thank God. I'll be drawing some back-money for the time I was away; and I'm giving **Michael** and **Eileen** a night out in the new restaurant in Louisburgh; and **Dadda**, if he'll come, but sure he won't! I'd like him to, because I hear it is a very fine restaurant—The 'Burgher—that **Mrs. Oliver Harney** opened at the end of Chapel Street.

Well that's about all I have to say. No news from **Tommie Joe** since, except to know that he went to England. I think myself he's foolish; but I suppose we were all foolish once. And I'm not too worried; he was a good lad—headstrong in ways, but good in the things that matter.

I didn't say thanks at all for the grand six weeks I had and all the grandeur and goodness ye gave me. Sometimes, in the middle of it, I used to think of your grandfather and grandmother and how happy they were with hardly enough to eat in the old days. And I'm praying since that our children all will have the same happiness, and that if ye **have** a good way of living ye'll never close yere eye to those that haven't.

God be with you always, **Austie**.

Your loving

Mother

REMEMBERING SION . . .

I remember as a young lad how my father and other men were talking down the thatch off the house for putting on a new roof. We had a young dog and I played all day with my dog in the warm thatch. Sitting there in sun I thought I was the happiest lad in the world.

Turas in Aisce

Litir a fuair Peig ón a cara — Máire — atá ins na Stáit Aontaithe, a rá lei go raibh an-ímní uirthí faoin a máthair, a bhí in a cónaí in a haonar in áit iargúlta sa bparóiste; áit nach raibh sí ar fonámh le tamaillín anuas.

Ní bhfuair Máire aon scéal ná aon litir ón a máthair le tamall fada, ach chuala sí ó dhaoine muinteartha go raibh droch-chaoi uirthí; agus bhéadh Máire faoi chomaoin go deo ag Peig dá rachadh sí ar cuairt chun an t-othar a fheiceál. Níor theastuí an dara focal ó Pheig. D'innis sí an scéal dá cara Áine, agus thug cuireadh dí teacht in éinféacht leí. Shocruí siad eatortha go dtógfaidís teoimheadh agus gléas tomhais brú fola leo; chuir Peig féin mála de rudaí deasa le nithe i bhfearas, — torthaí, milseáin, brioscaí agus deochanna éadroma a d'oirfeadh do dhuine breoite, agus dár ndóigh bhí mé féin réidh le cór taistil a chur ar fáil dóibh. Lá cruaidh i dtosach mí Eanair a bhí ann. Ní raibh an sneachta tagtha go fóill, ach í ag bagairt orainn sa ghaoth nimhneach a bhí ag séideadh anoir adtuath agus sinne ag fágáil an bhaile. Tugadh teor an bhealaigh domsa roimh ré; "diréach agus tú imithe trasna an droichid, tionntaigh an gluasteán ar chlé. Tabhair an-aire anseo mar tá casadh géar cúng ann; béidh an teach ansin ag ceann na sráide uait".

Bhuaileamar bóthar. Bhí Peig in a suí le m'áis agus Áine ag mo chúil. Dar ndóigh bhíomar ag pléidh ceiste na hothrach — an créatúir a bhí uaigneach agus í tinn. An raibh sí go dona? An mbéadh orainn fios a chur ar an dochtúir, nó ar an sagart b'fhéidir. Nach truaighmhéalach an scéal é, í fágtha ansin leí fhéin agus droch-chaoi ar a sláinte! Cháineamar an faillí a deántar de sheandaoine i láthair na linne seo, nuair a fágтар go haonraic iad agus gan chúram dá laighead ag aoinne orthu.

Ar an dtaobh eile dén scéal, bhí gliondar croí orainn triúr ó tharla go raibh ar ár gcumas gníomh carthannachta d'en chinéal seo a dhéanú. Bhíomar sórt mordhálach asainn féin — go maithfidh Dia dhúinn é! Bhí an oiread sin cainte ar siúl againn, go ndearna mé féin dearmad ar an treor a tugadh dom; agus chas mé ar chlé *sar* a dtáinic mé go dtí an droichead, ach níor thug mo chompanáil aon ní faoi ndeara go fóill. B'fhacthas dom féin go raibh a lán lán féar ag fás ar an mbóthar amach róm; agus bhí orm maolú agus é a thógaint "go deas bog" rud a rinne mé agus mo dhá shúil sáite go bior agam ar an mbóthar — mar bóthar a bhí ann, cinnte. Mhothuigh mé anois go raibh mo chomluadar

in a dtost. "Níl teach ar bith le feicéal anseo," arsa Peig. "Níl" arsa Áine agus nach ait, nach uafásach ait an sórt bóthar í seo."

Um an dtaca seo bhí fhios agam féin gan dabht ar domhain go raibh botún déanta agam: ní ag déanú ar tí an othair a bhíomar, ach faoi seo bhíomar leath-bhealaigh in áirde ar thaobh na binne.

Stad mé. D'fhéach mé in áirde. Bóithrín fada féarmhar róm; í caol, cúng, contúirteach, agus an beann breá, biorach ag claonú uaim chun na spéire. Bhí mé i gcruachás ceart anois — "Returning were as tedious as go o'er"! — agus mar thubaiste ar fad ar mo scéal ní raibh slí san áit in a raibh mé leis an gluais-teán a casadh timpeall chun filleadh —

Ní raibh an dara rogha agam! bhéadh orm cúlú siar . . . siar . . . anuas . . . anuas. Níl fhios agam an raibh an bheirt eile scanraithe nó nach raibh; má bhí níor lig siad tada orthu. Thosaigh Peig le mo thaobh ag maoímh nach raibh ímní dá laighead uirthi; rachadh sí thart timpeall an domhain liomsa bhí an méid sin iontaoibh aici asam mar thománuí—"Fíor Rosemary Smith atá ionat" ar sise! Ní raibh mé fhéin chomh síurálta sin; thuig mé go raibh aistir cruaidh róm, nó taobh thiar díom is córa dhom a rá. Bhí an t-allus ag titim díom faoi seo ach ní raibh aon dul as agam and b'sheo liom ag gluaiseacht. Thóg mé go deas bog é. Bhí doras an tíomanuí ar oscailt agam, mo chloigeann agus mo mhúineál sínte amach agam, agus mé ag dearcú uaim siar i gcónaí. Ba rí-dheacair dhom an gluasteán a choimead i lár an bhóithrín mar, mar adúirt mé cheana, bhí an féar ag fás go tiubh ann agus ba dhoiligh a aithneachtáil cá raibh na díoganna (bhí ceann ar gach taobh) agus cá'r stad an bóithrín.

I rith an ama seo bhí Peig dom mholadh toisc chomh maith is a bhí ag eirí liom agus Áine ag aontú léi. Ach ansin, go tobann, tharla sé! Scior an gluais-teán ar chlé, mhothaigh mé go raibh sí ag ísliú agus go raibh mé fhéin ag éirí in áirde, — Stad mé. Stadadh den chaint freisin: d'fhéach mé ar mo phaisnéirí, bhí Áine amuigh ar an mbóithrín cheana féin agus an doras cúl ar oscailt, ach taobh liom — ní hea ach cúpla troigh *thíos* fúm! — bhí Peig, gan chor aisti. Bhí sí thíos chomh híseal sin nach bhféadfadh sí corraí gan chabhair uainne. Bhíomar triúr — ar crith anois le eagla; d'árdíomar (Áine agus mé fhéin) Peig agus scaoileamar saor amach ar an mbóthar í. Ansin thúrling mé fhéin — shílfeá le féachaint orm gur ag teacht amach as eitealán a bhí mé ach nach raibh aon staighre agam! Bhí fonn gáire orm — bíodh is nárbh aon tráth gáire é — nuair a bhraith mé an bhail a bhí orainn fhéin agus ar an gluasteán. Bhíomarne

ar crith agus dath an bháis orainn. An gluaistéan — bhí leath-roth thiar léi thíos ins an díog, an leath-roth tosaigh thíos níos doimhne fós agus an cliabh dheas aici in áirde san aer, ag claonú i dtreo na bflaitheas. Do réir a chéile thosuieamar ag teacht chugainn fhéin arís; thugamar triúr buíochas to Dhia toisc sinn a thabhairt slán ón gabhtar. Bhreathnaíomar timpeall na háite, thuas uainn ar an taobh *eile* den droichead d'aimsíomar an teach a bhí uainn; bhí sráid ós comhair an tí amach, páircín mhín, fhódmhar ar thaobh na sráide agus caora ag innilt inti; na cnúic in a gcoluín dhírigh ar chúl an tí agus iad ag breathnú anuas orainn go magúil, shílfeá.

Bheartaigh Peig anois go rachadh sí féin de shiúl a cos faoi dhéin an tí; agus as go bráthach léi agus an mála "cinéaltais" in a glaic aici.

D'fhan Áine liomsa agus chuamar i dtreo an bhóthair mhór a bhí anois breis is dhá chéad slat uainn. Chualathas gluaisteán, rith mé fhéin agus shroich mé ceann an bhóthair díreach in am. Stad fear an ghluaisteáin, scaoil mé mo scéal leis agus tháinig sé ar ais liom go dtí an "ionad" chun an damaiste a bhreithniú. "Níl aon réiteach ar seo" adeir sé "gan go leor cabhrach" — Caithfear slua fear agus rópaí fada a fháil agus rachaidh mé féin anois go S — (an sráidbhaile ba ghoire dhúinn) chun iad a fháil". Bhí mé rí-bhuíoch dhó agus bhí áthas orm anois, mar chuir sé in a luí orm chomh maith nach raibh dochar ar bith déanta don ghluaistéan. Rosemary Smith a bea mé cinnte; bhíor do Pheig.

Bhí droch bhail ar Áine faoi seo, bhí an ghaoth ag éirí níos nimhní agus níos láidre in aghaidh an neomá, agus bhíomar beirt préachta leis an bhfuacht agus leis an anró. Bhuaileamar bóthar ag síul linn suas síos ag iarraidh sinn fhéin a théamh agus dar ndóigh bhíomar ag smaoineadh ar ár dteachtaire, Peig. Cé mar bhí ag éirí léi? Ar shroich sí ceann cúrsa? Cén bhail a bhí ar an othar roimpí? Bhíomar anois go mí-fhoighdeach chun dul agus fóirthint uirthí. "Níl aon tuiscint ag na Puncánaí damanta sin," arsa Áine "a bheith ag iarraidh ar dhaoine dhul ar ghnó dén tsórt seo, in áit mar seo, i lár an Gheimridh". Sar a raibh deis agam fhéin labhairt, tháinig an meitheal chugainn agus rópa fada teann acu. Thosaigh siad ag obair láithreach; bhí cúigear nó seisear díobh thíos sa díog iad fhéin, agus an fuighleach thuas ar an mbóthar. D'árdíodar an gluaisteán sanaer agus d'fháig i lár bhóithrín í. Bhíodar chomh seimh bog sin léi go sílfeá gur leanbh tinn a bhí idir lámha acu. Go neartú Dia bhur lámha!" an paidir a chuir mé fhéin leo.

Isteach liom arís in áit an tiománuí, bhí dhá chéad slat den bhóithrín le déanú fós agam (ag chúlú, arís) agus bhí mé faiteach agus neirbhíseach go leor anois. "Ná bíodh aon imní ort," adúradar liom "Fanfaimid ar gach taobh díot, idir thú is na díoganna". Shuí Áine isteach le mo thaobh agus rinne an meitheal líne ar gach taobh dínn. Thóg mé an-bhog ar fad é agus ghluais an "gárda onórach" liom nó gur shroich mé ceann an bhóthair faoi dheire. Deirimse leat gur ligeamar osna faoisimh asainn anois.

D'fhágamar slán, buíochas agus beannacht ag na fir fiala, fearúla fiúntacha sin agus thugamar aghaidh ar an teach.

D'oscail bean a' tí an doras dúinn; chuir sí fíor-chaoín fáilte romhainn agus thug cuireadh isteach dúinn. Bhí mort mór tine ar an teallach aici agus cé bheadh suite ansin ós comhair na tine ach Peig — í go te teolaí i gcaith-aoir uileann. D'fhéach Áine agus mé fhéin ar a chéile le neart iontais agus ansin drheacamar arís ar Pheig. 'Sí bean a' tí ba thúisce a labhair:" Dár ndóigh tá náire an domhain orm go go bhfuair Peig i mo leaba mé nuair a bhail sí isteach chugam," ar sise. Níor thuigeamar fhéin gurbh aon chúis náire é do dhuine breoite a bheith in a leaba; d'fhéachamar ar a chéile arís ach, buíochas le Dia, níor éalaigh focal ó cheachtair againn— Is binn béal in a thost! Thosaigh sí arís "Ach mar a bhí mé ag míniú do Pheig sar a dtáinig sibh," ar sise "bhí mé tuirseach, traochta inniú, tar éis na hóiche aréir, bhí mé fhéin agus slua mór de mo ghaolta i dtigh ósta an C — áit a raibh fleadh, féasta siamsa agus árd-óiche ar fad againn — go dtín a ceathair a chlog ar maidin".

Bheull Leath na súil arís orainn beirt, agus chonaiceamar an meanga gáire ar aghaidh Pheig.

Chuala mé an cogar in mo chluais "Cthar my eye! teimheadh agus gléas tomhais brú fola! nach sinn na hoinsí!" Ba bheag nár phléasc mé amach ag gáire.

Níl gá len thuilleadh uaimse, rinne bean a' tí, cupán tae dhúinn; shuíomar cois tine agus d'ólamar an tae mar d'ólfadh an cat an leamhnacht.

D'fhanamar scathamh maith ag caint agus ag seanchas agus le titim na hóiche ghluais Rosemary Smith agus a foireann chun bóthair arís!

Na puncánaí damanta sin! Agus tig leat é sin a rá arís!

Clementín Uí Laighin

Caher - Revisited

Readers of the 1963 issue of "An Choinneal" will recall an account of the first pilgrimage to Caher made in the Easter week of that year. In that article a full description of the geography, topography and archeology of the island was given and there is no need to repeat it here. In June of 1967 we made a second pilgrimage, this time on a much larger scale. The well-known journalist and television personality—Michael Viney and Mrs. Viney (nee Ethna MacManus of Westport) were spending a camping holiday on the island and had been making enquiries about the possibility of having Mass there. Fortunately the weather was ideal with calm seas and clear skies. As was explained in the former article these conditions are necessary for the safe landing of a large number of people. On this occasion we had permission to say Mass at any time of day—morning or evening—and this made the arrangements easier as we had extra time to play with. The Vineys went to Caher on Saturday June 10th. Sunday was the beginning of a heat-wave which lasted about eight days. On Monday we made remote preparations. By telephone we alerted Clare Island, Bofin, Inisturk and several mainland centres to be ready for Tuesday. We also contacted the "Radharc" team of Telefis Eireann but unfortunately their cameras were engaged elsewhere. We felt that the whole pilgrimage would have made a very good television programme and in retrospect I am convinced that a golden opportunity was missed. Lighting conditions were ideal, the scenery superb and the whole proceedings really impressive.

The first boat to leave Roonagh pier was Charles O'Malley's **Saint Bernadette**. With a full complement of Clare Island pilgrims he left at 3.30 and we sent Father Ludden (Castlebar) and Father Gill (Saint Jarlath's College) on this boat to start the hearing of Confessions. Chris O'Grady came to take on board all of the pilgrims from the mainland. He filled his boat to capacity and in the interest of safety he was reluctantly compelled to leave a few disappointed ones behind. We left at 4 o'clock and when about half way to the island we overtook the St. Bernadette which was at a stand-still because the engine had overheated. We took her in tow and this cut our speed to less than half. After about half-an-hour's towing, the engine of the St. Bernadette was repaired and both boats continued separately under their own steam and arrived at the island at about 5.30. The ranger from Bofin was at anchor at the island. As it was ebb tide we had to anchor outside the little inlet but the Inisturk curraghs with their

outboard engines quickly completed disembarkation. By six o'clock all the confessions had been heard and we were ready to start the con-celebrated Mass. The present writer was principal con-celebrant and the other con-celebrants were :- Father Leo Morahan of Saint Mary's, Galway, Father O'Toole from the diocese of Northampton, England, Father L. Durkan of Saint Jarlath's, Father E. Duffy, C.C. Renvyle, Father J. Moran, Louisburgh, and Father P. Curran, Adm., Clare Island. We vested in the old Abbey church and marched in procession to the altar which had been erected on the level ground in front. All the people stood in a semi-circle on the rising ground before the altar which formed a natural amphitheatre. The Bofin church choir under the direction of Bridie O'Halloran N.T. (since deceased and greatly mourned) sang during the Mass and their sweet voices mingled with the singing of birds, the bleating of sheep and the gentle murmur of the sea. Father Charles O'Malley of Castlebar gave a commentary on the ceremony. The two skippers, Chris O'Grady from Clare Island and John Concannon from Bofin, carried the bread and wine to the altar at the Offertory. We reckon that there were close to three hundred pilgrims in all and over ninety received Communion.

After Mass we had a short break for refreshments and then several people made the traditional stations. We went to the Holy Well at the West end, but as evening was drawing on we had to cut short the station exercises there. We left about 8 o'clock. As the tide was now up the boats were able to draw up by the rock and all embarked in a very short time. We had said two rosaries on the outward voyage and we recited the Litany on the return. The sun was sinking towards the rim of the ocean in purple and golden glory and we felt no qualms about expressing the joy of our hearts in community singing. Besides those mentioned already the following priests made the pilgrimage :- Frs. Tom Shannon and Patrick Delaney of Castlebar, Father John O'Malley S.M.A. of Cloonty, Father Peter Waldron C.C. Leenane, Father Michael Gibbons, Adm. Bofin, and Father O'Carroll from Chicago. Also present were three nuns from Saint Jarlath's College. A number of non-catholic visitors who came from Bofin expressed themselves greatly impressed by all they saw and heard.

Michael Viney later wrote a very fine article for the **Irish Times** which also printed a photograph of the con-celebrated Mass. I still regret that R.T.E. missed the opportunity of sending its cameras. Next time perhaps?
Kylemore
Patrick Prendergast

KEEP YOUR WORD!

We take the liberty of presuming that our readers are familiar with the general content and format of this feature as it has appeared in our five past issues. It is re-assuring to find that quite a few readers have expressed pleasure from studying these familiar local words. We should also like to draw attention to a letter written to the editor by Professor A. J. Bliss, Dept. of English, University College, Dublin who is particularly interested in the local variants and usages in the English language in Ireland. (The professor's letter is on page 8). Both as a contribution to his collection and (which we candidly regard as more important) for the sake of keeping such colourful language alive and understood in our parish we ask that any unusual words which readers have heard be sent for publication in this feature. In this sense you can "keep your word" best by giving it to us!

The method of the following quiz, and the system of pronunciation will be understood by reference to earlier issues of **An Choinneal**.

1. **Bruth-fá-thír** (brufaw-here)—(a) mashed potatoes; (b) something washed ashore; (c) the sheltered side of a house; (d) senseless talk.
2. **Bruscar** (brus-ker)—(a) broken-up articles; (b) hasty; (c) an ignoramus; (d) an osier basket.
3. **Bun-fhola** (bun-wulla)—(a) foundations of a house; (b) a hidden treasure; (c) a stone-bruise; (d) the "butt" of a hill.
4. **Ciotóg** (kith-ogue)—(a) a young goat; (b) a left-hander; (c) a short shower of hailstones; (d) a nephew.
5. **Clamhsán** (klow-sawn)—(a) "contrairy"; (b) the lid of a skillet; (c) complaining; (d) a tea-towel.
6. **Cóiriú** (kohir-you)—(a) girl's "make-up"; (b) without any coat or jacket; (c) gathering the mountain sheep for a fair; (d) easy-going.
7. **Cora** (korra)—(a) giddy; (b) an upstart; (c) "By Jove"; (d) a dam.
8. **Eadramh** (adh-roo)—(a) amongst the crowd; (b) "mixed-up" or mithered; (c) a long time; (d) a wollen cap.

9. **Faslach** (foss-luch)—(a) old hay used as fodder; (b) sedge growing by a lake-side; (c) staggering or stumbling; (d) a hollow-bog.
10. **Forbhach** (fora-wuch)—(a) formation for a stack; (b) a non-native who comes to reside in the parish (c) very light, unsubstantial turf; (d) the horizon.
11. **Fraoch** (free-uch)—(a) frightened of ghosts; (b) heather; (c) a free-kick in a game of football; (d) a streak of other-coloured hair in one's head.
12. **Gaisc** (goshk)—(a) bad-humour because of having no tobacco; (b) Get up quickly!; (c) a note-worthy deed; (d) the spoke of a cart-wheel.
13. **Maistín** (mosh-cheen)—(a) a bold female; (b) a churning; (c) part of a sailing-boat; (d) a "springer" heifer.
14. **Neantóg** (nyan-thogue)—(a) a girlish young man; (b) a mushroom; (c) a niece; (d) a nettle.
15. **Stéagachai** (shchay-guch-ee)—(a) thorn bushes; (b) the "breechings" of a horse's harness; (c) an animal's entrails; (d) the dregs remaining in drinking-glasses on a public-house counter.

Test your prowess by the answers on page 64.



Mary Lyons (Furmoye) with her teacher, Sister M. Hyacinth (Sancta Maria). Mary won the Mayo competition for bread-making last year.

HOME MADE CURES

A Blood Cleanser

Ingredients :

- 4 handfuls of stinging nettles freshly gathered
- 1 handful of spinach and dandelion mixture
(three parts spinach to one dandelion)
- 10 cupfuls of spring water

Method—1, The traditional method of preparing hare's soup begins :

- "First catch the hare!" Similarly here—one must first collect the nettles. For those who have not accustomed themselves to "grasp it like a lad of mettle" a pair a leather gloves will be invaluable. A rubber glove is useful in the rest of the preparation.
2. Hand-pick the nettles into a plentiful supply of cold water in a large container (e.g kitchen sink).
 3. Plunge them thoroughly and turn them frequently in the water.
 4. Lift them into a large colander and empty the sink.
 5. Put the nettles back into the sink (with its plug in place) and let the cold tap run generously again. Plunge them thoroughly as before. Repeat this process to five times.
 6. When the cleaning process is complete lift again into colander, shake out surplus water, put the nettles into a large saucepan and add water, as in recipe, above. Put on the cooker; bring slowly to the boil and allow to simmer slowly till the nettles are soft. (This will take 1½—2 hours, approximately).
 7. Lift from cooker and allow to cool (but not too cold). Strain the mixture through muslin and pour into clean bottles. Cork tightly and use as required. One wineglass-ful, three times daily, is recommended.

The nettles may be used as a vegetable and if added to the daily fare during spring and early summer prevent rashes, pimples, sores and ugly "breaking out" on the skin. One can hardly do better for one's health than eat generously of this vegetable and drink the water in which its has been cooked.

And, incidentally, for the pain of that sting (caused where the leather glove was torn!) rub a dock-leaf briskly on the skin.

(Mrs.) B. A. Morahan

Saying it with Starch

Perhaps more than any feature of **An Choinneal** the collection of "spakes" which we published in our last issue has been welcomed, appreciated, and commented on favourably by our readers far and near. This does not surprise us, for two reasons—namely that those who do not know our parish and community find such expressions rich, imaginative, fresh and original; and that readers who are familiar with the parish and its people not only relish the saying but can fill in the music and atmosphere in which they were first uttered. A good instance of the former kind of reader is our friendly and appreciative reviewer "Tatler" in the **Irish Independent** (whose reactions appeared in that paper on 21 December 1967; they are quoted from in **Bits and Scraps**, page 84) "Tatler" remarks: "There must be thousands, word imagery and which take their charm from a mixture of spontaneity, word imagery and a reckless sense of exaggeration, and my only complaint with **An Choinneal** is that it does not quote enough of them. But the writer of the article . . . appeals for more samples, and we may look forward to a further list in the 1969 issue".

Our purpose, in this as in all our features and articles, is to preserve **our own** tradition; to make **our own** contribution to present and future society. We regard these as basic material, and have tried to keep to the home-made specimens of spake. Some of them, however, have probably been heard elsewhere.

A tall islander reached in off his boat to fasten the moorings at Roonagh Pier. The fastening-place was almost out of reach. The voice of another islander came from the back of the boat: "You'll want whatever length is in you there!"

"The apparel oft proclaims the man"—Polonius would hardly get away without an argument from the Ballyhip man who stated roundly: "It's not the clothes but the peg they and on!"

Death and its sureness is often commented on.

"When He puts up his finger **your must go!**"

A neighbour, trying to console a woman on the death of her daughter:

"But what can we do, Mary? He's his own boss!"

Was there a vision of eternity in the reply to :

"But you'll die if you don't get the doctor, John".

"If I do, itself I'll live at the loss"?

And there's the delightfully vivid if not too theologically correct wish for a happy death: "That you may be ten minutes in heaven before the devil knows you're dead!"

How many of us would give an original description of a Light-Sussex hen? And how few of us would recognise and relish the picture of them as "the hens that wear the shawleens"?

A young man from the parish approached a country girl: "Will you dance Annie" The only reply he got was: "Pity!" But he got the message and they danced; because he knew well that her one word meant "What the dickens do you think I came here for except to dance?" However, she must have been more articulate with her tongue than with her feet, because he confided in a comrade afterwards: "She was like a goose with a leather on one foot!"

Apology for a hang-over: "You'll forgive me today if I appear to have a bird's head!"

Isn't there a pathetic sound in a man's announcement that he was financially embarrassed! "My change is all **gone brown!**" Pathetic colour even!

Perhaps he would have fared better if he had played his hand of cards well. "Why did you stir so soon with your five?" his partner complained. "You should have kept your patience and you sitting there with the power!"

Long before Vatican Two emphasized the need for dialogue, one of our old men had appreciated it. "It's a poor thing, indeed," he said, "to be working with yourself; because when you put the question, you have to answer it yourself."

But dialogue is alright if every suggestion you make or every attempted joke isn't capped by one better. When one man met a woman who could

do this, he confessed with frustration: "If I put forty holes in the table, she'd have a peg for every hole of them."

"How are the family?" the old lady asked. "Oh great!" said their mother; "Every one of them getting the upperhand of the other in wisdom and understanding".

Another mother tried to convey proudly that she had a whole house-ful of children: "We had a goose for the dinner the other day, and sure it wasn't white water to them!" But the listener chose to take another meaning: "Well, I never knew your family was that ravenous!"

Isn't there something splendid about a well-built man? Perhaps, but surely this description gives him an extra dimension: "He's the finest man within the parish: he's the only man in the parish on a Sunday that has to turn sideways coming down the side-aisle from Communion!"

It's a common enough complaint in Ireland that things are just opposite to what we'd like them to be. Equally common is the remark "If it was raining soup, I'd have a fork!" But a local expression of the same dissatisfaction goes: "That's the way: the moon would be out a bright night when you wouldn't want it!"

Let no-one imagine that the spakes are rooted in a static past: "How did ye travel to town?" got the reply: "We walked it in, and **bushed** it out." And here's a parishioner's comment on a recent lunar attempt: "What a time they should go trying to land on the moon—the little slip of a moon that's in it. Why didn't they wait until there was a decent full moon?"

And it was no Bord Fáilte agent who said: "I'll never forget the sight I saw coming down the Quay Hill on the way back to Louisburgh. The bay was full of little islands, like the tops of mountains pushing up out of a fog; and there was your Clare Island making the Reek of itself in the middle of them!"

But perhaps we have given enough spakes. If we are to continue, we might earn the reprimand that a fluent talker did in the parish: God knows that one would give a heart-burn to a snipe!"

KEEP YOUR WORD?

(Questions on page 58)

1. **Bruth-fá-thír** is something washed ashore. It refers not to seaweed, sea-rods, or such natural growth, but to such things as timber, rubber, barrels of oil or other fuel, etc. which occasionally are washed onto the shore especially (for our shores) in a west wind. The clear or coloured glass balls—floats for fishing-nets (which have been collected on the shore and used as ornaments) are a good example of bruth-fá-thír.
2. **Bruscar** means of course, broken-up articles. It is often applied to the offals of bread and other food which remains after a big meal. (In this exact sense, it is the word used in the Irish translation of the Gospels to describe the "fragments" of the loaves and fishes) The offals of a hospital, college or such institution is also **bruscar**. But the word is used apart from food: a vivid description of the breaking of a cup especially if it was intentional—might be "She made **bruscar** of it!" Turf that is not carefully spread becomes **bruscar**. Another way of producing **bruscar** is to put a packet of biscuits in your pocket before going into a tightly-packed crowd. But perhaps the two most engaging usages of the word are: "All the money I have is five single notes and a couple of shillings of bruscar"; and "Give the men the work to do; and leave the little jobs to the bruscar of children."
3. A **bun-fhola** is a stone-bruise. The word is very likely to become obsolete in an age which puts fully-finished leather shoes on a child, still in a pram, who hasn't even begun to learn to walk! If you cannot ever remember the experience you might undertake this experiment: remove shoes and stockings and walk down the sea-shore without particularly watching for the jagged edges of stones. If you can slip off one stone (in your bare feet) on to another, then you've got it—a **bun-fhola!**
4. A **ciotóg** is a left-hander—whether he be a handballer or a carpenter, or she be beating an egg or pouring a cup of tea. **Ciotóg** is a noun, and the adjective is **ciotach**, which also means 'awkward'.

5. **Clamhsán** is complaining, or more familiarly "givin' out". One feels that it is an habitual thing—not just an outburst of bad temper or occasional annoyance. A person is said to be "always clamhsán, never satisfied." The object of dis-satisfaction then must be a rather permanent state of affairs such as: that the young men aren't work-hungry; or that the rates are increasing; or simply, that the daughter-in-law "isn't like our people at all".
6. **Cóiriú** means without any coat or jacket. It has almost exactly the same meaning in the parish as the word 'shape' (cf. A Fair Deal page 58) The word is used only of woman's dress and its exact meaning is the apparel of a woman within her own home—usually blouse and skirt. Out of doors such dress would attract attention. So, to describe a hasty decision one might say "As soon as she heard it, she struck a **bionóg** on her head and went out in her **cóiriú** . . ." Perhaps after all it can be applied to a coatless (unfrocked!) man. Someone has recorded, within the parish, a delightful salvo in the developing dialogue prior to a skirmish between neighbours. It was "Maily, if you do that again, you'll **shape** yourself!"
7. **Cora** is a dam. Dineen's dictionary instances the place-name, Kincora (of Brian Boru fame) as a use of this word. In our own parish there is a village named **Cora** in the townland of Ballyhip. On a miniature scale however a **cora** is the thin ridge of turf which the sleansman leaves to prevent water rushing in along the 'spit'. The word also refers to the line of turf which, at spreading-time, was placed carefully on the brink of the turf-bank and dried so quickly there.
8. **Eadramh** is a long time—in fact too long a time; this is why it's used always about someone else, or apologetically about oneself! Particularly this word is used of the time that a person spends visiting, or gossiping (or both), when he has been sent for a message. Again, it is used of a dallying along the road. Always there is a rebuke in the word; and a clear hint that someone else is waiting, patiently or otherwise, for the end of the **eadramh**. The verbs we use are important: we **spend** an **adramh**; or someone **makes** his eadramh. In Irish the word had another meaning, namely "the milking time". "Codladh go h-eadramh" meant a very long sleep. Is there some hidden connection with the phrase "till the cows come home"?

9. **Faslach** is a hollow-bog. And a hollow-bog is the lower part or cut-away part of a bog, on which is spread the turf which is cut at the lower level.

10. **Forbhach** is the foundation for a stack. In a haggard, lest the lower sheaves of a grain crop be lost by dampness, it is usual to place a few layers of rubble, or cut branches, or turf before the stack is built. This is the **forbach**.

11. **Fraoch** is simply heather, whether it be white, red or purple; whether it be the the species wich Diarmuid took to the seaside to outwit Finn Mac Cumhail's intelligence service; or the kind that our own old people gathered to make into that type of broom which they called a "beesom".

12. **Gaisc** is a note-worthy deed. It's real meaning is a "boast" and so it has come to **our** meaning, which is a reason for a boast. But it often has a nuance which should be noted. A man who is "doing great **gaisc**" is really regarded as attempting more than he is able to do; and incidentally, he is raising the standard of performance on the neighbours! For this reason there is often more than a little irony in the use of this word; and a demolishing kind of tolerance in the verdict: "He's a bit of a gaisc!"

13. A **maistín** is a bold female. Not just a barge—who would hold forth with railing and abuse, yet could be thought of as having quite another side to her character which could even make up for the barging periods. But a maistin's vices are more deep-seated and her virtues, if any, on the surface. A **maistín** may be quite appealing in her good moments, but just rub the wrong way and you'll see her true colours. Dear reader, could you imagine a young female who is forbidden to go to the dance and retaliates by overturning the bucket of milk her mother has just brought in? Gentle reader, could you visualize a female who, disappointed with the present that has been given her, burns it bad-temperedly, in the donor's veiw. Kind reader, could you conceive—but, enough said, Can it be that this word has lived in our parish because people have found use for it? But gentle (men) readers, do please remember that so also have such words as : **Búiste, bodach, leisceadóir**, etc!

14. A **neantóg** is a nettle. Besides being applied to the stinging plant it is also used to describe a "touchy" person—meaning, presumably, a person who stings back whenever he is touched. A vivid description of someone with a bad morning manner is "You'd think he rose out of a bed of nettles!"

15. **Stéagachai** is a word for the entrails of an animal, but the word is seldom heard or understood in the parish now. Irish dictionaries give the word **stéig** as an intestine. Ten years ago the compiler of this feature heard an old man in the parish recall: "The old woman told him to drink up the tea and 'twill warm your stéagachai. They all thought she used a bad word; it was a good Irish word she used!"



The Killeen football team which brought the O'Toole Cup to the "half-parish" in 1968—for the first time in thirteen years.

Back row M. Gibbons, Anthony Jordan, Joe Keane, Tommie Cox, Christie O'Malley.

Front row Mattie Fergus, Paddy Keane, John Keane, M. J. Keane.

PARISH REVIEW

Survival . . .

Sister Mary Anthony (O'Toole) last year celebrated her sixtieth year as a professed nun in Presentation Convent Tuam. This year she completed her sixty-first year and sixty-fourth in religion.

She was born in Louisburgh, the second youngest of nine children of John O'Toole (Roonith) and Catherine O'Malley of Feenoone. Her brothers and sisters were, in order: Patrick, Richard, John, Mary (later Mrs. McHale) Brigid (later Mrs. Ward, Mooneen), Anthony, Austin and Willie. Patrick and Richard went to America as young men; Austin after a period in America returned to live in Louisburgh; Anthony became a priest of the Tuam diocese and Willie was ordained for the American mission. Perhaps the best-known of this distinguished family was Mr. John O'Toole who was for a long period principal teacher at Louisburgh (Boys) National School.

Sister Anthony went to school at the Presentation Convent Tuam at the age of ten. On 21 September 1905 she entered at the same convent as a novice, and because of the rule obtaining for religious communities then she was never home in Louisburgh afterwards. "We had a house in Achill however", she remembers "and went there on holidays. It was grand to see Croagh Patrick, even from there!" She was professed on 2 May 1908.

During her years in religion Sister Anthony taught at Headford Convent and in Tuam. Music was a favourite subject of hers and many girls and boys were introduced to a love of music under her direction. We send Sister Anthony our congratulations on such an extra-ordinarily long spell of religious life and wish that her memories and her music will gladden her years of retirement.

The Mercy Convent, Louisburgh was the setting for a simple celebration on 17 May 1939; simple but, as simple things so often are, symbolic and meaningful. It was the golden jubilee celebration of the profession of Mother Josephine (Fitzpatrick) who was professed on 1919. Having taught for some time in Bouris, had entered in Tuam on 15 November 1916 and had been received on 15 May 1917. During most of her religious

life she taught at the Mercy Convent, Tuam; first on the primary section and later in the secondary (boarding) school. Indeed there she spent all of her life after entering religion apart from one year as novice and the periods she has spent in Louisburgh. In 1923-'4 she taught in the Mercy Convent secondary school which was then in (what we know now as) McDermott's Hotel. Later—in 1949—she came back to the parish as superior of the Convent and headmistress of the secondary school there.

Mother Josephine is known to many generations in the parish: some of the mothers she taught in her early period here: others were in her charge as pupils in Tuam; and practically all the younger generation of Louisburgh girls has come under her influence since her return. All of them remember her, not merely as the brilliant teacher she was, but as an example of an enthusiastic whole-heartedness which was infectious. Quite apart from her gift as a disciplinarian, her very presence was a rebuke to a would-be laggard; and her direction and method enjoyed a further seal of authority because of a remarkable quotient of common-sense and practicality, quite unusual in a nun.

The evident success of Sancta Maria as a school and the service it has, as such, rendered to Kilgeever parish is a measure of her zeal and exertion. Indicative of her magnanimity is her insistence that the success in Sancta Maria could never have been achieved were it not for the dedication of Father Moran; and, quite honestly, this is an opinion in which any observant parishioner must concur. But on the occasion of her golden jubilee we simply thank Mother Josephine for all those days and years. Sincerely, we wish her as many more among our grateful community.

. . . and ARRIVAL

Miss Kathleen Friel of Carramore became Sister Angela at the Mercy Convent, Tuam. The date of her final profession was Wednesday 19 March 1969. We send Sister Angela our felicitations and sincere good wishes on her profession and we ask our readers to pray for her in her chosen vocation.

Sister Angela is daughter of Mrs. Mary Anne and the late Edward Friel and with her mother at the profession were Sister Angela's sister, Mary, (Dublin) and her brother John (Carramore). The ceremony which began at 4 p.m. was conducted by Very Reverend Martin Geraghty Adm., Tuam; and among the young nuns relations present were her grandmother, Mrs. Katie Lally, Durless, Martin Lally (uncle) Mrs. Alice Sammon Carramore, (aunt) Mr. & Mrs. Frank Sammon, Mrs. Sonny Egan, Mrs. Thomas McNamara, Miss Anne McNamara and Mrs. Joe Burns, Westport.



LOUISBURGH

Mr. Tony Kilcoyne and Miss Anne Gavin, married 23 July in Westport Church.

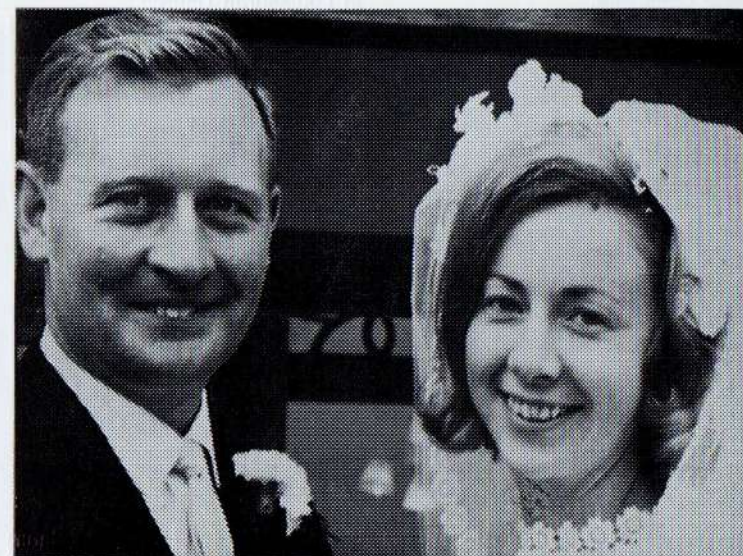


Mr. Jim Bowe (Main Street) and Miss Nuala Downes (Foxrock) who were married in Foxrock Church. The bridegroom's uncle, Bishop Fergus officiated.

WEDDINGS



Mr. Brian McDonald (Dublin) and Miss Mary Harney, married 12 February 1969 in Louisburgh Church.



Mr. Charles Deacy (Foxford) and Miss Maura O'Malley (Cahir) who were married in Saint Patrick's Church on 14 September 1968.



Mr. Sean Dunne (Louisburgh) and Miss Mary Hughes S.R.N. Armagh married in Church of the Epiphany, San Francisco.



Mr. James O'Malley (Roonith) and Miss Nora Jordan (Carrownskey) married 9 August, 1967 in Louisburgh Church



Mr. Michael Gallagher (Aitinaveen) and Miss Margaret Fergus (Cahir) who were married in Saint Patrick's Church on 11 January 1968. The ceremony was conducted by the bride's uncle, Bishop Fergus; celebrant was her brother Father Austin Fergus.



Mr. Patrick O'Malley (Bridge) and Miss Mary Heraty N.T. (Westport) married 14 August, 1968 in St. Mary's Church, Westport.



Mr. P. J. Gibbons (Croonlara) and Miss Catherine Buckley, Fairhill Cork.



Mr. James O'Malley (Feenoone) and Miss Gertrude Murphy (Delvin) married 24 April, 1968 in Visitation Church, Fairview, Dublin.



Mr. Thomas Duffy (Falduff) and Miss Joan Broderick (Abbeyfeale) married in Church of St. John Baptist, Croagh, 16 August 1967.

Marriages in the Parish Church

- 1967 28 December** Patrick J. Ferguson (Ballyshannon) and Brigid T. Ryder (Falduff)
- 1968 3 January** James M. Maxwell (Ballyhip) and Sarah O'Grady
- 11 January** Michael Gallagher (Aitinaveen) and Margaret M. Fergus (Cahir)
- 17 April** Edward M. Quinn (Westport) and Mary T. Prendergast (Louisburgh)
- 19 June** Michael Richard Gibbons (Doughmackeown) and Mary Bernadette O'Malley (Cloonty)
- 3 July** Partick F. O'Grady (Kilmeena) and Mary Teresa Gibbons (Askelane)
- 3 July** John Patrick Lyons (Askelane) and Brenda M. O'Reilly (Shraugh)
- 27 July** Michael Coen (Ballyhanuis) and Delia P. Maxwell (Ballyhip)
- 3 August** Michael McGreal (Tallabawn) and Brigid Davitt
- 7 September** Garda John McGrath (Shanagolden) and Brigid Lyons (Killadoon)
- 14 September** Charles Deacy (Straide) and Mary B. O'Malley
- 1969 1 February** Richard A. Scott (Bridge Street) and Leone M. McKeown (Main Street)
- 12 February** Brian McDonald (Dublin) and Mary B. Harney

OTHER MARRIAGES OUTSIDE THE PARISH.

Gabriel Hannon B.A., H. Dip., (Bunowen Road and Ann Maher S.R.N., S.C.M., in the Cathedral Ennis (23 August 1967)

Lorean Geoghegan B.A., H. Dip., (Bunowen Road) and Helen Curley (Kilconly) in Kilconly Church (August 1968)

Francis Sammin B.A. (Carramore) and Teresa Stewart (Castlebar)

Joseph Burke (Carramore) and Nellie Biggins (Belcarra)

Pádraic Hannon (Bunowen Road) and Anna McDonagh at Saint Clare's Church Manorhamilton

Jeremiah Slattery (Kerry) and Nuala Mary Dunne (Bunowen) in San Francisco

Since the year in which our first issue appeared the annual number of marriages in the parish church has been as follows : 1959—four, 1960—five, 1961—eight, 1962—eight, 1963—three, 1964—two, 1965—six, 1966—three, 1967—seven, 1968—ten.

Parish Survey

The following statistics regarding the population of the parish include those who are resident at home and those who are away from home, in Ireland or elsewhere. The survey has again been carried out by the students of Sanctá Maria Secondary School who are members of the Macra na Tuaithe branch.

A—Resident Population

U-20 Years old	20-40 Years old	40-60 Years old	60-80 Years old	Over 80 Years old
712	258	440	360	52

Total resident population—1822

The number of married persons (including widows and widowers) is 784.

The number of unmarried persons in the 20-40 age-group is 147.

B—Louisburgh Natives resident elsewhere

Age	Ireland	Britain	U.S., Canada	Australia	Africa
Under 20	49	3	—	—	—
20-40 Years	245	272	154	13	2
40-60 Years	156	315	142	7	7
Over 60 Years	68	47	173	1	—
Totals	518	637	469	21	9

The entire number of people who have left the parish is 1654.

Remember O Lord....

These parishioners died since our published list of September 1967 :

1967	27 October	John Kelly, Crickeen
	8 November	Patrick Hastings, Dereen
	21 November	Patrick O'Toole, Carramore
	12 December	Mrs. Ann O'Malley, Cloonty
	13 December	Thomas McGreal, Doughmackeown
	14 December	Michael O'Malley, Ailemore
1968	16 January	Mrs. Brigid Egan, Derrygarv
	16 January	Cecilia O'Grady, Doughmackeown
	27 January	Mrs. Brigid Ruane, Mooneen
	5 February	Mrs. Nora O'Toole, Roonagh
	21 February	Michael Kerrigan, Pulgloss
	2 March	Patrick Prendergast, Bunowen
	25 March	Martin Kilcoyne, Crickeen
	20 April	Mrs. Ann O'Malley, Pulgloss
	25 April	Geoffrey Prendergast, Accony
	4 June	John Crotty, Kiltimagh
	9 June	Patrick Hastings, Tallabawn
	9 June	Julia Mannion, Killadoon
	13 June	Patrick Gibbons, Kinnadoohey
	30 June	Thomas McNally, Roonith Hill
	12 July	Mrs. Maria Scanlon, Louisburgh
	15 July	Thomas O'Malley, Corrigan
	17 July	Mrs. Brigid Burke
	21 July	Mrs. Ann O'Grady, Cloonty
	31 July	Thomas Joyce, Shraugh
	25 August	Michael Ward, Carramore
	2 September	Peter Scanlon, Kinnock
	7 September	Mrs. Mary Durkan, Askalane
	20 September	Thomas Gallagher, Furmoyle
	1 October	Patrick O'Grady, Kilgeever
	30 October	Austin Kitterick, Dereen
	18 November	James Kilcoyne, Woodfield
	22 November	Patrick Scanlon, Louisburgh
	25 November	Anthony Gavin, Woodfield
	25 December	Patrick Flanagan, Dereen

28 December Patrick Gavin, Derrygarv

1969	5 January	Rose Gibbons, Accony
	31 January	Peter McLoughlin, Tully
	3 February	Mrs. Ella Staunton, Tallabawn
	6 February	Mrs. Rose Harney, Legan
	7 February	Austin O'Reilly, Shraugh
	19 February	Mrs. Margaret McDonnell, Cross
	25 February	Miss Brigid Foye, Louisburgh
	29 March	Mary Burke, Devlin
	16 May	Anthony Jordan, Carrowniskey

EMIGRANTS' DEATHS

The deaths of these people who had left the parish were announced since our last publication :

1967	October	Brigid O'Malley, Feenone
	October	Austin McDonnell (Louisburgh) in Dublin
	December	Mrs. Brigid Rice (Louisburgh) in Dublin
	December	John Hester (Falduff) in Chicago
1968	January	John McCarthy (Falduff) in New York
	January	Peter Nee (Curra) in Duleek
	February	Sally Durkan (Askalane) in England
	March	Mrs. Mary Davitt in U.S.A.
	March	Mrs. Nora Kilgannon (nee McDonnell, Cross) in Liverpool
	March	Patrick Burke (Aselane) in England
	March	Birgid Forbes (nee O'Toole, Roonagh) in U.S.A.
	March	Mrs. Sarah McMyler (Carramore) in Maynooth
	June	James McNamara (Kinnadoohey) Westport
	September	Mrs. Catherine Logan (Kilgeever) in Chicago
	October	John O'Malley (Roonith) in U.S.A.
	October	Anthony Gibbons (Roonagh) in England
	October	Mrs. Nora Greely (Louisburgh) in Dublin
	November	Mrs. Mary Hester (nee Donnelly Louisburgh) in U.S.A.
	November	Mrs. Margaret Gallagher (nee Sammon Carramore) in U.S.A.
	November	John Kneafsey (Bunowen) in U.S.A.

- The word could also be applied to any Y-shaped article, or road. Was this, perhaps, the origin of the name of the village Gabhlán?
8. A large dike or trench is called **glais**, but in our usage it is reserved almost entirely, for those dikes which form the mearings between villages. It is also the name of a separate village, Glospatrick, beside Murrisk. It is more than likely that the word is, in fact, "clais" which is now found in Irish dictionaries; and that our form of the word came from phrases like "ag an **gclais**" or (more often!) "ins an **gclais**". The word has no connection with goloshes — at least not linguistically!
 9. **Ladhraicín** is a delightfully descriptive name for the little finger. The word recalls a most imaginative description of a public figure who was judged to have all the signs of action but no real work. The judgement was that he "hopped about" a great deal yet did nothing. But all this was put in two Irish words: **Ladhraicín píobaire!** It means: "He's like a piper's little finger!"
 10. **Mungailt** means chewing — but not just that. It indicates, not the occupation of a child during lunch-hour or of an adult with an apple, but the surreptitious kind of mastication which a child practises on a sweet during class-time or which even an adult child might impose on a piece of plum-pudding which he pilfered when the cook's back was turned. But we make the word pay its way to a greater extent; we give it the further value of "chewing the rag" — but in a subdued manner. An example will clarify. Forbid your teenager to go the party and explain carefully what he or she is to do at home during the night. Then listen carefully to the semi-audible third-personal protest. You can't tell what exactly it is? We can — it's **mongailt**.
 11. A **pislín** is extra saliva (and our more fastidious readers will please omit the rest of this paragraph!) The disgusting specimen is found in the very young and very old; and especially in less-accomplished pipe-smokers. The activity — if indeed it can be termed such — is given a name which is particularly graphic if not onomatopoeic. It is called **pislineacht**.
 12. A **pisreog** is a superstition. It is not a ghost story or a fairy-tale, though it could be related to these. It's a **pisreog** to believe that thirteen is an unlucky number; or that a black cat brings good luck; or that to open an umbrella in a house will bring some misfortune. Incidentally, would it not be worth while to collect them all in a "Coinneal" article before they disappear from memory?

13. A pillar of smoke is called a **púr**. One has the feeling, though that the smoke must go up straight, and that it is caused unexpectedly. A quotation will help: "The two Yanks were there — one on each hob; and the next thing, the dog chased the cat across the hearth knocked the tea-pot into the fire; and up goes the **púr** of smoke and ashes. The Yanks were destroyed."
14. A **scearchán** is a precocious youngster — one who takes on the doing of things which are the preserves of older people, and presumably is not able to do them as well. If a junior member of the Legion of Mary were to call to a house and enquire about the state of religion there, the householders might well complain that "it's a nice how-d'ye-do having a **scearchán** of a gasúr asking such questions!" **Scearcháns** are also known to have given intimate medical advice to adults, to have made political public speeches, to have given back-chat publicity to senior citizens; to have questioned the status quo in any domain publicly. And did you hear about the young fellow of seventeen that went to England, and within one year what did he do but to get married? The **scearchán!**
15. A **traid** is a great amount, but you must be careful how you use this word. Without question it refers to loose things that are being carried or have just been delivered, but it seems also that they must also be the same kind of things or thought of as such. And there must be an abundance — even a super-abundance — of them. And, one final nuance, there is just a little resentment when the **traid** is delivered; though while it is being carried it merits praise. A cart is said to carry a great **traid** of turnips but a country woman in her generosity might slightly displease her town cousin by "landing in with a **traid** of onions", or a **traid** of old clothes, or even (perhaps, especially) a **traid** of children.

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"The land-grabber, like a hungry hound, swallows up all he can. He forcibly reminded one of a half-starved sow pig, who goes about until she gets her head into a pot of potatoes, and gobbles up all she can, although the woman of the house gives her the pot-stick on the back. Well the way to put down the land-grabber is to lay the moral pot-stick on his back by refusing to buy or sell to him, or by associating with him in any public-house or even the House of God if necessary".

From a Speech delivered by Fr. Coen, Newport on 19th. June 1880, at Louisburgh.

This was read out to Bishop Francis MacCormack of Galway on 10 May 1889 and he was asked to comment on it. He expressed disapproval but quickly added that Fr. Coen was a Tuam priest.

## The Poorer Classes in 1835

— from a commission report

The following gave evidence at an inquiry into the state of the poorer classes :

John Barns, cottier, holds 2½ acres.—John Cox, farmer, holding 8 acres.—James Frehill, cottier, holds 1 acre.—James Gallagher, farmer, 7 acres.—Rev. Mr. Gibbons, Roman-catholic rector.—Mr. Austin Gibbons, assistant to Mr. Durkin, apothecary.—Miles Joyce, cottier, holds 1½ acres.—Pat Mally, an old man past his labour, did hold 2 acres.—Roger M'Donogh, cottier, holds 2½ acres.—Pat M'Donnell, farmer, holding 8 acres.—William M'Evily, farmer, 5 acres.

Rev. Mr. Potter, protestant curate.—Mr. Reed, land-steward to Marquis of Sligo, the principal proprietor of the parish.

In the four villages of Carramore, Mooneen, Benowen and Cahir, containing 190 families, there are a great number of distressed widows, but only seven who have families depending on them for support. Witnesses from each of these villages have mentioned them by name, and described the manner in which they live. Four of them have land, which without exception, is gratuitously tilled for them by their neighbours. One of these, though occasionally assisted by her mother-in-law, is falling into such distress, that she complains, she will be obliged to give up her little holding, which has hitherto preserved her from begging. She holds two acres, at three guineas rent. A second, holding four acres, at 5l. rent; has six children, the eldest 14 years. M'Donnell says, "She is often in sore distress for provisions, but never asks any gratuitously. The like of her or her children for nakedness I never saw; and yet it is astonishing to see how they work in the water in cold weather, collecting rack for manure". The other two, though holding land, one occasionally begs, the other sometimes falls back for support on her relatives or neighbours. Of the three who have no land, one, having one child, lives among her neighbours; another, having five children, partly supports herself and children by selling fruit, but lives mostly on the neighbours. She is described as half naked. The third has but one son, a young man of sickly habit. When he is able to work, and can find employment, which is seldom, he endeavours to support her; but M'Donnell says, when ailing or unemployed, he depends on her, and she on the neighbours.

There is no employment open to them by which they

could support themselves. M'Donnell says they now sit idle all day long. Before the wool rose to such a price, they might earn a trible by spinning; but now they can earn nothing. A woman, a neighbour of mine, told me that after buying a half a pound of wool for 10d., and spinning and knitting it into three or four pair of socks, she sold them all for 10½d. As this statement seemed to require confirmation, we made inquiries into a neighbouring parish, where we were told that half a pound of wool might be manufactured into three pair of thin socks, which commonly sold at 3d. or 3½d. each. Nothing can be made by knitting, unless they mix with the woolen yarn tow, or the short wool of the tuck mill; the latter has numbers seeking for it, and can be procured only by interest with the miller. Mr. Evily says widows and wives sell illicit spirits; it is the only profitable employment an industrious woman can find.

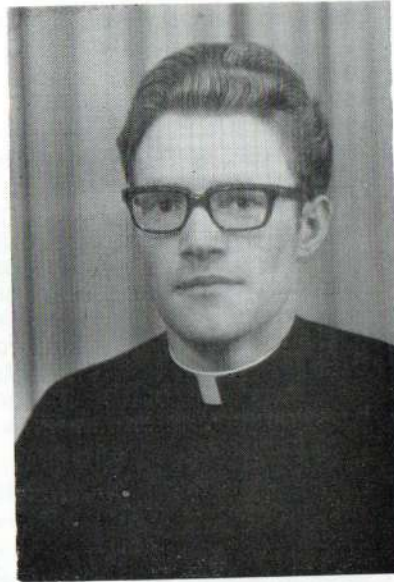
There is no public provision of any sort for them. In answer to a question whether the owner of the estate on which the deceased husband lived provides for the widow, Mr. Reed (land-steward on Lord Sligo's estate, this parish), says, his instructions are whenever a lease drops by the death of the husband, to give the widow her choice of a cabin and a plot of ground, of a rood or half an acre, rent-free, or a preference of the land, if she is able to hold it; the latter is mostly preferred. The other witnesses say they do not know such to be the practice on any other estate in the parish. One of the widows before mentioned lost her land on the death of her husband, and got no assistance from the landlord, a resident in the county; she begs. The gentry make no effort for their support; but their relations and neighbours, though unable to undertake their whole support, are very ready to assist them, often by taking charge of one of their children.

They seldom leave home to beg; and though relieved by their neighbours at home, it is generally on private application.

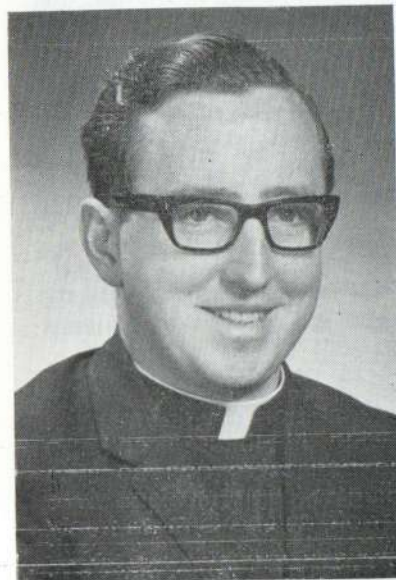
As regards the comparative condition of widows with young families, and women having illegitimate children M'Donnell says, if both take the bag there can be little difference; but if both be struggling to support themselves at home, the widow is by far better off, as she is more freely assisted by the neighbours. The woman who has a bastard is always driven to beg, unless her parents keep both her and the child, to prevent her coming to greater shame. The witnesses have never known an instance of a widow driven by her poverty to prostitution.

*Following . . .*

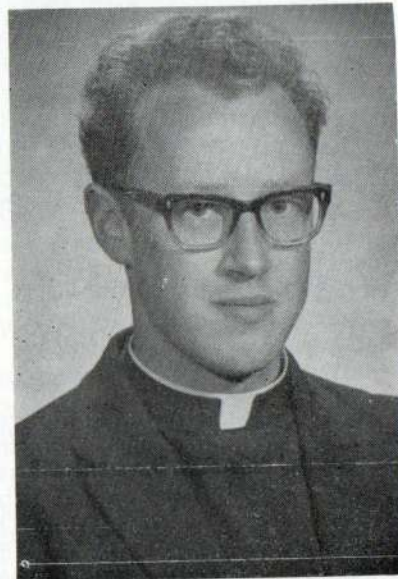
Three Young Men  
from the Parish  
were Ordained since  
our last issue.



Father Geoffrey O'Grady Killeen  
Louisburgh  
Ordained 15 June 1969



Fr. Lyons Main Street Louisburgh  
Ordained 14 June 1970



Fr. Sylvester O'Donnell Main Street  
Louisburgh  
Ordained 8 June 1969



**Parish  
Weddings**

Photos by Liam Lyons, Westport.



Mr. Séamus O'Grady Tully and Miss  
Teresa McHale Snugboro Castlebar.



Mr. Jimmie Tiernan Doughmackone  
and Miss Marie O'Reilly Castlebar.



Mr. John Mac Nicholas B.A.,  
Kilmagh and Miss Mena Hannon  
B.A., H.Dip., Louisburgh.



Mr. Edward Allen Drumcorey Cavan and Miss Katherine Joyce Carrownisky.



Mr. Joe Donnelly Carrownisky and Miss Anne Mac Donnell.



Mr. P. J. Davitt Corradavitt and Miss Margaret Durkan Bohola.



Mr. Kurt Amrein France and Miss Mary O'Reilly Louisburgh.



Mr. Denis O'Connell Dublin and Miss Breda Joyce Carrownisky with Rev. Austin Fergus.



Mr. John Needham Old Head Louisburgh and Miss Breege Barret Belmullet.



Mr. Liam Grealis Falduff Louisburgh and Miss Joe Staunton Mill St. Westport.



Mr. James Gibbons Accony and Miss Nina Taylor Athenry.



Mr. Martin Jennings Main St. Ballinrobe and Miss Mercy Harney Lagan Louisburgh.



Mr. Paddy McDonagh Belcarra and Miss Mary O'Grady Tully.



Mr. Anthony McHale Pulgloss Louisburgh and Miss Bridie Kilroy Newport.



Mr. Michael Weir Roscommon and Miss Breege Grady Louisburgh.



Mr. Joseph Gibbons Carrownisky and Miss Helena McDonnell Cross.



Mr. Joe Cusack Ballinrobe and Miss Josephine Cannon Kilgeever



Mr. William Jcyce Headford and Miss Julia Navin Lecanvey.



Mr. Francis O'Malley Doughmakone Louisburgh and Miss Celia Huddy Ballinrobe.

## MARRIAGES IN THE PARISH CHURCH

|      |              |                                                                                        |
|------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1963 | 25 June      | William J. Donnelly (Carrowniskey) and Ann Isabella McDonnell (Cross)                  |
|      | 12 July      | Michael Joseph Cusack (Ballinrobe) and Brigid Josephine Cannon (Shraugh)               |
|      | 23 July      | James Stephen O'Malley (Corrigaun, Thalla bawn) and Mary O'Malley (Currdavitt)         |
|      | 11 August    | John Charles Hanley (Castlebar) and Mary Attracta O'Donnell (Louisburgh)               |
|      | 13 August    | Donald Patrick McCarron (Culduff, Co. Donegal) and Mary Brigid Needham (Louisburgh)    |
|      | 15 August    | James Joseph French (Robeen, Co. Mayo) and Mary Teresa Tiernan, (Dougmackeown)         |
|      | 23 August    | John Jarlath Horan (Portumna) and Anne Marie Cannon (Louisburgh)                       |
|      | 15 October   | Michael Weir (Dublin) and Brigid T. O'Grady (Kilgeever)                                |
|      | 1 November   | John Joseph McNicholas (Kiltimagh) and Philomena Hannon (Louisburgh)                   |
|      | 29 December  | John Anthony O'Malley (Kilmeena) and Mary Gabriel O'Malley (Louisburgh)                |
| 1970 | 22 January   | Thomas Joseph Coyne (Aillemore) and Brigid McNally (Feenone)                           |
|      | 7 February   | Kurt Richard Amreim (Westport) and Mary O' Reilly (Chapel Street)                      |
|      | 2 March      | Edward Francis Cullen (Dublin) and Kathleen Rita Joyce (Carrowniskey)                  |
|      | 18 April     | Patrick Gannon (Kilsallagh) and Margaret Hestor (Fallduff)                             |
|      | 27 June      | Cornelius Francis Kehily (Dublin) and Anne Patricia O'Malley (Louisburgh)              |
|      | 19 September | William David Cuddigan (Cloyne, Co. Cork) and Anne Josephine Prendergast (Louisburgh). |
|      | 31 October   | Denis Peter O'Connell (Raheny) and Brigid Joyce (Louisburgh)                           |
| 1971 | 8 January    | Arthur Christopher O'Malley (Aillemore) and Nora Catherine Keane (Feenone)             |
|      | 23 February  | Hubert Gerard Jennings, (Claremorris) Mary O'Malley (Aillemore)                        |
|      | 8 March      | Anthony Shiels (Dublin) and Ann Sweeney (Louisburgh)                                   |
|      | 12 April     | Kieran James Rossiter (Sligo) and Mary O' Toole (Dougmackeown)                         |
|      | 13 May       | Patrick Joseph Murphy (Devlin) and Mary T. O' Donnell, (Thallabawn)                    |
|      | 9 June       | Patrick McDonagh (Claremorris) and Mary O'Grady, (Tully)                               |
|      | 14 July      | Joseph Gibbons (Carrowniskey) and Helena Margaret McDonald, (Cross)                    |
|      | 4 August     | Michael M. McNally (Westport) and Mary B. Maxwell, (Kilgeever)                         |

## Remember O Lord . . . .

These parishioners died since our last publication :

|      |              |                                        |
|------|--------------|----------------------------------------|
| 1969 | 4 June       | James Harney                           |
|      | 26 June      | Mrs. Catherine Burke                   |
|      | 6 June       | Mrs. Nora Jennings, Thallabawn         |
|      | 4 June       | John O'Malley, Polglass                |
|      | 22 July      | Edward O'Dowd                          |
|      | 26 July      | Matthew McEvelly, Bunowen              |
|      | 27 July      | Thomas Jennings, Kilgeever             |
|      | 5 August     | Mrs. Margaret Gibbons, Carrowniskey    |
|      | 3 September  | John O'Dowd, Falduff                   |
|      | 8 September  | Mrs. Brigid Kelly, Feenone             |
|      | 14 September | Mrs. Kate Gallagher, Cahir             |
|      | 13 October   | Thady O'Malley                         |
|      | 26 October   | Patrick O'Malley                       |
|      | 12 November  | James O'Malley                         |
|      | 13 November  | Mrs. Catherine McHale                  |
|      | 23 November  | Thomas O'Grady                         |
|      | 29 November  | James Burns                            |
|      | 8 December   | Patrick J. Toner                       |
|      | 10 December  | Mary Ellen Corrigan                    |
|      | 16 December  | Margaret O'Grady                       |
|      | 30 December  | Mary Nicholson, Bridge Street          |
| 1970 | 2 January    | Mother Mary Dympna, Convent of Mercy   |
|      | 5 January    | Anne Mary Keane, Bunowen               |
|      | 5 January    | Mrs. Margaret O'Grady, Glenkeen        |
|      | 7 January    | John P. Sammon, Carramore              |
|      | 8 January    | Peter Armstrong, Altore                |
|      | 9 January    | Patrick Joseph Lyons, Accony           |
|      | 15 January   | Michael Ball, Ballyhip                 |
|      | 21 January   | Thomas Kilcoyne, Cregganbane           |
|      | 24 January   | John Gibbons, Aillemore                |
|      | 2 February   | Mrs. Winifred Sammon, Caher            |
|      | 19 February  | Mary Ellen Moran                       |
|      | 2 March      | Mrs. Brigid Ferrins, Brackowney        |
|      | 17 March     | Anthony Durkan                         |
|      | 21 March     | Mrs. Mary Anne McDonnell, Carrowniskey |
|      | 7 April      | William Hestor, Thallabawn             |
|      | 10 April     | Agnes Moran                            |
|      | 9 May        | Patrick O'Malley Aillemore             |
|      | 13 May       | Catherine Ruddy, Aillemore             |
|      | 5 June       | Ellen Hestor, Doughmackeown            |
|      | 1 July       | Bernard Gerard Duffy, (Infant)         |
|      | 5 July       | John Kitterick, Aillemore              |
|      | 7 August     | Walter McDonagh, Askelane              |
|      | 16 August    | Michael McConnell, Cloonty             |
|      | 25 August    | Anthony Kilcoyne, Cregganbane          |
|      | 9 November   | John Tiernan, Cregganbane              |
|      | 15 November  | Anne O'Reilly, Glenkeen                |

- 1971
- 12 December Margaret Durkan
  - 27 December Michael Tiernan, Crickeen
  - 11 January Michael Gibbons, Roonith
  - 19 February Patrick O'Toole
  - 5 February Michael Duffy
  - 17 March Patrick Hestor, Doughmackeown
  - 22 March Patrick William, Cross
  - 29 April Thomas Kilcoyne, Crickeen
  - 7 April William O'Toole, Doughmackeown
  - 24 April Michael O'Malley
  - 16 May John O'Toole, Inishturk
  - 3 June Mrs. Bridget O'Grady Kilgeever
  - 17 July Mrs. Mary Kelly
  - 26 July Mrs. Mary Heneghan (Bridge St.)
  - 2 August Mrs. Anne Corrigan (Shrawee)
  - 6 August John O'Malley (Mick) (Cahir)
  - 11 August Thomas P. O'Malley (Cahir)
  - 20 August Patrick O'Toole (Mooneen)
  - 1 September Mrs. Anne McDonagh (Polglass)
  - 2 September Patrick Morrison (The Square)
  - 14 September Sheila O'Reilly (Shraugh)
  - 20 September John Dunne (Bunowen)
  - 27 September Mrs. Hanna Staunton (Thallabawn)
  - 12 October Mrs. Catherine McNamara Barrabawn
  - 14 October William Gibbons (Roonith)
  - 29 October Mrs. Sarah Gibbons (Bridge St.)

**DEATHS (Outside Parish)**

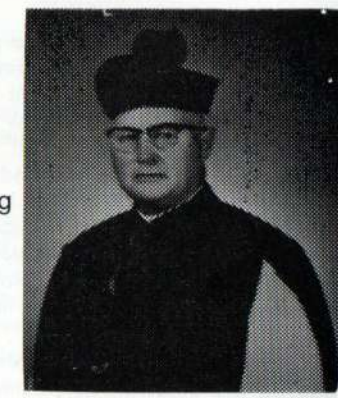
- 1969
- 4 May Fr. Richard Prendergast in Killbannon
  - 4 May Mrs. Catherine Duffy (nee O'Grady, Kilgeever) Massachusetts
  - 29 June Mrs. M. Hastings (nee Foye, Falduff,) Chicago
  - 6 July Mrs. Sarah McDonald (nee Joyce, Collacocon)
  - 6 July Mrs. Ann Ward (nee O'Grady, Kilgeever)
  - 7 September John McNamara (Carramore) Clinton, Mass.
  - 12 October Mrs. Margaret Doyle, Clogheen, Co. Tipperary
  - 2 November John Durkan (Askelane) in Worcester, Mass.
  - 7 December Paddy O'Donnell (Cahir) in England
- 1970
- 1 March Edward O'Malley, (Askelane) in Dublin
  - 8 March Michael Ryder (Gurteen) Worcester, Mass
  - Ann Mary O'Dowd, in London
  - 28 June Fr. Thomas O'Grady Littleton, Mass, U.S.A.
  - 5 July Anthony Wallace (Cregganbane) in U.S.A.
  - 26 July Sister Anthony O'Toole in Tuam
  - 23 August Stephen Wallace (Cregganbane) in U.S.A.
  - 30 August Patrick Kelly (Askelane) in Dublin
  - Mrs. Brigid Lyons (Devlin) in Oldtown Co. Meath
  - 20 September Michael McNamara (Collacocon) in Chicago
  - 27 September Mrs Mary Philbin (nee Gibbons) Bridge Street
  - Peter Prendergast (Emlagh) in U.S.A.

- 22 November John O'Toole (Roonah) in England
- 29 November Mrs. Nora Mortimer (nee McNamara Carramore) in Clinton, Mass, U.S.A.
- 20 December Mrs. Margaret Coyne (Cloonty) in Dublin
- 1971 3 January Mrs. Margaret Bradley (nee Joyce, Shraugh) in U.S.A.
- 10 January Sister Mary Michael Mitchell (Dereen) in Pittsburgh
- 27 January John Donnelly (Carrowniskey) in England
- 7 March Mrs. Lena O' Malley (nee Gibbons, Roonith) in Boston
- 2 May Mrs. Mary O'Grady, Carrabawn Westport, formerly of Ballyhip
- 16 May John Kitterick died in Coventry
- 2 June John Mitchell (Leachta) in America
- 15 August Thomas Kilcoyne (Falduff) in England
- 24 July Dr. Paddy Keane (Bridge St.) in Doncaster

*In Memoriam*

*Monsignor Thomas F. Scott*

A stillness fell on the land  
 And snowflakes swung  
 Silently down on  
 The bowed and weeping heads,  
 Like a benediction.  
 Then, pure and clear,  
 Came the Christmas Angels' song  
 "Alleluia, Alleluia.  
 From among you,  
 A man of God  
 Has come to God.  
 Rejoice, rejoice.  
 "Alleluia"



Eileen M. Kinney

## PARISH COMMITTEES:

### G.A.A. Club

Chairman : Geoffrey Gibbons.

Secretary : William McNamara.

Treasurer : Geoffrey Gibbons

We had a somewhat mixed season this year and our success is, as usual, measured by our performance in the Junior Championship. To qualify for the knock-out stages of the championship in West Mayo we had to arrive in the top four teams. Despite the difficulty of having many of our players away from home we did reach the top four. In the semi-final we were drawn against Parke and beat them.

So we qualified for the West Mayo final against Breaffy — an experienced team compared to ours, for Louisburgh haven't won the West Mayo championship for fifteen years! The final was played on a glorious Sunday in Westport in September. We were leading by three points at half-time. We lost — but by the barest possible margin — a point scored by Breaffy with the last kick (which had to be a "score direct"). We were disappointed.

Now however, perhaps it is best in the long run that we did not win. A victory this year in the West would mean that our team would hardly win out the County honours; but would have to go into a higher grade (Intermediate) next year. It is better to have gained this experience now and to build on it with hope of a county victory next year.

Besides the officers whose names appear in this report there were many workers — even excluding the players — whose efforts collectively brought us a measure of success; but two people — both non-natives — deserve our special thanks.

John Kenny was a live and energetic chairman until he was transferred to Ballina, and the life he brought to the club is now beginning to appear and bear fruit. We appreciate especially his organizing talent and energy in bringing a busload of our younger boys to Croke Park for each of the last two football National League finals. We wish John success and happiness in the future.

A Kerryman among us, Maurice Lynch, has taken on the task of training the present team. When a man gives up his free time to do such a task we can best express our appreciation by giving our time and our effort in co-operation. And co-operation in this will eventually bring the reward of success.

## Louisburgh Tourist Association

Chairman — Mr. Séamus Durkan

Vice-Chairman — Mr. Seán Heneghan

Secretary — Mrs. Clementine Lyons

Assistant Secretary — Miss Annie B. Casey

Treasurer — Mr. Paddy Duffy

Extract from Secretary's report read at A.G.M. on Nov. 8th 1971.

During the year there were thirty-five meetings and eleven special meetings held. Here-under is a synopsis of projects undertaken and a general outline of the work in which we attempted to make our interest felt.

i **Accommodation** : We compiled a new accommodation leaflet carrying a list of the names of those who had houses and caravans to let, also the names of those who had other accommodation, caravan sites to offer and ponies for hire. We procured large numbers of leaflets produced by Bord Fáilte, and we also compiled a list of the old ruins of interest in our area. Father Kieran Waldron edited this information in a compact pamphlet of which we had a hundred copies printed and then distributed with the fore-mentioned leaflets to all business people in the area.

ii **Finance** : we started off this year with £40 on hands, during the year we ran two dances, one social and we ran Bingo sessions weekly throughout the winter months. As treasurers report shows we now have £211 in bank, we have £20 invested in prize bonds, we also paid a deposit on a plot of land, and purchased our Bingo machine for £92

iii **Advertising** : By way of helping to advertise this area, we co-operated with English Unit of the B.B.C. in their filming of a scene from "The Playboy of the Western World" in Tallabawn during Easter week. We also co-operated with Irish American Cultural Institute and Aquinas College who jointly sponsored a summer school in Louisburgh for twenty-three American Students.

iv We held a Special Meeting on Jan. 15th 1971 which was attended by elected representatives of West Mayo, officials of Mayo County Council, representatives of Bord Fáilte and the Press. For this meeting we compiled a very lengthy agenda copies of which were distributed to those present. We are very grateful to those, who as a result of this meeting, got to work on our behalf and succeeded in obtaining following results.

1. All-night Street-lighting in the town;
2. Extension and repair of town footpaths;



3. Erection of litter bins and public toilets at Carramore;
4. The County Engineer has promised to obtain planning permission for erection of our sign at Aasleagh;
5. Measurements have been taken in preparation for the fixing and erection of speed limit signs;
6. A visit from Mr. Pat Ryan — assistant County Development officer — to us initiated the formation of a Tidy Towns Committee.

v We have procured a plot of ground adjacent to the town — this we hope to develop as a Community Centre when funds permit.

vi This year we have compiled and distributed over a hundred questionnaires to people who have accommodation, houses or caravans to offer — with a view to having a much bigger number of houses included in our 1972 Accommodation List, which we hope to print early in January;

vii We have succeeded after lengthy negotiations in having sign posts to local beaches, and sign posts indicating Louisburgh at key points in Westport, erected by Bord Fáilte;

viii We compiled a six-point Specification, at a special public meeting, on what we would need a harbour to do for us. We sent copies of this specification to Mayo County Council, Bórd Fáilte, Minister for Local Government, Bord Iascaigh Mhara, and Department of Lands and Fisheries exhorting them to develop a harbour on those lines adjacent to Louisburgh town.

ix On our invitation a lecturer from Decimal Currency Board visited Louisburgh in early Feb. 1971 and lectured on the new decimal currency.

**Work on hands at present but not completed :**

1. Preservation of Kilgeever Abbey;
2. Construction of harbour adjacent to the town;
3. Pressurising appropriate authorities to improve the roads in the area
4. Sub-committee planning major improvements in Tidy Towns Project;
5. Studying details of company formation.
6. Running a raffle to raise funds for local development;
7. Completion of land purchase and development of same;
8. Development of sea and shore-angling to full potential;
9. Negotiating with An Óige to open a Youth Hostel in Louisburgh area;

To **Sum up**. We attempted much and achieved some creditable success, but there still remain mountains of work to be done. New ideas and new members are welcomed and needed so as to inject new thinking into our schemes.

Our gratitude to Vice-Chairman, Mr. Seán Heneghan also to Mr. O' Regan C.E.O. Vocational Educational Committee for providing us with Vocational School in which to meet, also to Mrs. Ursula Mac Dermott who placed her premises at our disposal on several occasions.

I wish to pay special tribute to those members who attended all our meetings. I thank them for their co-operation with and courtesy to me at all times, I sincerely hope that this community spirit grows and develops to the ultimate.

Fr. Kieran Waldron became one of us, shortly after his advent to the parish, we are very grateful to him for the energy he injected into our Association. I wish to record here my personal appreciation of the assistance he gave to me in my Secretarial Work.

Our sincere thanks to, Mr. Paddy Duffy Treasurer, he looked after our money, and dealt with all bills in a prompt and efficient manner.

I wish to express gratitude to the elected representatives of the area, to Mayo County Council, officials of Ireland-West and to the local pressmen, and to Mr. Liam Lyons of Westport for their co-operation.

Last, but by no means least, I wish to pay a special tribute to our Chairman — Mr. Séamus Durkan. The hardest tasks are easy when working with Séamus he always kept a vein of good humour, diplomacy and earnestness running through our meetings, and he continually met disappointment with stronger determination. On my own behalf I wish to congratulate him on the splendid job he has done as Chairman of the Association, I always felt proud of him as he represented us at any level — and did so in a graceful, diplomatic, dignified and gentlemanly manner. This Association owes a lot to him, and for his whole hearted co-operation, and guidance readily given at all times — I say a very sincere 'thank you' to Séamus.

Our aim is to make Louisburgh a better place in which to live, and also more attractive to the desirable tourist. In achieving our aim we must strive to preserve our own individual image as a parish and ensure that noble ideals motivate all our endeavours as a community.

We expect, and look forward to, the full co-operation of all Louisburgh people; we must all become involved. This takes courage as well as sacrifice and hard work — but involved we must surely become if we are to surmount difficulties, and work together harmoniously as a community — thus making continued protests against indifference and laziness.

Clementine Lyons

## Committee For The Blind

Chairman — OLIVER P. MORAHAN  
Vice-Chairman — SÉAMUS DURKAN  
Secretary — MRS. URSULA McDERMOTT  
Assistant Secretary — MISS BRIDIE O'MALLEY  
Treasurer — MISS ANNIE B. CASEY

The branch held its annual fund-raising function in December 1970. Although this was not as well attended as in former years the committee raised sufficient funds to give Christmas presents to fifteen blind people and to contribute fifty pounds to the County Mayo fund (which pays the Home Teacher for the county). We take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to all who give such wonderful help in running the annual function, and to all who attend.

Additional committee members are : Mrs. Clem Lyons, Miss Nora Lyons, Mrs. Beth Prendergast, Messrs. Paddy Duffy, Michael O'Brien, John Joe Philbin, Jim Bradley and Richard O'Toole.

## Killeen I.C.A.

President — MRS. MARY MANNION  
Vice-President — MRS. NORA O'MALLEY  
Secretary — MRS. KATHLEEN DUFFY  
Treasurer — MRS. ELIZABETH SAMMIN

During the year six members of the guild attended a one-day course in handcrafts which was sponsored by Country Markets. In December the guild held its annual dinner in Murrisk Abbey Hotel. Over the winter months members made various articles in crochet; others made fireside rugs. As part of the programme for the coming year two members have booked week-long courses at the I.C.A. College in County Louth. Lectures will include a series from the Farm Home Adviser, Castlebar.

## Pioneer Total Abstinence Association

President : MICHAEL GALLAGHER  
Secretary : PADDY MORAN  
Treasurer : M. J. O'GRADY  
Spiritual Director : FATHER MICHAEL SAMMIN

Monthly meetings are held, in Killeen and Louisburgh.

## Legion of Mary

President : M. J. O'GRADY  
Vice-President : PADDY MORAN  
Secretary : PETER MORAN  
Treasurer : ITA PRENDERGAST  
Spiritual Director : FATHER MICHAEL SAMMIN

## Muintir na Tíre

Although Louisburgh Guild of Muintir na Tíre is at the moment inactive, it is affiliated still as usual to the national body and will be revived in late November when the national organiser visits Mayo. The popular drama group of this guild does, however, retain its high standard and has a production every year.

## Order of Malta

Secretary : MICHAEL GALLAGHER  
Treasurer : P. MORAN  
Spiritual Director : FATHER MICHAEL SAMMIN

This branch is a sub-unit of Westport and has fourteen ordinary members, seven girls and seven boys. This is entirely a voluntary service and Louisburgh — Westport have now their own ambulance. The ambulance services the whole of the Westport and Louisburgh areas, with a twenty-four-hour-a-day service, free of charge. Each winter the senior officers give a series of twelve lectures in first aid.

## Louisburgh I.C.A.

President : MRS. KAY O'MALLEY  
Secretary : MISS BRIDIE O'MALLEY  
Treasurer : MRS. BRID LOVE  
Members : Mrs. M. McConville, Mrs. Evelyn Durkan, Mrs. Ita Durkan, Mrs. E. F. Gaffney, Mrs. Eileen Gaffney, Mrs. Josie Scanlon, Mrs. Nora Dunne, Mrs. Anne Gannon, Mrs. Sally O'Toole, Mrs. N. Prendergast, Miss E. O'Malley, Mrs. Eddie O'Malley, Mrs. E. McNamara, Mrs. A. McNamara, Mrs. M. Duffy.

## Deep-Sea Angling

Chairman : SÉAMUS DURKAN  
Vice-Chairman : RICHARD O'TOOLE  
Secretary : JOHN J. PHILBIN  
Assistant Secretary : TOM McHALE  
Treasurer : TOM DUFFY  
Competition Secretary : JACK PATTERSON

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horn" we must shed this veil of false humility, put our shoulders to the wheel and work untiringly to make the real Louisburgh known and appreciated. We are fully aware that Louisburgh has all the natural assets which attract the discerning tourist, and we feel indignant that despite our numerous appeals to Boad Fáilte, they have not yet recognised that we deserve (repeat, **deserve**) to have this area declared a major tourist area.

We ourselves must keep plodding onwards and upwards along the steep climb; once we reach the summit, we will have difficulty in enthusing the spectators to pedal down hill with us; but it seems have got to face the ascent alone.

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### Angling Club

Chairman : SEAMUS DURKAN

Secretary : J. J. PHILBIN

Treasurer : AUSTIN LYONS

The Secretary sums up the attitude of the Angling Club.

Fishing is a hobby, a captivating sport, a wonderful breakaway from the daily strain of living. Fishing, too, is largely a continuous dream of "the one that got away". To catch a clean-run salmon, fresh in from the sea, is any fisherman's hope. He watches the sky for that rain-cloud and has his tackle at the ready. His chosen fly, his rod and reel, landing net and the wind as God made it. But that elusive salmon flips his tail and another disappointed angler tells the tale of "the rise" and "another one that got away".

Our sea angling in Clew Bay is a gold mine of sport and wealth. In surveys over the years, and in the recent Deep Sea-Angling Festivals, many varieties of fish of record-breaking weight were landed. This Spring—April '69 (at Old Head), an English angler landed many fish one weighing 167 lbs. The fish are there, the potential for anglers is great—now, all we want in our own area of Louisburgh is a safe harbour to facilitate the hundreds of fishing folk to avail themselves of this mighty sport.

Asked to comment on the verdict and the marks awarded, Mr. Leamy said :

Since this article was begun, the results of the 1971 Tidy Towns have been published. The marks received by Louisburgh were 82. At first glance this was a disappointing mark for the efforts made by the local committee this year vis-a-vis previous years. On closer examination however, it appears that valuable marks were lost through a sunfeit of litter and absence of shrubs, colour and colour harmony. In addition, there was an increase of 630 against 554 last year in the number of entries for the competition and marking was, consequently, stiffer. All of which goes to show that our target set will be harder to attain and, therefore will call for greater effort.

## Macra Na Tuaithe

Chairman : Padraic Scott  
Treasurer : John O'Dowd  
P.R.O. and Assistant Secretary : Marion Prendergast.

Secretary : Michael Kilcoyne  
Vice-Chairman : Anne Heneghan

The Sancta Maria Macra na Tuaithe Club, Louisburgh held its annual general meeting on September 15, 1970 at which the above officers were elected. Fr. K. Waldron was elected new Club Leader and Sisters M. Gregory and Assumpta were elected Advisory Leaders.. The club had just been declared National Winners in the 1970 competition of "The Best Club of the Year Award". The special trophy for this competition — the Ovelle Cup — was presented to the outgoing Chairman, John O'Brien, at a gathering in Knock on October 8th by Most Rev. Dr. Cunnane, Archbishop of Tuam. This gathering was attended by all of Headquarters Staff, public representatives and representatives of practically all the Macra na Tuaithe clubs in Mayo and Galway. This was our club's third win in this competition since 1965. The club also got a special award for its project on Conservation.

During the year as part of the usual fortnightly meetings, the club held debates, question times, film shows, displays of members' projects and inter-club meetings. Twice we visited Knock Club and were visited once in return. Members took part in the walk over Mweelrea on 7th March and helped in the effort to clean the old mill-race. The club was visited by our past leader, Fr. J. Moran and by the Regional Youth Officer of Macra, Mr. John McDermott. Our Chairman, Padraic Scott, was chosen to give a talk to the visiting American students on the aims and methods of Macra.

This year we did a group project on "Tourism as a Growth Industry in Louisburgh" for the Citizenship Award. The project is composed of ten pictorial and statistical charts with an explanatory report. We are happy to report that our club has reached the National Final of this competition and the final adjudication will take place at Gormanston on Wednesday 14th July. Our club will be represented at the Annual Gathering in Gormanstown by John O'Brien, John O'Dowd, Marion Prendergast and Maureen O'Toole.

Michael Kilcoyne, Secretary

## Angling Club

Chairman : SÉAMUS DURKAN  
Secretary : JOHN J. PHILBIN  
Treasurer : AUSTIN LYONS

The smell of a trout can make one's mouth water, but to catch the trout is another matter. When a fisherman casts his fly lightly over a rising trout, everything has to be right — the river in spate, a good breeze, from the south-west, sunshine, and shadow. The trout is a wily adversary, one moment you have him and then — no! he's off again! Another try : another fish, this time perhaps a less wary one. I drop the fly the crucial inches so that I see the trout in his actual rise, see the opening of the mouth, and then snap —! The pleasures of fresh-water fishing — fresh air, physical exercise, and of course heavy bag — are pleasures sublime.

Salt-water fishing has complementary pleasure — the preparations with heavier rod and tackle, bait, oilskins, knitted cap (Gráinneuaile, of course!), boarding the boat, the high expectations, the salty tang of the sea, and the rise and fall of the boat clinging along to the fishing ground — all these build up the tension for the moment of the first cast. Sea-fish are both bigger and in greater variety than their river counterparts. Even now I can feel the thrill of the first strong pluck of a big pollock as he bounds away to bury himself in a bed of sea-weed fifteen fathoms below. All eyes aboard are riveted on my straining line and, after a momentous struggle, up comes a famous fish. Clew Bay abounds in tope, shark, cod, pollock, and many other kinds of fish. Recent sea-angling competitions have proved that it is the coming pastime in our parish for town and rural residents as well as tourists; and heavy bags are always proudly displayed by beginners or amateur anglers. But to facilitate sea-anglers, a safe and convenient harbour is a first essential; for until we can hold our own boats safely, valuable time (and tide!) will be lost in getting to the fishing grounds.

This year, four deep-sea angling competitions were held by our Sea-Angling Association, which is a member of the Federation of Sea-Anglers. This would have been impossible without the courtesy and co-operation of the Westport Boat Club. After years of agitation for a local harbour, we are optimistic now that a location has been inspected.

Shore-angling has also become a major attraction recently. From our several strands young or old can engage in the fishing of bass, sole, flounder, skate, etc. Four competitions were held for adults this year and in these more than one hundred and twenty anglers from all over Ireland were introduced to the beauty of Clew Bay for the first time. Our juniors were particularly active — so much so that, having organised three competitions they are now the first junior club in Ireland to be affiliated with the Irish Federation of Sea-Anglers. A direct result is that a special Connacht Gold Medal will be struck for Louisburgh Junior Shore Competition to be held in August 1972.

All of these competitions are locally organised and locally promoted without any help from Bord Fáilte or other bodies; and they add greatly to the interest in, and economy of, the area.

John J. Philbin, Secretary

## Horse Show Society

Louisburgh Horse Show Society (Affiliated to S.J.A.I.) held their third and fourth Annual Show on the last Sunday of June 1970 and 1971.

Both shows were a tremendous success. There were sixteen show classes for horses and ponies, and seven jumping events, with higher entries each year from all over Ireland, and horses of International fame competing.

The hard-working society plan to hold an even bigger and better show again in 1972 on the last Sunday of June.

The organising society members are as follows : President : Rev. Fr. Fitzgerald, Vice-Presidents : Lady H. S. Harman and Rev. Fr. Sammin, Chairman : M. J. O'Toole, Vice-Chairman : John Scanlon, Secretary : Anthony McHale, Treasurers : Patrick O'Reilly and Seamus Durkan.

Members : Michael Sweeney, Richard O'Toole, John Moran, John McIlhoney, Joe Broderick, Bill McNamara, Pat Cox, Tom Duffy; Tommy Grady, John McLoughlin, Louis Heneghan, Michael Joe Grady, Paddy McLoughlin, Eamonn O'Donnell.

## Mid-Summer Festival Committee

In 1968 when the idea of a festival fortnight for Louisburgh was first talked of it was felt that it would be too big an undertaking to put across.

However, it was decided to give it a try and due to the determination of the newly-formed festival committee, and the financial support which so willingly came from the people of Louisburgh both at home and abroad, it proved to be the most successful programme of events ever held in the town. The festival concluded as it still does with the Louisburgh Horse Show, which is to-day termed the Biggest Little Show in Ireland.

That was four years ago and now in 1971 as we are drawing to the close of another successful two weeks in the town it is fitting that we should say a word of thanks to all those people who contributed in every way both financially and by untiring effort to ensure the future success of the mid-summer festival.

The purpose in staging the festival is two-fold : to improve the economy of the area and to make Louisburgh better known as a tourist resort.

With four festivals now gone by, we feel we are achieving this purpose, but there must be no let-up in our endeavours.

Our festival has been made possible by the co-operation of the many organisations in the area and the full support of the people of the town. Let us hope that the good work will continue in the future.

Joe Broderick, Secretary

## Local Customs

Talk to American Summer School Students in Louisburgh 22nd June 1971

As to-morrow is St. John's Eve this provides me with a convenient starting point for this talk. The Eve of St. John the Baptist is the occasion of the traditional annual bonfire in honour of the Saint here. In recent years the aspect of the event is almost altogether that of a light-hearted youth festival but in the early years of the present century it had a more sober religious character. Doubtless where there was a communal fire — as there frequently was when the village houses were close together — the presence of youngsters in large numbers was a guarantee that cheerfulness was not forgotten and that the traditional rites were pushed into second place. But when dwellings were a couple of hundred yards apart each had its own family fire built in the open.

An animal bone had been carefully laid aside by the children in advance and the fire was lighted about sundown. From then until bed-time every one who could walk, came out and said his prayers on bended knees by the fire. A glowing coal of turf from the fire was thrown into the growing crops of potatoes and corn, and a coal was brought into the kitchen fire.

No one thought of its origin as the Mid-Summer Sun-festival. They simply sought God's blessing and protection on themselves and their crops through the intercession of Saint John the Baptist.

Now a few words about some other local feasts — St. Brigid (or Bhríd) is the second great patron saint of Ireland and her Feast Day, 1st February. On St. Brigid's Eve we made St. Brigid's Cross. Two light sticks of wood each a few inches long were tied or rivetted in the form of a cross and on them was woven with straw or rushes a diamond-shaped pattern. The cross was stuck behind the exposed rafters in the kitchen — there was no ceiling there then. Some times you could see rows of them from year to year. This custom has waned very much here for the past half century — Hardly any one does it now.

February 1st was the pagan feast of Imbolc — the first day of Spring. About two miles west of Louisburgh is Cill Bhríd — the church (or Cemetery) of St. Brigid. And there was once a Holy Well (or Blessed Well) there also.

Saint Martin's Day, 11th November, was observed and is still honoured here. A sheep or pig or fowl was slaughtered in his honour on the evening before, or if it suited family

circumstances a few days before — but not after. The folk rubric — in Irish stated : "Martin accepts before but not after". Fowl for St. Martin's had to be killed by drawing their blood, not by wringing the neck. The animals and birds were used in the normal way as food. Neighbours were most generous to those who had not the means of celebrating the feast, giving them gifts of fowl.

It was said here that St. Martin was a tall dark man and that on his Eve a 'beef' i.e., a fat ox, was slaughtered in Heaven. The first four letters of Martin's name spell the Irish word for beef but this may be only a coincidence and Martin's fame for generosity and charity may be sufficient explanation.

November Night i.e., November Eve, 31st October, was, and is, loved by children for Barn Brack (with ring) and for Snap-Apple. I don't know whether you have this name for a fruit cake but Barn-Brack is made up of two Irish words — Bairín, a cake; and breac, meaning speckled, that is a cake speckled with fruit. A ring was put into the cake before baking and whoever found the ring when the cake was divided was sure to be married before the next year had passed.

It was known here as Púca Night: but there was no clear idea of who or what the Púca was except that he was to be feared especially on that night: and that he was very black indeed. 'As black as the Púca' was a common phrase. However he was really very little feared or believed in except by children. They were told that the Púca soiled on the blackberries on November Eve. This was to prevent them eating the berries which by that time are unfit for use.

Children and teenagers threw cabbage heads as missiles at their neighbour's doors on November night as if to show, perhaps, that the Púca was abroad and up to his pranks. A cabbage was about the least damaging missile available for formerly doors were slight and rickety.

If you wished to discover your future spouse you should on that night go alone and without a light to a cabbage garden at midnight and there pull up one whole cabbage. This was hung over the door of the dwelling and the first unmarried man (or woman) who entered on November Day was your spouse, be he — or she — ever so old or so ugly. This was just teenagers' fun and not taken seriously.

November Night was the great pagan feast of Samhain celebrating the end of Harvest.

The last Sunday of July was known as Crom Dubh's Sunday. Crom Dubh is variously described as Chieftain,

Druid or God in the old legends. It is the day of the great national pilgrimage in honour of St. Patrick on Croagh Patrick a few miles east of Louisburgh. There is however reason to believe that originally it was the opening Harvest festival in honour of the great God of the Celts, Lugh, from whom is named the month of Lúnasa, in English August. 'Rounds' in sunrise direction are still part of the traditional rites of the Pilgrimage.

**Holy Wells** — There were at least five of these in our district. Only one is still used viz. Kilgeever. But few do the 'Stations' or 'Rounds' there now and year by year the numbers decrease. You walked round the well in clockwise direction seven times saying a Pater, Ave and Gloria each time. Then you visited certain stones nearby, one said to hold the print of St. Patrick's knee, a depression in the face of the stone, and you said some further prayers. The ritual was always much the same at the different wells.

- 1 Kilgeever was associated with the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Patrick and the traditional 'station' was between 15th August and 8th September, Great Lady Day and Small Lady Day. But a few generations earlier its name according to Ordnance Survey of 1838 was Tobar Rí an Domhnaigh — a Dedication to Christ, Our Lord.
- 2 The Holy well in Thallabawn district — now forgotten though frequented up to 60 years ago — was named after a Saint Gortnán but nothing but the name is known of him locally.
- 3 The Althore well, now closed up, was at the dolmen in Althore village a few miles South. The great flagstone on top suggested an altar and this is the village name.
- 4 Askelawn well as already said was associated with St. Brigid.
- 5 Forgaill well, was linked perhaps, with St. Patrick as Ordnance Survey shows St. Patrick's Church there.

'Stations' were done to implore any special favour, for the suppliant himself or for friends. A proxy could do the station for one sick or overseas if he had vowed one but found it impossible or inconvenient to perform. Many did the stations annually for their spiritual and temporal welfare. The wells had no pagan associations for the votaries, but Christian only, as in case of the St. Patrick on Croagh Patrick.

Holy wells were, of course, originally pagan shrines connected with animism and sun-worship but later Christianized and reoriented towards Christ, His Virgin Mother or some local Saint.

May Day, first of Summer, was another old pagan festival

but little of its lore came down to this century here. It was said that to wash your hands in the May morning dew would make you dexterous and to wash your face in it would make you beautiful. But no one tried either as far as I observed.

It was also said to be the most favourable morning for those who practised dairy charms i.e., magic rites to increase their milk and butter yield. This they could only do at the expense of their neighbours. A story is told of a man from this district on his journey to Westport by foot very early on a May Morning. Somewhere along the road he saw, in the hazy light of dawn, a man in a field by a disused lime-kiln with a ball of yarn in his hand. He dropped the ball into the kiln and pulled it up again by the strand of yarn saying in Irish: "All the butter of these villages on my own milk! Come, butter, Come!"

Our neighbour must have considered this too grasping for he called out "Come half to me!" but saw no result of his interjection. On reaching Westport he called to a friend's house. His friend said: "What's that on your boots?" Look-down our neighbour was amazed to find his boots all smeared with ungathered butter i.e., the little globules of butter-fat as in the final stage of churning before the butter falls and solidifies. He could only conclude that somewhere along the way he had waded through a flood of butter-fat.

There still remained down to this century a fear or quasi-belief that milk and butter could be charmed away by those who had the appropriate spells. And not on May day only but throughout the year

If you entered a neighbour's house on any day and found the housewife churning you were careful to take a hand. This was purely token — you need only take the churn-dash in your hand or touch it. This was a guarantee of your goodwill towards their dairy. And though it was joked about and laughed at it was still observed. It was easier for the visitor to observe it rather than perhaps run the risk of arousing the suspicion that he had arrived deliberately at the critical time of butter-making in order to work some secret trick.

Fire was another sensitive subject on May day. Some were unwilling to allow any live coals out of the dwelling-house on that day for any purpose. It would be bad form to ask for such from any neighbour.

I heard of a household who made a point of delaying to light their own hearth fire on May morning till the smokes from all the village chimneys assured them that their neighbours had already lighted theirs. But if it was so I can't say what the meaning of that might be.

**Fairies** — I hope you will not be disappointed to hear that the character of our fairies was generally speaking sinister and malignant. They were much feared and we tried to avoid incurring their enmity and to placate them as best we could. They were invisible but could at will assume human or other shape.

In the last century it was still believed that they occasionally kidnapped babies, children and young women whom they kept as servants in their dwellings underground. This suspicion could be especially strong in case of sudden wasting illness in children or mental disturbance in young women. The poor patient was looked upon as a fairy changeling and sometimes advice was sought from "Wise Women" — women alleged to be skilled in fairy lore. They recommended procedures to dislodge the changeling and recover the real human. If and when the patient recovered normal health this was taken as proof of their powerful intervention.

Fairies were often represented as riding on fairy horses when they moved about the countryside. A sudden powerful gust of wind in fine weather was believed to indicate their presence. Lights floating about at night especially in the vicinity of forts were a sign, too. If the farmer's horse whinnied in his stable at night or showed restive and uneasy, this was because the fairy host was passing by outside or, worse still, they might be trying to attract the animal away from his lawful owner. If the horse later became sick or died this was pretty strong proof that the real horse had been stolen and a poor changeling substitute left in his place.

Blacksmiths were often none-too-happy about being out alone after dark lest the fairies abduct them to shoe their horses and to tend them also, for in those days the blacksmith was a horse vet, as well as farrier.

Not that their activities were restricted to night-time — they often operated in daylight. As they lived mainly in the old ring forts — of which we have very many — one had to be careful about interfering with fences, stones or bushes there especially with a lone whitethorn bush or with a prominent standing stone. No one would think of tearing down these or of rooting up the boundary ring or cutting a passage through it or tilling the enclosed space. Once a poor farmer thought it could hardly matter if he cut grass within the fort for his animals. But he soon learned otherwise: a surly 'man' of huge stature brandishing a reaping-hook confronted him and addressing him by his Christian name said: "Get out of this fort and don't presume to interfere with it or if you don't leave, I'll cut off your head like this", gesticulating with the reaping-hook. Of course, our fairies spoke Irish only.

This salutary fear long preserved the forts but in this century it has worn too thin to protect them, and some of the forts have suffered grievous violence. And the fairies don't even protest.

Perhaps they have withdrawn in high disdain to the hills and hollows to which, from the names, they appear to have proprietary rights. We have several Fairy Hills and Hollows in the district. The names are in Irish of course as are all the place-names here except a very few.

The fairies had several different appellations — The Fairies or The Fairy Host, The Good People, The Gentry, The Bright Folk. (The Irish word 'Shee' could mean either Fairies or Fairy Dwelling).

You will notice that three of the names pay them compliments: this was to conciliate them. But usually it was wiser not to refer to them by name as one could never be sure they weren't listening and might take offence at something said. Better refer to them as 'they' or 'them'. Your (human) listeners would know very well from context who was meant.

You might also try to secure privacy or secrecy when about to discuss 'them' or something which might arouse their covetousness, by saying: "This is Tuesday (or whatever). Their face eastwards and their back towards us!" If you did happen to mention them by name you said: "May they thrive". Although "God Bless —" was constantly on our people's lips for people and animals, no one ever said "God bless the fairies!"

When travelling at night you might carry as insurance against fairy molestation a hazel rod, a quenched coal, anything made of iron, salt as well as a couple of other powerful prophylactics more odorous than sanitary.

An infant or child who had a heavy fall was given a grain of salt on his tongue or three grains in the name of the Trinity. This was in case "they" had been attempting to carry him off. A person sneezing gave rise to uneasiness. It isn't clear whether the sneeze indicates that "they" are at work on him or that at the moment of sneezing he is in a vulnerable position but the practical counter is to say: "God bless us!" If the sneeze repeats: "God and Mary bless us!" If it persists to three: "God and Mary and Patrick bless us!" And for four we muster: "God and Mary and Patrick and John the Baptist .....". This is calculated to repel anything the fairies can throw against us.

Spilt milk or spoilt food was often attributed to fairy action or intervention. You shouldn't complain too much.

You said: "Maybe 'twas more needed where it went" i.e. perhaps the fairies had need of it.

You should give due warning before throwing out dirty water after dark lest you soil or insult "them" as they pass your door perhaps. The form was: "Beware! Beware! Dirty water! Again beware and leave its path!" (We had no kitchen sinks or wastepipes then and dirty water had to be carried outside in vessels and dumped).

I have heard only one story of lighter calibre regarding "them" in this area. An old couple who lived alone were one night sitting by their fire. The poor old lady was quite exhausted because she had been on foot since early morning. Worse than all she had just remembered that there was no bread for the morning meal and the thought of turning to bake at this late hour was almost unbearable. At that very moment a strange little man strode up to the hearth and seated himself between the old couple. "You are worthy people", he said, "and you work hard. So I have come to reward you. I will grant you three wishes — two to the good lady and one to the man". Turning to the housewife he asked: "What would you like?" "I only wish I had a couple of cakes for to-morrow's breakfast" she answered. She had hardly uttered the last word when several cakes appeared on the kitchen table. But her good husband was furious at her thoughtlessness in using one of the valuable wishes on such a trivial matter. He snarled across the hearth: "I only wish they were pasted on the tip of your nose!" Whereon they immediately rested. And now she had to use the last wish to remove them. So the wee man went off laughing leaving the poor old couple no better off.

As well as the lone whitethorn bush the Ragwort weed seemed to belong to "them" specially. You should not even in play strike a person or animal with it.

The 'Banshee' — accent on the second syllable — or Fairy Woman, was heard crying in the night when a death was imminent in certain 'old' families. She was very selective and so was heard only occasionally. But she was once firmly believed in though nowadays no one hears her.

Now something about a few other personages — not fairies but otherworld beings — who deserve a mention.

There was 'the Hill man' who skimmed along the foothills at nightfall — and later — as if he had wings, uttering great yells. Any strange cry heard on the hills after dark could be ascribed to him.

And the mermaid, who of course belongs to the sea. One day a local fisherman found her sleeping on a rock by the sea with her cap lying beside her. He snapped up the



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cap and she was compelled to follow him. When he got home he hid the cap in the thatch and she had to remain with him. They were married and they had children and were very happy. But one day there was a fire which extended to the thatch. As soon as the fire touched the cap she smelt it and rushed to recover it. Then she remembered the sea and could not resist its call. An so she left her earthly husband and children never to return. The story in one form or another is told all around the Irish and Scottish coasts.

We believed that a water-horse dwelt in some of our lakes. In time of heavy frost he might be heard groaning as if he took a poor view of such conditions.

About ten miles away, in Thallabawn district, there is a small mountain lake a few hundred feet up but invisible till you are almost on its brink. It is named Lough Cunnel, that is Lake Dog-fight. Go there alone at the midnight hour with your brave tigning dog and call out in Irish "Troid gadhar ar ioch!" that is "Dog-fight on lake!" Soon a champion will emerge from the water to tackle your dog and we trust that at least you, yourself, will return — to give us the story.

A word about some of our real animals. The stoat is common here but never known by that name. We wrongly call it a weasel. It is of course feared and disliked because of its destructiveness among fowl but it seems to inspire also a fear that it is something more than natural and tales are told of its extraordinary vindictiveness and sagacity. There was a 'rhyme' to be said when you saw one. Translated it runs : "Little lowly woman, little noble woman! Little lowly noble dainty woman! And I could make a pair of stockings for my little lowly noble woman! Lowly-noble, lowly-noble, lowly-noble-dainty woman!" But, alas it was all flattery and blarney and conciliatory deception for no attempt was made to fulfil the 'promise'.

Similarly, it was sought to buy off the fox in springtime for then he is most destructive among the newly-born lambs in order to provide for his own cubs. He, too, was promised gloves or socks but without any intention of performing. There was said to be a conventional rhyme for his case but I haven't heard it.

There was a suspicion of something preternatural about hares and seals, too. In the case of the hare it may have arisen from belief in tales of witches changing themselves into hares in order to milk the farmer's cow by stealth.

Immediately across the Killary Bay south in Connemara, there was a belief that seals were enchanted men and related to a certain family there. But I have heard nothing of this here.



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victorious. But with his dying breath the cat implored him to tell when he went home that he had killed the King of the Cats.

Naturally it was the very first thing he told on arrival. When he announced the death of the Cat King the domestic cat which had been lying on the hearth, evidently listening, suddenly jumped up and rushed out madly, never to return.

There was wonderful reverence here for the Milch Cow; and small marvel this for without her milk and butter it would go hard with the family to live in health or comfort. You might beat or swear at a calf or bullock which proved difficult to handle but any mature person would be shocked and horrified to witness you maltreat or curse a cow.

The Donkey was supposed to bear a Cross outlined on his back in memory of the occasion when our Saviour rode an ass into Jerusalem and therefore he was 'bless-ed' as was said. But very strangely indeed this won scant respect for the Donkey in every-day life — he was still 'starved, scourged, derided' as Chesterton described him.

**Charms** — There was of course a multitude of cures for ailments in man and beast. But what I want to mention now is some that depended for their efficacy, wholly or partly, on a fixed formula of prayer or recitation with or without actions. And occasionally there was nothing but the simple action without words. These were known in English as charms. They were very widely practised, of course. Take a simple case of sprained foot. You went to the local weaver and told him you had sprained your foot. You didn't ask for anything — he understood. He gave you a piece of the yarn he was using and you tied this round the affected limb — that was all. If your foot was too sore to walk you sent someone to the weaver on your behalf.

Another form of treatment for sprain had a set form of words. Someone laid his hand on the injured limb and asked : "Is this a sprain?" Someone else standing by answered : "No, just a hurt". Then the first speaker said : "Yon fellow over the way who is stealing the turf, may he take this sprain away with him". And there you had it.

A patient who suffered severe headache or disturbance in the head had his head 'measured'. The therapist did not take the dimensions of the head in English or metric measure but just encircled the skull with an ordinary string or cord three times. Some felt their heads contract with each binding! This has left a saying used all over the country. A person who propounds fantastic ideas is told : "Have your head measured!"

You may be interested to hear of a charm for toothache. I'm sorry I haven't it verbatim but I can give you the general

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drift. The sufferer repeated the following or something like—"Peter lay on a bed of agony. Christ looked down upon him. 'What ails you, Peter?' 'It is my tooth that pains me, Lord'. 'Rise up, Peter and be well'. Every one who says this through God's mercy and Peter's prayer will not have the toothache and the petitionary prayer in the same jaw". The final, curious phrase seems to mean that the utterance of the formula must surely dislodge the ache. The patient had to repeat the complete form, from 'Peter lay' down to 'jaw'.

The original is in Irish verse but there was also another local version in English, beginning : "Peter sat on the marble stone" which is all I can now recall.

Similarly there were charms for erysipelas (or 'The Rose' as it was known locally), for eye troubles, for whooping cough, for infections and for God knows what. Some of them were fantastic : an infant who had 'Thrush', an infection of the mouth and palate, could be cured by getting a white gander to screech three times into his mouth.

Whooping cough, a great scourge in those days, could be cured by asking a man riding a grey horse for a cure. As everybody here knew about this, the rider always charitably co-operated by suggesting something easy and simple e.g., a spoon of milk or water. But the horseman must come on the scene by sheer chance and not by arrangement. If there was collusion or if a third party contrived the meeting then the charm would lose all virtue. So the availability must have been comparatively rare.

You can guess the joy of a father whose large family were down with the whoop when he faced quite by accident the longed-for mountie. (The father, then in his eighties, told me this forty years ago.) And you must only try to imagine his fury to be told in answer to his eager request for a cure : "Boil the devil in new milk and give it to them". He could hardly be expected to appreciate such twisted humour.

Now I have to tell you something more pleasant and interesting. Just one week ago I was talking to a man who lives a few miles away. And we were not discussing old cures or folklore at all. He told me of a near neighbour of his whom I know well being in great pain with grit in the eye. The neighbour asked to be driven to the doctor here in Louisburgh for he could no longer bear the pain. An elderly woman happened to be listening. "If you wish I could try the ould cure," she said. He agreed. So saying, she caught the eyelash in her fingers, pulled on it saying the appropriate words and released it. He felt better immediately and had no further pain or difficulty.

A feeling of depression in the chest — caused, it was

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Trádmharc : "An Chruac"

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said by one of the ribs being out of place — was known as 'The Cleheen'. Certain local people could 'lift the cleheen' as the phrase went; but the treatment was by skilful manipulation I understand. This was done here till very recently and may still be practised.

There were charms for animal ailments, too. To give but one example : a beast suffering from worms might be cured by having the 'Worm Knot' made over his back by a competent person with a piece of cord. I can't say whether there was a form of words — I rather think not.

Some examples of local Taboos — You may build your house (or stable) to any plan you wish but once built you must not extend towards the North or West. As the local saying puts it "You cannot build back". It was even more emphatic in Irish — "Only a person stronger than God would extend his house backwards". Every one knew of this prohibition and few dared contravene it. If somebody dared it, then any later death in his household or serious misfortune, accident or loss could be attributed to his temerity — he invited it. You may extend buildings towards East or South i.e., sunwise, according to the 'natural', fixed 'ordinance' but not contra-sunwise.

There was a 'rule' often cited for youngsters that no one should go swimming or bathing till after Pentecost (or Whit) Sunday. The rule was not always observed nor always strongly asserted. But there was a strong insistence that you should not go in on Whit Sunday itself. Even children were warned not to go paddling in streamlets or chasing little fisheens. I'm not sure why this was so.

And speaking of fish — If you go sea-fishing or on a journey by sea you must not eat eggs immediately before setting out. One explanation suggested to me was that the fairies might come to know your plans and avail themselves of the shells as water craft to accompany you and do you mischief.

There was a strange belief about those born at Whitsuntide — 'Whitsunites' as they were called in Irish — that a hoodoo attached to them; that they were likely to be difficult and hot-tempered and that they might even cause death to a person or animal.

Certain observances were required on various occasions. If you admired or praised someone you must not fail to say 'God bless' him! especially to a child or young person who 'has his life before him'. This was to ward off the 'evil eye'; lest anyone should 'make a bad eye o' him' as the saying went.

Though you never invoked God's blessing on a dog or cat

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you should always do so when referring to a horse or cow — animals indispensable to our life and well-being. I once saw a man in great anger rout a group of unruly boys who were loud in praise of the horse he was riding but deliberately refrained from adding the customary blessing. This was to tease him of course — they knew their man!

When you were given a measure of milk to drink you never omitted to say : "God bless the cows and the givers!" as you returned the empty container.

When repeating news of some tragic accident or heavy tidings you should add : "God save the hearers" and if reference was made to a serious wound or sore, the convention was "God bless the mark!"

You were not to list your misfortunes and if you caught yourself enumerating them you immediately said : "Indeed I shouldn't complain and I'm not complaining".

If you broke something by accident — crockery, glassware or such — the formula was : "May we meet with no greater loss " or "May all the bad luck of the year go along with it".

All these are translations from Irish.

Out of doors there were two things you should beware of. The first was the "Hungry Grass" which was usually found on a hillside. It wasn't recognisable by sight but by its effects. If you had the ill-luck to step on it you were immediately afflicted with a ravening hunger and overpowering weakness. You fell down and were unable to walk. The proper safeguard and remedy was to carry a little oatbread in your pocket. Take three morsels of this and your strength and energy returned.

The other was known as "The Wee Sod of Confusion". If you crossed this in your travels — and it might be met anywhere — you lost all sense of direction and you might wander round in circles all day and night. Your proper counter-strategy was to turn some garment of wearing apparel inside out — your jacket, gansey, shirt or socks. This would reverse the sinister impulse governing you and put you straight back on course.

I don't think the Grass had any flavour of enchantment — it was rather looked on as a natural phenomenon. But the Sodlet was a device of 'the Gentry' to kidnap or work harm to mortals. Referring to a person so confused — and cases are not so rare as you might imagine — you may still hear it said : "He was put astray!"

I must now say a word of certain worthy ladies who belonged neither to the world of "the Skinny Shee" nor to ours. Their abode was in certain remote, mountain valleys or high

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on mountain slopes. They were not at all noxious or malevolent. And so, impudent people had the effrontery to call them 'Hags' while they cowered in abject fear of the vicious Shee. But one thinks of them as dwelling in high state, too noble and dignified to note such cheap jibes. One of them kept a great flock of goats for her sustenance and if you were lucky enough and stumbled on her dwelling she invited you to dine and pressed you to make a good meal. Another had no visible means of support — doubtless she had private resources. They seldom came down to mortal level and I rather think they were wise in that, as appears from the following story. One evening as it waxed late a busy housewife at the foot of Mweelrea Mountain was boiling the great pot of porridge for the family supper. As she stirred the pot a stately woman entered without salutation and seated herself by the chimney corner with her bare feet on the hearthstone. The housewife sensed she had a very strange visitor but spoke no word of welcome. Her husband and sons were at work a great distance off, too far away to call. So she had just to await their coming.

Every now and again she stirred the pot and then went to the door to watch for their return. And with every disappointment her anxiety mounted — and her temper! "Holy Virgin" she kept muttering to herself in Irish "how long the men are away". At last she could bear it no longer and under pretence of adjusting the pot on the fire she tilted it over so that a great gush of scalding porridge poured over the exposed feet on the hearth.

Even in this moment of anguish, Lady Visitant lost no whit of her dignity and spoke only in words of exalted disdain — "What a state of affairs!" quoth she in Irish "when the Lady of the House of Tamhna Binn Leice (a place high on the overhanging mountain) is scalded and roasted by this rustic wench of the porridge!" And gathering her mantle round her she left.

I suppose no talk on folklore would be complete without a curse. But first an incident which we'll call "Raising the Wind!" Many years ago — but well within living memory — a little boy had arranged with some grown-up friends of his, to go on a boating excursion in Clew Bay outside. As it happened they went off without him, leaving him seething with rage and disappointment. So he rushed round to every one within reach begging for a halfpenny — our smallest value coin. He had heard that if you bore a hole through a halfpenny you will raise a storm and this was just what he needed to drown all his faithless friends.

Now for the curse: long before that little boy's time there was a woman here who took more elaborate means to raise a storm and succeeded magnificently. She had a

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grudge against a neighbour and pondered how she might revenge herself. It was midsummer and the potato crop was everywhere in bloom. The neighbour had an exceptionally good crop with rich, succulent shoots. And Bríd Mhór, for that was the vengeful lady's name, decided that the neighbour's potato crop was to be the means of glutting her spite. This was before the Great Famine, and the potato blight had not yet appeared in Ireland. The one great hazard for the crop, especially if stalks were rank, was a strong gale. But such gales were not frequent and for this every one thanked Heaven for the safety of the crop was then a matter of life and death for every family. Having once decided her plan of action, Bríd did not falter. She went to a local lake where there was then a cursing stone. She turned the stone to the left in the name of the man below, ( i.e., the devil ) and prayed for storm.

And storm it was the following day — a storm whose like never blew before or since in Summer time. Wherever the crop was well advanced nothing remained but a mass of tangled and broken stalks. The less forward crops escaped with slight damage. But every one in the district had good reason to remember Bríd. Until quite recently if it blew hard in Summer the popular saying was : "It's nearly as bad as Bríd Mhórs day".

May all your days be halcyon days here and elsewhere. May you meet no overwhelming storms now or in the future. Bail ó Dhia oraibh uile. God bless you all!

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## The Editor Regrets . . . .

— that many obituary tributes which readers might well expect in the present issue must be left aside temporarily. The problem is not just one of space; it becomes increasingly difficult to find writers who would consider themselves competent to pay valid tribute to a dead friend. And an appreciation should, above all else, be valid : the cliché, the fulsome or exaggerated statements are of no use precisely because they lack truth.

It is a genuine regret, then, that our pages do not now carry a written memory of those who have recently died. A whole list comes to mind — Father Dick Prendergast, Father Michael Tiernan, Sister Anthony O'Toole, John O'Dowd, Sister Philomena Scanlon, Father Paddy Sheridan and his school and college friend, Doctor Paddy Keane — and it can truly be said that the death of each brought a sorrow, much wider than a family circle.

Indeed one could well question the propriety of a custom which reveres the memory of the recent dead and then, publicly at least, forgets. How much better to have the memory re-stirred after a lapse of time, as in Miss O'Malley's tribute to the "Master" and "Missus" (p 44). One wishes also that tributes should not be confined to the more public personages, although for obvious reasons these will be the longer ones. It would be a happy development if more "ordinary men" were remembered, as for instance in the note "Requiem for a Fellow" in 1967 which revived the memory of Michael O'Grady of the town.

It is our view that **every** person who dies deserves at least one sentence as a record of the things he did. What a rich document such sentences would make in the case of the people whose names are recorded this year on pages 89-91! We invite such contributions — short, and signed, — for future lists.

Editor

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There is also one anonymous member. We express, once more, our gratitude to those readers who have shown their appreciation in a practical way.