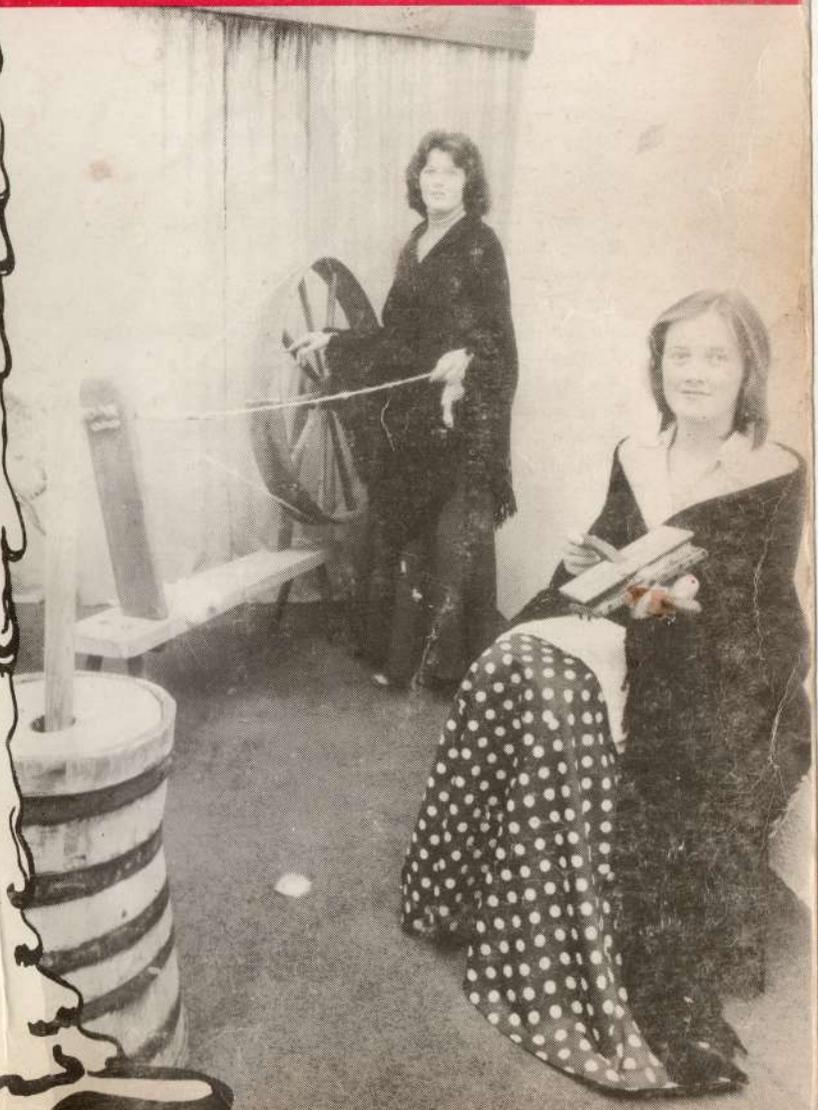
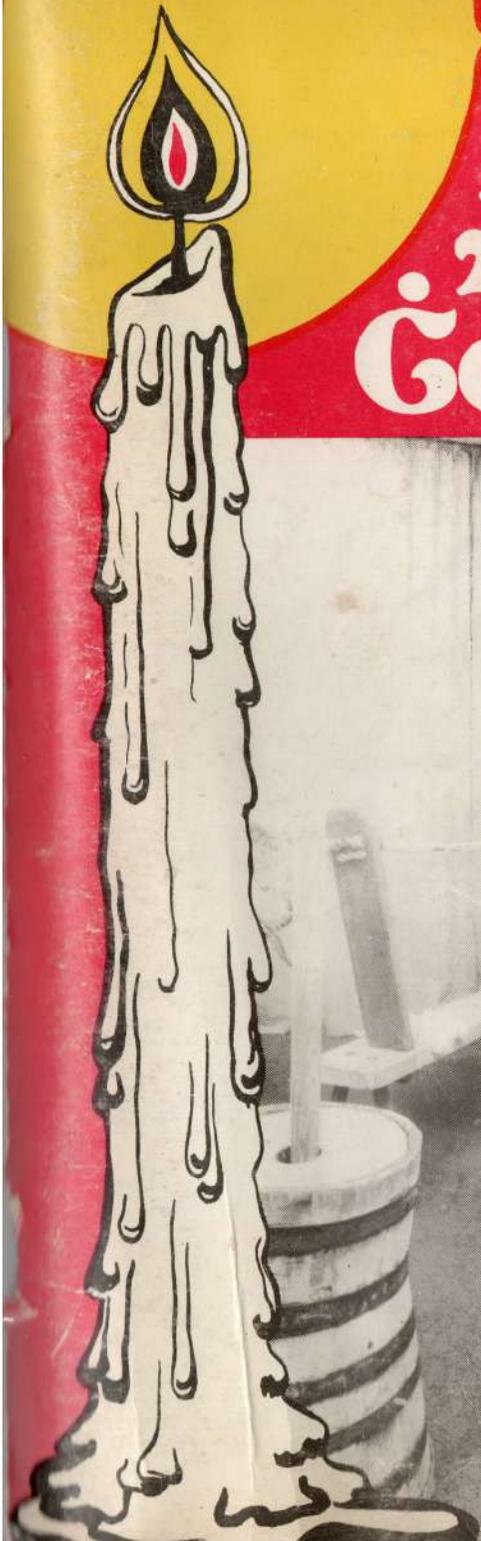
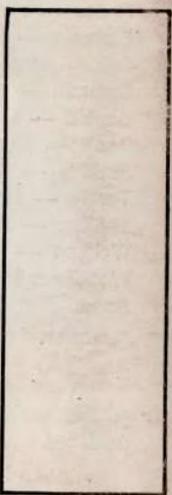


Louisburgh

An Goirneal



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Cover-photo: *with dignity and grace the youth of Killeen recapture the past. Eileen Scanlon (Feenoone) — standing — and Annie B. O'Malley (Cross) Photo - Liam Lyons*

an coinneal

AN CHOINNEAL is a periodical of Kilgeever Parish; the oldest parish magazine in Ireland. It has appeared in alternate years since 1959.

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The Editor wishes to thank sincerely our photographers — Frank Dolan, Liam Lyons, The Irish Post — who supplied photographs free of charge. Some pictures also supplied from Killeen Macra na Tuaithe scrap-book but without credits attached.

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Arks

Letters to the Editor

Thank you so much. I was delighted to receive it. If you can possibly send me fifteen or more copies I have clients waiting for them. It is very interesting to read. Don't delay.

Helen E. McNamara (W. Roxbury)
How we wish we had as loyal an agent as you, Helen, in every town where there is a colony of our parishioners! We really appreciate your work.

Bhain mé taitheamh thar barr as gach uile chuid de, ach go mór-mhór na hairteagail ar sheanchas na háite. Mura ndéanfadh "An Choinneal" rud ar bith eile ach an stair agus an seanchas a bhreacadh ar pháir sara n-imeoidh na sean-iondúirí ar shlí na firinne beidh obair iontach maith déanta aige. Seic le táille ballraíochta leis seo. Guidhim rath Dé agus na Maighdine Muire ar an obair agus ar gach duine atá chomh diograiseach sin ina bun!

Nóra Hawkes (Easgáitine)
Mile bhuiochas, Nora: cuirfidh se rud ort go bhfuil ag cliseadh orrainn, faraor, alt as Gaeilge a fhuil le chur i ngach eagran.

I am sorry to hear of the flood, and of the loss of your back copies. As you know I purchased several copies of 1971 and 1973 issues for my immediate families. However under the circumstances . . . I am sending you three of the 1971 and three of the 1973 copies. Edna C. Teillon (Williamstown, Ma)
From one who is such an avid and interested reader of our magazine your gift is a compliment indeed. Sincere thanks.

I am delighted with the parish magazine and find it very interesting reading. I hope every family in the parish buys the magazine and also that a copy is sent to every

emigrant relative overseas. It is a credit to the parish.

Ned O'Malley (Monkstown)
We could not have said it better ourselves, Ned.

I always read "An Choinneal" with great love and joy. My eighty-two years old cousin, Sister Francis Xavier Burke from Devlin thought that the last issue was the best. Keep up the good work.

Sister Brigid O'Malley (Toledo)
Thank you on the double Sister Brigid. Your written contribution appear elsewhere in this issue; an earnest of a greater honour, I hope.

I'd be delighted to be a promoter for the magazine . . . It was Joe McNamara's son that gave me the issue I read. My maiden name was Kilcoyne — a daughter of Pat Bawn of Cregganbawn. I'm looking forward to catch up on past history!

Mrs. O'Connell (London)
We are very pleased with your offer, Mrs. O'Connell, and we hope you are equally pleased with our offerings!

My sincere thanks for the copy of "An Choinneal", always so full of interesting information and so brilliantly edited. I wish it continued success and to yourselves a new year full of blessing.

James Fergus (Ballaghaderreen)
Bishop Fergus, we all wish you many happy years in your retirement and we avail ourselves of this opportunity to thank you sincerely for your loyalty and support — moral and financial support — of our efforts since the founding of this magazine in 1959. Gurab thada, geal do choinneal fhein!

It made me sad to read of Margaret Gormally's death: she, Nancy, Kathleen O'Reilly, Delia Prendergast of the Bridge, and a sister of John P. Sammin's were staunch friends all through life. One could

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There was also one anonymous sponsor.

Letters . . .

class them as "Kipling's Ladies" — they walked with kings but never lost the common touch. Maragaret spent much of her holidays in Furmoyle and there was no special dish for her: if it was boxty-cake or a slice of a pig's head, Margaret would share with us. Life gets so sad when you read of all the young peop'le passing away.

M. J. O'Malley (Nottingham)
You will pardon us, Michael J., for printing your intimate letter, but we wished to share its beauty and pathos with our many readers who knew Mrs. McGreal (nee Gormally).

I am sending £10 to become a foundation member and I am looking forward to reading this issue.

Monica (Lynch) Fearon (Rush)
We hope you will recognise a little of the Louisburgh you knew. Mrs. Fearon. Yes, the Coinneals arrived in good time! I enjoy Mother's "Letter from Home" and also Séan's letter. In my mother's "treasures" — boxes of prayers, cards, letters, etc. I found a poem "Louisburgh in County Mayo". Seán's letter mentioned it on page 53. I haven't overlooked your note regarding stories from Uncle Paddy. I haven't seen him for a number of years but maybe this summer. He is eighty years young.

Credit withheld, Mrs. Teillon, until your your thesis is submitted!

I could not put it down until I read every page, turning each leaf with the greatest anticipation . . . I must write and tell Father Leo that my only criticism is this — two years is too long. The wedding-pictures are always lovely . . . Then it was sad to hear of Urusla McDermott's death: from what I

hear she was a lovely person and an excellent teacher. What a loss! May her soul rest in peace! I expect you to be snowed under with compliments on that cover. Three cheers for Furmoyle, and for Eil'een Ferrins! And three cheers for the artist as well.

Nora (Lyons) Sek (Chicago)
Two years is almost too long to wait for such an enthusiastic response, Nora. I have passed on your tributes.

Congratulations to all again . . . all deserve great cred't. I will spend tomorrow with Dad reading to him.

Ann Carr (Framingham)
More tomorrow to him, Ann! See page 112.

Congratulations on your wonderful magazine and on the amount of work and information you put into it. I don't think there is a parish magazine in Ireland to compare with it. I enclose a foundation membership fee.

Edward (Canon) O'Malley (Corofin)
Many thanks, Canon Eddie. Could we coax you to contribute in the other way too?

I am very disappointed that "An Choinneal" has not come for the New Year. I sent a p.o. for it some time ago . . . However, I am sorry for annoying you about it as there may be some delay in printing it or in the post.

Mary T. Dolan, Drumeela, (Cavan)
Firstly, Mary, thank you for such a beautifully dignified rebuke. As you shall read later on in this issue we did not deserve the rebuke; but you made your protest so gently that we almost wished we did! I hope your mother is well again.

How come I have not received my copy? Attention please. I have not received a copy of "An Choinneal"

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Letters . . .

since Christmas 1973. I wrote to you a year ago and got no reply. I am a foundation member. Now you owe me two copies, I want them by return mail. I am highly disappointed in you and your staff. I should not have to go through this. I want An Choinneal by return mail or refund my money.

Name and address supplied.

Whew! Is it over? . . . Cautiously I came up to reply!

Dear foundation member, your copies have indeed been mailed — not once but on every occasion you wrote; and with explanation that the fault is not ours. What more can we do? Perhaps our postal service is at fault. We shall alert them: will you contact yours? However, we have a compensation: deep down (very, very deep) we notice with joy how keenly you wanted "An Choinneal"; and, despite our genuine regret for someone else's mistake, we are deeply (very deeply) pleased. This issue, too, will be posted to you as usual. But where's the use of writing more? They may still thwart us both — you may never read this, and I may have yet another rebuke from you. If only I could get the neighbours to tell you!

Memories of people, of places and of friends gone to their last resting-place come flooding back. It is the best reading material I have had in a long time . . . As many as a dozen people have read and enjoyed them. Some of them have never been to Louisburgh; others haven't been for many years but soon will. It's beautiful to lie in bed here in London to read about home and in your heart to be at home. I was disappointed though in not seeing my parents names among the dead (R.I.P.) They left those rugged mountains for Westmeath to make a better life for themselves and leave something behind for others to enjoy.

Please in the next issue I'd like to see their names — Patrick A. Kilcoyne and Anne Kilcoyne (nee Durkan) Mrs. McGreal (R.I.P.) who wrote about them could have filled two Coinneals. Next issue is almost due, thank God. Christmas this year will be more exciting. Roll on December!

Mrs. O'Connell (London)

Thank you for your compliments, Mrs. O'Connell; we are truly sorry if the omission has in any way hurt you. We depend for our obituary list on parish records and on the announcements in the two churches about deaths away from home. The system is not a hundred per cent certain and we regret that it should have failed — especially in the case of both your parents. God rest them! Strangely, Castlepollard is our nearest colony yet the one our magazine has least contact with!

I was greatly interested in the account and pictures of the new school at Killeen. What a wonderful change . . . I am relieved that the Dutch scheme did not materialize. Surely there are better alternatives. I can see from your pages that several worthwhile ideas are being thought out and planned for, which would not spoil the beautiful countryside and the peace which so many visitors, Irish and foreign, long for. Another thing that struck me was the number of associations and committees formed . . . in the district . . . Old Head and Louisburgh occupy a very warm corner of my heart and always will. My sister and I had such happy times there and made many friends.

Nora McAllister (Dublin)

These many friends would welcome a visit by you to the haunts of bygone days, Mrs. McAllister. We appreciate your appreciation of our efforts!

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Our Contributors

Apart from writers who are well known to readers from many earlier issues, the following have contributed to this issue:

Mrs. Delia Coen (Tooreen Road) was originally Maxwell from Ballyhip. She and her husband Gerry returned to the parish some five years ago.

Mr. Jim Egan (Derrygarv) is a secondary-school teacher at Sancta Maria, where he was educated. He is both chairman of Killeen Community Council and an adult leader of the Macra na Tuaithe club; both with remarkable success.

Mr. Myles Gibbons (Feenoone) teaches at a comprehensive school in London. He was educated at Killadoon, Louisburgh, Mungret and De La Salle College, Manchester.

Rita Gibbons is a Chicago-born daughter of James of Cloonlara.

Mrs. Kathleen Golden was McGreal of Cahir. An enthusiastic supporter of *An Choinneal*, she has returned with Doctor Golden to her native village.

Mrs. Bernie Kilcoyne (Killadoon) is secretary of the newly-formed Killeen Community Council.

Mrs. Nuala Kitterick (Aillemore) with her husband, Thady, are recently returned from Newport.

Mary Lyons (Furmoyle) is a Registered General Nurse; at present a student midwife at Holles Street Maternity Hospital.

Mr. John P. McGrail (Berlin, Mass) is a first generation descendant of both Derrygarv and Feenoone.

Mr. Oliver P. Morahan (Mooneen) is a solicitor who practises in Louisburgh and Westport.

Father Joseph Moran (Coolarne) taught for many years in Sancta Maria and engaged in an enormous amount of community work. He was a member of our first editorial board.

Mrs. Mary Murphy (Devlin) is a niece of Thomas and Una O'Malley of Kinnadoohy and shares their interest in history and tradition.

Sister Jane Anthony (Doughmackeown) teaches at Saint Ursula Academy, Toledo. She is a member of the very literary O'Malley family and sister of Irish scholar and writer, Father Pat. Her article is reprinted from *Today's Catholic Teacher*.

Mr. M. J. O'Malley (Dublin) is an official with *Posts and Telegraphs*; a cousin of Tommie Andy.

Senator Martin J. O'Toole (Mooneen) has been in public life for twenty-two years. At present he fills three very exacting roles — Chairman of Mayo County Council, Chairman of Mayo Agricultural Committee and member of Seanad Éireann.

Mr. Michael Sammin (Cross) is a farmer, a native of Carramore.

Mr. Michael Viney (Tallabawn) is a professional writer and columnist for *The Irish Times*. His current series, *Another Life*, describes his change from city life to the rural life under Mullree.

DEVELOP OR DIE

Development is a word that works overtime nowadays. There is a clamour for self-*development*, for local and community *development*: we have a state-sponsored Industrial *Development* Association: we are constantly reminded of the needs of under-*developed* countries. Even if it should become cliché, there is substance and import in the term. As technology speeds the changes in our life-style, yesterday's luxuries become today's necessities and, gradually, even a remote community must conform and develop if it will survive. So the proud tools and utensils of humbler living are fast disappearing — the scythe, churn, fire-irons, horse-shoe, pot-oven and steel writing-pen are fast following the side-car, *cliabh*, flail, spinning-wheel and oil-lamp into history. Someone, we hope, will preserve samples of these and present them to a local folk-museum. Meantime, as life spirals on, we must develop or die. The calendar, no more than the clock, cannot be put back: a people must not — *can* not — be put into a museum.

The problems of progress are compounded in a community such as ours, which was almost untouched by the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century. With no sizeable factory ever, and an economy hinged on home produce, "egg-money" and the fair day, families were, unfortunately, trapped at their own economic and social level. Education cost money — even in the event of a scholarship — and so emigration was the only practical hope of self-improvement, self-development. Despite the advent of free education (which, incidentally, is our greatest industry now, with some twenty-five employees within the parish) old patterns persist. Even free education is largely for export. Are we still trapped then? Fortunately there are signs to the contrary: very fortunately the signs are from within the community.

If we are to develop as a thriving, twenty-first century community, development must build on what *is*. Agriculture is still our basic industry: tourism is growing as a second one. Can not both of these be greatly intensified? Apart from the obvious vegetable output for home and tourist needs there are branches of agriculture, almost endemic to the area, which could

be developed or revived. Why not a very positive mountain-sheep industry linked to a national or E.E.C. sheep-policy? Could there also be spin-off employment if such an industry was centred here? Milk-production is now paying handsome dividends: could there be a similar revival in pig-rearing on modern business lines?

We have merely scratched the surface in tourism. At the present moment there are sanguine hopes that a Rent-a-Cottage scheme — such as has proved a great boon in Tullycross, Eally-castle and elsewhere — will be a concrete reality within a few months. If so, what next? Could the Development Company then acquire and repair the many derelict houses to provide further self-accommodation? (If so, in a healthy economy, more and more home-grown food must be produced. Tourism, as we have often pointed out, is not a basic industry: agriculture is). Could the tourist facilities be made yet more attractive — Roonagh Pier improved (replaced!) to accommodate a ferry to Clare Island, Inisturk and Achill as is the case off the Donegal mainland? Is there a hope of reviving boat-building? Can the present vicious circle “No boats, because no harbour, because no boats” be broken to avail ourselves of coming fishing legislation? If Gaeltarra Éireann have invested capital elsewhere (e.g. the Killaries) in shell-fish industry can they not be coaxed to Clew Bay? Our side of the bay has been pronounced unsuitable for conventional trawling because of its undulating sea-bed, but could not some kind of inshore, long-lining techniques be employed to obviate bottom trawling? Would Bord Iascaigh Mhara be interested?

There remains one factual constraint, however: with fifty-odd students leaving Sancta Maria annually, and many wishing to remain at home, there is need for a factory. Our geographical location — a tourist's paradise — is, the bane of any large industrialist; there must, however, be the real possibility of luring a smaller-type concern, even a community work-shop, so as to give the all-important initial impetus which the community needs. In such a development one or more of our monied emigrants might play an important role.

Let us put the case that there is a Kilgeever emigrant in London, Birmingham or Boston who has a small but thriving business. Put the case that now, hearing of Mayo County Council's advances, (outlined by Senator O'Toole page 125) he decides, for reasons of family, patriotism or business, to change his concern to the home parish. Will he be met with open arms? We think so. We sincerely hope so! Such a man could be the saviour of our community. Put the case that this emigrant is seriously considering such a decision. This magazine has already stated (1973 issue) our belief that, if there is commercial opportunity within the parish, a first option should be given “to the sons and daughters of Kilgeever who, because of the neglect of the past, have never had the opportunity to live their lives —

as their counterparts in any normal country — among the people from whom they come”. They are men and women who, almost literally, never got anything for nothing from anybody. Such a one owes his success, under God, to his own personal industry and thrift: he may not even be aware of present-day Irish grants and incentives to incoming industrialists. Specifically, he may not know that a returning emigrant is, quite properly, afforded more generous financial terms than a foreigner. (Sixty per cent as against thirty-five to fifty; with a *further* fifty per cent, at stage two).

An Choinneal puts a further practical suggestion to its readers: could the community now set about providing a serviced site, and even an advance factory building — by public grants and voluntary labour — and make this available for consideration to the first suitable business concern opened by a resident or a returned emigrant? The community has shown its mettle in cognate spheres. The will to live is paramount. We must develop or die.

Teacht Aniar

One quite remarkable achievement by the young people of our parish in 1976 cannot be fully appreciated by those who do not know our parish and its boundaries. In a national competition run by Macra na Tuaithe, three clubs were chosen from the entire country to present their projects for the final of the National Citizenship Award. *Two* of the final three were from our parish of Kilgeever — the clubs of Killeen and Louisburgh. We warmly congratulate them and their leaders. The fact that Killeen, the “country cousins”, were outright winners was widely hailed; it may have generated fleeting, schoolish comparisons — even gloating or envy! Understandably so.

On a higher plane, however, this national award for Killeen brings happily into the limelight an area which, denuded of part of its population several times during a century, has always retained a strong and lively identity; an area which (as many contributions to this magazine from its beginning have shown) is still teeming with history and with consciousness of its past. Its people, labouring under so many restrictions and privations for generations — lack of communication services, lack of public transport and so of second-level education, and lack of many ordinary amenities and conveniences — seemed to have capitalized on their remoteness to consolidate the spirit of what we know locally as “The West”. Indicatively, the winning project records the history of that community; and the collecting of it has itself brought the present community, young and old, more closely together. That the whole Killeen area is vibrant is evidenced in the doings of their Community Council, chronicled elsewhere in

this issue. We express our unstinted and heartiest commendation of their activities and encourage them towards other and greater successes.

We have a sincere hope that in its future development Killeen will grow *with*, not in isolation from, the rest of the parish community. Divisiveness may be understandable at school-level: not in adult life. We have sad proof elsewhere of the cost and the tragedy of partitions. There is no basis for inferiority complex. We would wish to see "the half-parish" (and that very name is indicative!) as a proud and equal partner with Louisburgh in the work and in the success of the entire Kilgeever community. The bridge at Carrowniskey is a symbol: quite recently it was re-built and widened. The whole revived community will be all the more salutary if it is enriched with that strong, independent spirit; that sound, practical wisdom; that clearly-proven native intelligence, and that wholesome streak of good nature which is characteristic of the great people behind that bridge.

We have an expression, from Irish, to describe something dependable, something of reliable quality: we say it *has the teacht aniar* — a good piece of material, a slice of home-made bread, a reliable worker, a good competitor, a trier against odds. Strangely (or is it?) the expression means literally "a coming from the west".

In every sense, Killeen *has the teacht aniar!*

A Folk-museum a reality? Mr. and Mrs. Joe Scanlon (Bunowen) inform us that they intend to set up a folk-museum shortly. We ask readers to support this effort to save the relics of our past — Editor

KILLEEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The first steps towards the formation of Killeen Community Council were taken on January 25th., 1977 when a meeting of about one hundred people, chaired by Father Conneely, C.C. heard a talk by Mr. Paddy Corley, Development Officer of Muintir na Tire on Community Development and the procedure involved in the setting up of a Community Council. On his suggestion, a Steering Committee of twelve people was formed to prepare for the election of a council and the drafting of a constitution.

During the following weeks the steering committee met and decided (a) to have the election on a station-area basis, two representatives for each of the seven areas; (b) that each local voluntary organization have one representative, (but Macra na Tuaithe have two in order to ensure an adequate voice for the youth); (c) to allow for co-option on to the council of new members (up to a third of the total already chosen) whose special talents and interests could be of benefit to the council; (d) to carry out a needs survey in the area to ascertain for the incoming council the level of support for various projects they would have to tackle.

Station Areas:

Result of the Election

Thallabawn — Jim McDonnell and Peter Morrison.
Killadoon-Devlin — Mrs. Bernie Kilcoyne and Joe Keane.
Cloonty-Cross-Cloonlaura — P. J. Sammin and George Gibbons.
Carrowniskey-Roonith — Joe Gibbons and Pat Berry.
Feenone-Aillemore-Curra — Tom O'Malley and Owen McNally.
Derrygarrow- Althore-Shrawee — Michael Corrigan and Jimmy Egan.
Cregganbawn — Patrick O'Grady and Pat Kilcoyne.

Voluntary Organizations

Sheepbreeders Association — Richard Mannion, Killadoon.
G.A.A. — Michael Lacey, Feenone.
Macra na Tuaithe — Barbara McNally and Patrick Morrison.
Killeen Central School Management Board — Mrs. B. Kilcoyne.
Cregganbawn National School Management Board — Michael Corrigan.

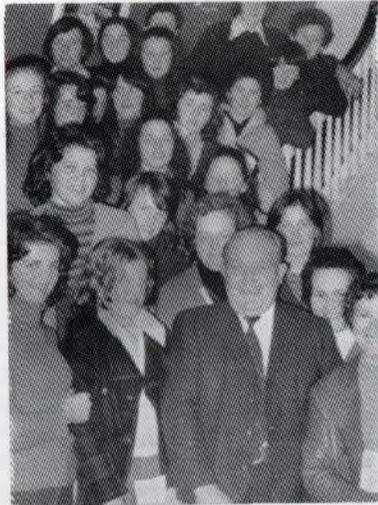
Co-Opted

Fr. Conneely, C.C.; Michael Burke (Roonkeel).

Officers

President — Pat Berry; Vice-President — Pat Kilcoyne.
Chairman — Jimmy Egan; Secretary — Mrs. B. Kilcoyne.
Treasurer — P. J. Sammin; Assistant Secretary and P.R.O. — Patrick O'Grady.

The Community Council is elected for a three-year period; officers are elected annually.



An Ghaoth

LEADING THE YOUTH: In front (L. to R.) Marie Keane, Martina O'Malley, Austie O'Malley, Anne O'Malley, Nora Lyons

"YES, YES — BUT WHERE'S THE DONKEY?" L. to R. Barbara McNally, Michael Joe Gibbons, John O'Toole, Jimmy Egan, Marie Keane: Seated — Annie B. O'Malley and Jimmy Corrigan



A BASKET OF SMILES: L. to R. John Francis O'Malley, Maureen O'Grady, Martin Jordan and Michael Ruane

Aniar !



HOW OUR GRANDPARENTS LIVED: Martin Jordan and Maureen O'Grady



OLDER HEAD ON YOUNGER SHOULDERS: L. to R. Jimmy Corrigan, Maureen O'Grady, Margaret Corrigan; Seated — Patrick Kilcoyne



NIGHT-LIFE — OLD-STYLE! L. to R. Jimmy Corrigan, Colette Gibbons, Margaret Corrigan, Maureen O'Grady

Needs Survey

The results of the needs survey highlighted the following points:

- (a) widespread dis-satisfaction with the condition of roads in the locality.
- (b) the urgent need for an industry in the parish so that at least some of our youth can earn their living here.
- (c) the utilization of Killeen Technical School for night classes and recreational activities.
- (d) the immediate acquisition of land for an extension to the cemetery.
- (e) the clearing of waterways, particularly Carrowniskey river.
- (f) division of commonage and lands held by the Land Commission.
- (g) development of bogs.
- (h) provision of improved recreational facilities for youth.
- (i) provision of public amenities at popular strands.

Immediately the council set about launching a promotion campaign for the area. On April 25th a public meeting attended by over two hundred local people was held. Present were the three Mayo T.D.'s: Mr. Denis Gallagher, Mr. Enda Kenny, Mr. Myles Staunton; Mayo County Councillors: Mr. Martin J. O'Toole, Mr. Owen Hughes and Mr. Jack Gibbons; Mayo County Manager, Mr. Michael O'Malley; Chief-Assistant County Engineer, Mr. Pat Gleeson; County Accountant, Mr. Tony Murphy; County Council Engineers, Mr. J. Staunton and Mr. D. Waldron; Mayo Tourism Promotions Officer, Mr. Michael Heverin.

The Community Council outlined its most urgent demands. (a) Need for Industry. (b) Road Maintenance. (c) Drainage of Carrowniskey River. (d) Need for new Cemetery. (e) Tourism Development. (f) Division of Thallabawn Commonage.

A. Need for Industry

The need for industry in the parish to provide much-needed employment and stem the flow of young people from the area was stressed by many speakers. One speaker put it bluntly — "fifty pupils do their leaving certificate in our local school this year; forty-four of these haven't a hope of getting a job locally. The life-flood of the community is being drained away. We can't tolerate it any longer". The matters of industry was taken up again when a deputation from Louisburgh Development Association and Killeen Community Council met Mr. Denis McCarthy, Regional Manager of the I.D.A. on May 18th in Westport. Industry was again first on the agenda when members of Killeen Community Council met Mr. O'Malley, County Manager on

October 5th in Castlebar. Very shortly after this meeting we learned that a site is being negotiated on Cahir Hill and will be serviced by Mayo County Council. This is good news but of course we are still a bit away from an actual factory.

B. Maintenance of Roads

The sub-committee (Tom O'Malley, Pat Berry and Michael Lacey) detailed the condition of the roads in the area. The engineer's attitude was that, while he agreed with the proposals, money was the crux. However a number of road signs were erected and following further discussions in October with the County Manager and County Engineer the council expected some improvements to be made.

C. Carrowniskey River

Local farmers had been campaigning for years to have work done to prevent flooding and destruction of crops along the river. The excuse was lack of money and/or lack of any government scheme for such work. Killeen Community Council requested the County Councillors of the area to pool some of their limited "allocation" so that the job could be done. Following further talks in Autumn we are glad that the councillors have agreed to our proposal. It means that a job which might well have been put on the "long finger" will soon be carried out thanks to a bit of co-operation all round.

D. Cemetery

The people of Killeen believe (rightly or wrongly) that Mayo County Council could and should have acquired an extension to the local cemetery about two years ago, when the last available plot was taken up. We have made numerous representations on this matter over the past few months but as yet no land has been bought.

E. Tourism Development

Our area has been described as "a tourist Utopia where the visitor can enjoy the unspoiled scenery and marvel at the wonderful, friendly people". But the Community Council is very much aware (a) of the grossly inadequate public amenities at our beaches; (b) that the local community are still slow to tap the financially rewarding tourist market in the form of Bed-and-Breakfast catering or the making and marketing of "craftwork" perhaps on a co-operative basis.

F. Thallabawn Commonage

This Commonage is large — over seven hundred acres — with twenty-two shareholders. Twenty-one of these, local farmers, wish to have it divided so that each can develop his portion. Agriculturalists agree that this is the only practical way to develop this area. However the holder of the other share, who is not a farmer and is not resident in the area, does not want the land divided. The Land Commission has

the power of compulsory division and as twenty-one to one seems a decisive majority local people are mystified as to why the land is not divided. The farmers, who have been requesting the division for some time recently asked the community council to help. We wrote to the public representatives requesting that they urge the Land Commission to get on with the job. But alas! the word keeps coming back that "the matter is being actively pursued". If they are banking on our apathy or on frustrating the efforts of a local people to develop our principal resource we hope the people of Killeen will prove them wrong. Lest anybody should think that we do nothing but harass officials and public representatives we would like to refer to some community projects.

- (a) In early July a clean-up of the graveyard was organized: thirty or forty people, with scythes and forks did a very good "tidying-up" job in the matter of an hour or two.
- (b) A very enjoyable sports day was organized jointly by the Council and the G.A.A. on July 17th It was highlighted by Killeen retaining the Paddy Gibbons Cup and Feenone winning the tug-o-war.
- (c) A number of dances and a community social and concert have been organized.
- (d) Night classes in woodwork, conducted by Mr. Heneghan, are going ahead in the local school.

In conclusion we would like to thank Father Conneely, C.C. His whole-hearted endeavour has been an inspiration to us all. We would also like to thank our elected representatives, and the County Manager and his staff, for the interest they have shown and for their willingness to help where possible. We hope the Killeen people will continue to support the Council as they have done over the past year.

Individually we can achieve very little and the temptation to "throw in the towel" is often great. However as a united community, patient yet persistent, we can all share in the achievement of many worthwhile improvements in our area.

Compiled by: Jimmy Egan (Chairman)
Mrs. Bernie Kilcoyne (Secretary)

Remembering Sion . . .

As I travel through the country now and then I cannot fail to observe how speedily the number of hay-sheds is increasing and the consequent decrease in the numerous ricks of hay that used to adorn every haggard as autumn followed autumn of the past. The progress of civilization is to be hailed with welcome perhaps and the hay-shed no doubt has advantages; but do these advantages compensate for the pleasures of "Reeking Day" such as we old-timers recall?

— Mrs. B. A. Morahan

Open Letter

A Community Council member remembers, laments and suggests:
Dear Editor,

Since the last "Coinneal" was published many changes have taken place in our parish of Kilgeever, and I regard as number one the forming of our community council in Killeen. This did not happen overnight: it had long been thought over down the years by different people, both lay and clerical. I would make special reference to Father James Mullarkey, P.P., who formed a parish council at Killeen in his early years in this parish. God grant him rest! He was a fine character; and, being a college boxer in his early student days, he had many a tryst with some of his parishioners (all for sport's sake) in Leenane Hall while he was parish priest there. After forming the parish council he got busy preparing to build a parochial hall in Louisburgh, which he did build; and for a number of years it was a great success. It had, however, one side-effect: it silenced our entertainment centre in Aillemore, Keane's Hall, which for years was both picture-house and dance-hall. A dancing-master, Kennedy by name, taught step-dancing and old-time dancing there for many winters.

The Parish Hall in Louisburgh was a great success until "Rock-and-roll" took over. Then the top bands became popular and the old céilí dancing had to stop. The young crowd, boys and girls, went wherever these bands played — Westport, Pontoon and other far-away places — where "Rock-and-roll" music sounded more attractive. As far as I can remember, the last céilí dance held in the Parochial Hall in Louisburgh was played for by the famous Gallowglass Céilí Band a few years ago. There were only three or four girls able to dance the Irish sets! This state of things is very unbecoming. The Killeen Community Council was founded to try and preserve our community and among other things to preserve our ancient culture along this western sea-board. We hope, when we get a proper community hall, to start anew the old-time dances, concerts and Irish drama. How grand it would be to see our children (who have the talent to do so) take part in one of the great epic plays such as "The Story of Cuchullainn" or any of the lighter plays which we had produced here during our early years.

We still have great talent in our parish. You have only to look at the papers every week to find our people's names making headlines and being conferred with honours in many different professions. This is a great credit to their parents and teachers for turning out such brilliant pupils. This good

work we have to foster still more in our community in Killeen and in Louisburgh. As a member of our council I appeal to our representatives in government from all areas in Mayo to get busy and get something done for these areas so long neglected. Labhras Ó Murchú once made a statement which I admired and which I now quote: "If the unprecedented opportunities which now exist for the realization of an Irish Ireland are not utilized, then the blame must rest squarely on the shoulders of the Government and its agencies. The goodwill of the majority of the people is obvious", he continued, "and has been adequately borne out in recent times by various surveys and reports. All that remains now for a final and decisive step forward is an unqualified commitment and leadership on the part of those who hold the reins of power. Government plans must be on-going, far-reaching and, above all, have a total and unreserved commitment." I can add that there are young intelligent boys and girls eager and willing to take over control of our own resources and use them for the betterment of our own country, if the Government fails to act quickly.

For far too long foreign industrialists are controlling our natural wealth, our import and export trade. At the present time Common Market industrialists are trying to take over our fishing grounds all around the coast. These are among the world's richest fishing grounds, yet not one pound of the wealth fished there will go to the benefit of our Irish nation. I appeal to the Minister for Fisheries to hold firm on the question of our national limits: if we do not win these concessions this wealth will be lost to us forever. Similarly I appeal to the Department of Fisheries to get to work improving our harbours. Our work force at present is vast: thousands of Irish boys and girls are unemployed. Our youth are the real wealth of this nation: every young person leaving this country is — apart from immeasurable losses — an economic loss of twenty thousand pounds. Take away our six million Irish workers who are now working in England and in less than three months England would go bankrupt. Take our other Irish assets away — there are millions and millions — and bankruptcy must take place overnight.

I hope, dear editor and readers, that when in two years' time our next issue appears many further changes will have taken place. We may by then have one of the old national schools as a community centre. By then too, please God, the new water-scheme to Louisburgh will be finished and the much-needed factory will, I hope, be in operation. Great things can be achieved if the people speak up and demand them.

Roonkeel

Micheál de Búrca

LOUISBURGH HOLIDAYS LTD.

The provision of high-quality traditional Irish cottages for letting to tourists has been an objective of the Louisburgh community now for almost eight years. As far back as 1971, Bord Fáilte officials met members of the local Tourist Association but between 1971 and 1976 several attempts to revive the scheme were unsuccessful. All was changed, however, by the publication in February 1976 of the Five Year Tourism Development Plan — a joint publication by Ireland West (W.R.T.O. Ltd.) and Bord Fáilte. In this Plan, Bord Fáilte indicated its keenness to grant-aid "a group-scheme of self-catering units at Louisburgh" for which it was proposed that a capital grant of £45,000 (or 50% of cost) could be allocated in 1976/77. On 2 June, 1976 the regional tourism manager, Mr. Joe Lally, spoke to a large audience in the Parochial Hall, Louisburgh on the implications of the proposal. A decision was made that night to form a public company, to acquire a site and to begin a local share-capital investment campaign. A figure of £26,000 minimum of local capital was regarded as essential in order to interest other parties in the scheme — Bord Fáilte, Regional Tourism Company and Mayo County Council. It was a daunting task but it was accepted with tremendous enthusiasm.

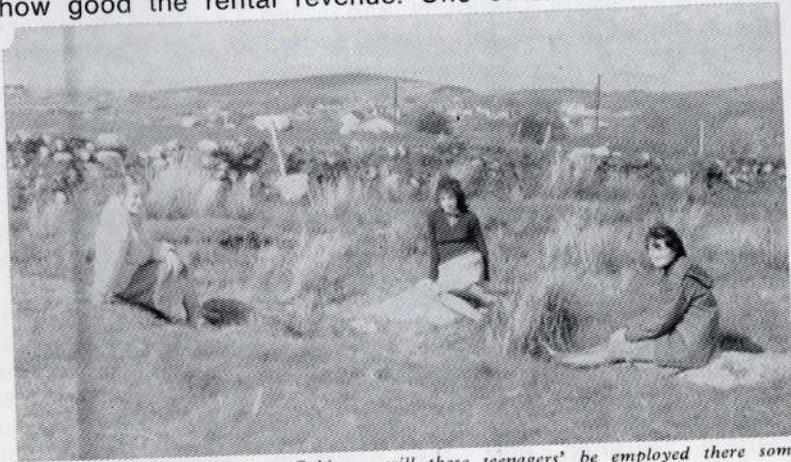
By 15 November, a magnificent site in Bunowen (opposite Joe Scanlon's house) had been acquired; the minimum target of £26,000 had been reached and an accountant was engaged in preparing detailed and comprehensive economic projections on the proposal for presentation to Bord Fáilte. At this stage also, Mayo County Council and Ireland West had voted to invest each £10,000 in the Company by way of share capital. The public company, Louisburgh Holidays Ltd. was incorporated on 15 December, 1976 with the following, who will hold office until the first Annual General Meeting, as directors: Charles Gaffney (Chairman), Rev. Kieran Waldron (Secretary), Paddy Duffy, Paddy Leamy, Mrs. Clementine Lyons, Mrs. Patricia Morahan and Joe Staunton. The Articles of Association provide that Mayo County Council and the

Regional Tourism Organization will each nominate a director when these bodies formally become members of the Company.

Outline planning permission for ten cottages, subject to a number of conditions, was granted to the company by Mayo County Council on 24th March, 1977 and at present our consultants, Messrs. Patrick J. Tobin and Co., are engaged in the final stages of house design with a view to obtaining full planning approval by the end of January 1978. The object now is to have the cottages built and in operation by May or at latest June 1979. Negotiations with Bord Fáilte (which itself is subject to the Department of Tourism and Transport) have been more protracted than we might have expected. However, we are encouraged by people with experience of these matters assuring us that we have made remarkable headway in view of the further information always required before such grant-aid is released by semi-state bodies and Government departments.

An urgent consideration now bedevilling all development proposals is the necessity of controlling capital costs. The Company must be viable economically from the outset and eventually it must be in a position to pay a dividend to shareholders. So our immediate responsibility in the design stage is to make every possible saving — without, however, reducing essential standards. In Tullycross and Ballycastle the high standards and beautiful traditional design have made the cottages the wonders of the western world.

Throughout the construction stage the same objective of saving costs must be constantly borne in mind — otherwise the Company will be threatened financially no matter how good the rental revenue. One other financial hazard



One proposed factory site at Cahir — will these teenagers be employed there some day? L. to R. Fiona Gaffney, Marie T. Morrisson, Alexandra Lyons.

of course is the size of the bank loan. Until we know exactly the capital costs and what exactly the amount of grants will be, it is not possible to state definitely the exact amount of the bank loan; but repayments will have to be made on time and interest charges will have to be met. To reduce the size of the bank loan, the Share Capital campaign (now standing at approximately £30,000 with 550 investors) will remain open — and readers of **An Choinneal** who would like to be part of this community self-help scheme are hereby invited to write to the undersigned as Secretary for share application forms.

In the marketing plan for the Company kindly prepared by Mr. Joe Lally and Mr. Dan O'Neill of Ireland West the following appears:

"There is a parish magazine, "An Choinneal" which will be used extensively to promote the scheme. It circulates in Britain, North America, Africa and Australia. The assistance of the entire parish will be sought to build up a list of contacts at home and abroad. There has been tremendous local enthusiasm for the scheme and the Directors propose to utilise to the full this enthusiasm in seeking out customer contacts. They are aware of the pitfalls and the hard work that has to be undertaken to ensure high percentage occupancy, having undertaken a detailed study and analysis of the Tullycross scheme. A yearly marketing programme will be devised and this will be implemented with the assistance of Ireland West and Bord Fáilte. The Company is aware that a very high target has been set but feels that with dedication and hard work the occupancy required will be achieved".

It is indeed a mammoth task — and has been since the first meeting last year. When completed, however, the scheme will be an enormous advantage to Louisburgh and its environs. Tullycross scheme of nine cottages across the Killary enjoys the phenomenal rate of 76% all-year-round occupancy. Imagine the extra business, the extra publicity and the extra morale the scheme will bring to the whole area. This part of Mayo has always been left out and underdeveloped. Here now is a scheme which will be controlled by the local shareholders and which with its company and appreciating assets will become the launching pad for all sorts of economic projects and worthwhile community development. The response of the Louisburgh people to the scheme, so soon after their response to the renovation of their Parish Church, has been nothing less than outstanding. Such local enterprise and community co-operation can never go unrewarded. May God bless the work.

Louisburgh

Kieran Waldron

MOVING MULIREA

About a year ago at the annual dinner-dance of the Mayo Association in London Father French from Swindon, President of the Association, stated that in Greater London alone there were at least fifty thousand people of Mayo extraction. At the time, that statement seemed to have no more force than that of a simple statistic, but on reflection it contains implications that should move Mulirea never mind the minds of thinking people. There are many ramifications to the question but I want to concentrate only on a few. From that statistic can be inferred, and indeed other statistics prove the inference, that most cities and towns in this country contain a similarly sizeable proportion of Mayo people or their descendants. In fact the same story can be told of cities in America and in any other section of the English-speaking world.

All of that is practically a statement of fact and there are two deductions I would like to make from it. The first is that it is good to be able to meet so many Mayo people away from home because such encounters inevitably mean that one is never entirely severed from the main trunk of one's history. Even in the branches a person can feel the identity which we all need. Wherever these people meet they invariably broach the other aspect of the issue. It goes something like this: Now that Ireland is in the E.E.C. and is promised financial aid in many disguises, should not the people of Louisburgh (or any other similar town) press the E.E.C. through the relevant channels to set up some form of industry in the town. With an increased Dáil/Senate representation this matter could be greatly facilitated.

The Louisburgh area is mostly, if not entirely, an agricultural zone. A farm can adequately (some would say inadequately!) support only one family. It follows that there is need for some other source of employment and income. This can be met only through a factory or factories. Such an industry would correct another feature which is being constantly realized now — that every parent in the area

knows that eventually many if not most of their family will have to leave home and go somewhere else in Ireland, or abroad, in search of work. This thought must surely be a stultifying incubus on the outlook of many parents.

The continuous outflow of talent from the area is analogous to the draining away of blood from the body. The result is eventual stagnation and death. The remedy is industrialization. Not by fields alone can man live; neither can he live on fresh air and beauty. These are ideal surroundings but few of the many who have to leave the area ever enjoy such sights in the smog and slums of dilapidated, foreign cities. What we need to do is to cater for the majority, who have to leave, and that is for most of the average family in the Louisburgh area. A factory or some such muscle could be the heart; the people who work there the circulatory force that gives constant and enlivening zest all round.

The promised "invasion" of the Dutch is a case in point. These people could have given employment to some local people and enhanced the income of others. But a vociferous minority denied them this when the evidence is that most of the people of the area and surrounds were aware of the new markets in vegetables, meat, etc., open to the local farmers were this holiday camp built. After all, what do the people of Blackpool or Brighton live on? — the tourist income. From the evidence available it seems as if the people of the locality have learnt a lesson from this little episode which is only a minor stain on our record. The Louisburgh people have constantly proven their ability to get things done, be it the ability to collect thousands of pounds to renovate their churches or the ability to put on a successful horse-show. This potential must now be re-channelled to more serious mundane matters. Already with the creation of community councils this seems to be an inevitability. But everybody's elbow must be bent to the struggle, and that includes the local business men, teachers, priests, farmers, housewives, etc.

In the process it might not be impossible with all our friends, contacts and relations throughout the world to get some rich industrialist to expend some of his millions in establishing some kind of industry in Louisburgh. We have also got the good intentions of the E.E.C., whose leaders must be made more fully aware of our needs, through our representatives in parliament. These E.E.C. people may give us only the residue unless we insist on nothing less than our rights. Only through constantly communicating our requests can we hope to win. If Dusseldorf can have thousands of factories to give employment to its millions,

then surely Louisburgh can have at least one, to give sustenance to its hundreds. Otherwise, the E.E.C. is little more than mere mockery.

And who knows? perhaps in ages hence — in, say 2278 A.D. — the president of the Dusseldorf Association in Louisburgh at their annual dinner-dance will reveal the astounding statistic that there are fifty thousand people who are Germans or of German extraction in Greater Louisburgh area alone? And that this did not include those Germans of Dutch descent in their ghettos on the heathery slopes of Muilrea. So from now on let not our song be: "Where have all the young folk gone?" but: "How many more foreigners are coming?" This is the only legacy our descendants will appreciate.

London N.W. 6

Myles Gibbons

What's in the Name?

Mrs. Edna Teillon, having done some research, writes her findings on —

How Louisburg Square, on Beacon Hill, Boston, Massachusetts got its Name

On Beacon Hill in Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A. there is a "Louisburg Square". Since so many Irish settled in Boston, I wondered if it were named for Louisburgh, Ireland. After much research, writing to the Chamber of Commerce, Realtors, and to a writer of history, I received the following information:

1. Louisburg Square is generally supposed to be named after the Siege of Louisbourg, Cape Breton Island, Canada. A grandson of the first white settler in Boston, William Blaxton, a Lieutenant Blaxton, fell at the Siege, and William Blaxton's land included what is now Louisburg Square. However, there is no positive record that this is true.
2. Louisburg Square in Boston got its name from the big Yankee Colonial victory over the French at the Fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia during the French and Indian war in 1758. Louisbourg was named after Louis XV who was King of France at the time that French fortress was built.

Now, please refer to page 94 of An Choinneal 1973 "How did Louisburgh get its Name"? King Louis XV was born 1710 and died 1774. If Louisburgh, Ireland were named after him, I'm wondering what the name was prior to this, since the village must have existed before 1710? Just wondering

Editor's note: Our Louisburgh was built in 1799—1801 and named, we believe, after Louisbourg, Nova Scotia because of a family connection between Colonel Howe and the local landlord who built the town. Of course the old name— more poetic still — was "Cluain Cearban" (Meadow of Buttercups) which is retained as the Irish language form.

UPDATING OUR FARMS

Today store cattle, sheep and dairying are the most important enterprises on the farms in Louisburgh area. Tillage is of lesser importance and pigs are kept only on a few farms. Before the famine the farming pattern was very different: tillage was then the most important enterprise, particularly the growing of potatoes to provide food for the household. Oats, wheat and flax were also grown and most of the grain was sold. At that time both Westport and Newport harbours thrived on the export of grain. The crops were grown on very wide ridges many of which are still to be seen in the parish. Practically all the work was done by spade as there were very few horses used in farmwork. Cattle were also kept but were of much less importance than they are today. Sheep were kept in small numbers and mainly for wool. It was not until the Scotch Blackface was brought into Thallabawn that sheep were kept in large numbers.

The Clearances

The famine brought great suffering to the people of the parish. This caused many people to lose confidence in farming as a way of life and looked to emigration instead. Even greater changes were to follow. Profits from tillage farming had been dropping for several years before the famine and the repeal of the Corn Laws, to allow the import of grain during famine, further reduced the profits from tillage. At the same time the demand for meat was growing in England, and so livestock farming became more profitable. The income that landlords could collect from their tenants was greatly reduced by the famine and by the fall in the profits from tillage. Scottish stock farmers were anxious for more land and were able to pay higher rent than the Irish tenants. It was this situation that led to the clearances in Old Head, Thallabawn and Glenkeen areas. Most of these evictions appear to have taken place during the eighteen-fifties. After the clearances, tillage became less important in the parish and more cattle were kept. Sheep were still of no great

importance to local people as all the good hills were tenanted by Scotch.

Land Ownership

During all this time the land was owned by the landlords and the farmers were their tenants. Most of these tenants were very poor and farmed a very small area of land. It was not until the Land Acts of the eighteen-eighties that it became possible for a farmer to buy out his holding from the landlord. This, for the first time, gave farmers the opportunity to become men of property. It was to be a gradual process, greatly helped along by the Congested Districts board in the early part of this century.

Farming in the last century was practically independent of bought-in materials. There were no fertilizers, drugs, medicines or sprays. Farmyard manure, wrack and sea-sand were the only materials available to a farmer to improve his crops. It was only after the turn of the century that horse-ploughs and horse-carts became plentiful. It is hard to realize today that until the 1930's there were no drugs in common use to control fluke and worms in cattle and sheep. Vaccines to control braxy and blackleg did not become widely available until the late nineteen-forties.

Farming Today

In the last twenty years dairying was introduced to the parish and today over forty farmers send milk to the creamery at Castlebar. Sheep-farmers began to sell wether-lambs rather than aged wethers during the 1960's and today only a relatively small number of aged wethers are kept in the parish. During the 1960's also the practice of letting cows suckle their calves became more popular, cow numbers increased rapidly and cattle were sold younger and at smaller weights.

During those years farmers became more conscious of the value of fertilizers and lime to help them to carry more and better stock. There is now a greater awareness of diseases like fluke, worms, cobalt pine, etc. and of the drugs and medicines that are available to combat these. But there is still plenty of room for improvement in husbandry of store-cattle, sheep and dairy cows.

Store-Cattle

The biggest problem with the store-cattle enterprise in the parish is that most farmers do not have enough hay or silage to keep their cattle thriving through the winter. They are expected to survive on grass that was allowed to accumulate uneaten on the ground the previous summer. What happens is that cattle lose a lot of weight over the winter as they use up the fat they put on during the summer, as a replacement for an adequate supply of winter feed.

Many bullocks weigh only 6-7 cwt. at 1½ years and heifers only 5-6 cwt. where they should be at least 1½ cwt. heavier. Many cows rear only a calf every second year due to poor feeding. To get cattle to thrive well they need in addition to rough land, one acre of manured grass, per cow, calf and yearling. They also need one half-acre of either hay or silage per animal being overwintered.

Much of the hay and silage made in the parish is very poor quality, it is much too old at cutting and can scarcely maintain an animal's weight for the winter. Green land should be closed for early grass from November until April. It is in the months of April, May and June that cattle gain weight fastest if they have enough good quality grass. Calves should be weaned at the end of October before cows have lost much weight; otherwise cows are very slow to go in calf. All silage ground should get four cwt. of "0-7-30" and three cwt. nitrogen per acre. Hay should get two and a half cwt. of 10-10-20 per acre and pasture should get three cwt. of super or slag per acre and one-two cwts. of nitrogen per acre in late February for early grass.

Sheep

There are at present 5,000 ewes in the parish and there is an enormous difference between what they produce in a mountain and in a lowland situation. On the hills a flock of one hundred ewes would be expected to wean seventy-five lambs weighing around fifty pounds weight each. Under better conditions that hundred ewes, spending most of their time on green land, will wean between a hundred-and-ten and a hundred-and-twenty lambs which should weigh seventy pounds. In the lowland situation most farmers can make more money by better manuring and carrying more ewes. In the hill situation improvements can be got for very small costs. Losses in ewes in spring can be greatly reduced by bringing weak ewes onto enclosed ground in spring and feeding from three-quarters to one pound of meal per ewe per day; or by letting them run on green land. Many lambs are still wintered on the hills and in bad winters over half these can be lost. This can be prevented quite cheaply by keeping these lambs at home and feeding them from one-quarter to one-third of a pound of meal per day on rough ground during January and February. The green land should be closed from Christmas until April when it will provide early grass for cattle or ewes. Hoggets that are expected to be too light to breed should be given a run on grass for a few weeks during the summer to ensure that they gain enough weight. All wether-lambs should be sold, and aged wethers can be replaced by ewes on the hills.

Dairying

This is easily the most profitable of the three enterprises mentioned. It normally leaves a profit at least fifty per cent higher than store cattle. Every good dairy-farmer must have: firstly, plenty of winter feed; secondly, early calving (six weeks before grass is available); thirdly, early grass; and fourthly, plenty of well-manured summer grazing. There are some very good dairy-farms in the parish with average milk yields per cow of up to eight hundred gallons. But there are also some dairy farmers in the parish who get a mere four hundred gallons of milk from their cows each year. These can get a dramatic increase in milk-yield by better feeding and earlier calving. This year the milk was collected by a bulk tanker, which means the milk is sucked out of the cans and into a lorry: the cans themselves are no longer taken to Castlebar.

Opportunity for a Contractor

Many progressive farmers in the parish are now looking to land reclamation and commonage division as the means of expanding their business. There is great opening for a land-reclamation contractor in the parish — one who will take full reclamation jobs and complete them to the Department of Agriculture specification. This should provide full-time employment for two or three men. The County Development Team and North Connacht Farmers "Co-Op" may be able to assist a suitable man to get into the business.

The Square

Seán Cadden



At the blessing of the new water-scheme:

L. to R. Jim O'Malley, Mrs. Sal O'Malley, Father Dan Conneely, Tony O'Hora (contractor), James McNally, Peter McNally

PHOTO FRANK DOLAN

TRACING ROOTS

There was a young man named Liam O'Malley from Curramailley with the famous smuggler George O'Malley when the English man-of-war chased him from the high seas. The English were coming close on them and he made for the Killeries where he often sheltered from danger before. Young O'Malley's mother, who was O'Malley as well, came from Derry — a village along the Killery — and Liam spent his younger days there, most of his time fishing in a boat; so he knew every nook and cave from Ashleagh's waterfall to Inis Téagail island. When the English were closing on them he escaped around Inis Bearna — or Joe's Island as it is now called. They were lucky the tide was full because the little channel is dry when the tide is low; and they took the báirneachs off the rocks going through! The English man-of-war went all the way to Leenane; they were sure that the smuggler was still before them, but there was no sight of him when they got there. So George had again escaped, but seeing now that his time was about up they agreed to scuttle the boat in Cuainín Uí Mháille on the Mayo side near Dooaghtry. George never settled down: he was at every wake and funeral, drinking whiskey and telling yarns about his narrow escapes on sea. He had a hide-out in Clare Island where he used to keep his whiskey and brandy at a place called Mauma in the north of the island, near Ballytoughey.

Young Liam O'Malley went home to Curramailley to his mother and told her that he was through with the sea, and was thinking of getting married to young Harriet O'Malley of Carrigahowley. When he had his house done-up for the young bride he went down to Carrigahowley, married Harriet and took her up to Curramailley in a coach-and-four! There was a bad road to his house, but the people in Aillemore and Curra went out and made it passable for the coach-and-four with O'Malley and his young bride. They lived there and brought up a big family there: they had six boys and some girls.

One day in May the six boys were cutting turf when who should come the way but young Lord Sligo. He must have heard about them. When he inquired how they were getting on the oldest boy told him that their rent and rates were very high and that it was hard to make a living on a mountain farm. That farm was the whole townland of Curramailley, and the neighbours always called the young Mrs. O'Malley "Lady Harriet O'Malley". Lord Sligo promised the young man he'd see that the next rent was reduced; and so it was.

But the call of the sea was in the young O'Malleys' blood: they built a boat and carried it from their home to Port Leacach on Dooaghtry; and they went there fishing a few days a week and didn't mind walking the four or five miles across the mountain and rivers to get fish.

A few more generations of that O'Malley family were reared in Curramailley. One man, Jimmy Liam, made two divides of the farm for his two sons Pat and William. The younger members left the farm and went across to Liverpool to their uncles and cousins, the Durkan's and Staunton's. They were in a big way in the meat business in Liverpool. One of their descendants, Maureen O'Malley, who is a veterinary surgeon, comes across every year to the O'Malley rallies.

Now to return to the O'Malley woman in Derry with whom Liam had spent his young days. She had a good farm on which she kept a lot of sheep, cattle, horses and goats. She had a herd by the name of Walsh who had been evicted from his land because he was caught poaching salmon. After Lord Lucan evicted the tenants of the Tallabawn area he sold the mountains to Boswell Houston, a Scotchman. Lord Sligo sold some of his mountains too, so he changed the O'Malley woman to Furmoyle where he gave her a big area of land and mountain. She had to sell a lot of her sheep and goats and horses because they would not stay in Furmoyle but were wandering to Muilrea. She got her daughter, Kitty, (that was a great name with the clan) married to another O'Malley man from The Demense or Carraholly.

It might be of interest to trace the descendants down to our own time. Kitty O'Malley had sons, one of whom married the Widow Lyons from Emlagh. Another son, John, married and had four or five sons and four or five daughters — nearly all married in the parish of Kilgeever. One of John Kitty's sons was Johnsie who remained on the farm. He was married twice and had a large family, sons and daughters. In his older days he had hard luck with stock, so he made up his mind to return to where his ancestors came from. He

did go to The Demense, where there was better land. He did not have long to enjoy it unfortunately: his second wife died and left him with a big family. In 1933 when the depression came there was nothing to be made on land: a lot of people emigrated, among them the brothers of that family. They are now doing well in England. A sister of theirs married John Edward O'Malley and they have a thriving farm in Meath.

What about the old homes? The man who got Furmoyle is William Ferrins, a fine big man who has it drained and manured and growing clover again. And the man who got Curramailley is another O'Malley — a son of Ned Arthur's — who has a new house built on the land and is doing well with his young wife and family.

So there goes the end of my story!
Knappagh

Tommie (Andy) Staunton

The final sentence of that story written down for An Coinneal has an added poignancy now that the hand is stilled in death. In sympathizing with his widow and family on their incalculable loss one can express also from the point of view of this magazine a conflict of sentiment — a deep disappointment that so much of the history, tradition and lore of Kilgeever has gone into his grave; and at the same time a real sense of satisfaction that we have been treated to many of his enchanting accounts of times and people who are, alas, almost forgotten. He had indeed promised to contribute at least three more articles: dealing with the families and doings of the Ruane's, the Staunton's and the Tomás Aibhistín's.

The following tribute has been sent in by a life-long friend — appropriately O'Malley by name — who obviously knew Tommie intimately. We like to recall that he wished to be known to Coinneal readers by the traditional name which commemorated his ancestors, "Tommie Andy". May his eternity be full of joy among the ancestors he so loyally admired. — Editor

TOMMIE ANDY An Appreciation

It has always seemed to me that Tomás Ó Criomhthain's best known line. "Ní bheidh ár leithéidí ann arís", was not only the makings of the ultimate in epitaphs, but was also of supreme relevance to the people he had particularly in mind, the farmer fishermen of the West. It was my great



good fortune and privilege to enjoy the friendship of quite a few of that splendid breed, whose character was moulded by their hard struggle for survival, and their daily problems with livestock, the sea, the weather and the grudging soil. Great men, rugged, independent, intelligent and articulate, strong in the Faith, generous of their time and property, altogether the best friends and the most interesting companions one could wish to meet.

The late Tommie Staunton of Tallabawn, whose long and meaningful life came to an end last Spring in the quiet townland of Knappagh, Liscarney, was an outstanding example of all these qualities. Courteous and kind, warm and hospitable, with a fine concern for the welfare and feelings of others, he represented the old world in a way that makes one grieve that the old world is now virtually no more. He loved to talk, and his conversation was colourful, entertaining and persuasive; yet he had in high degree the economy of words that so many of the people of the West appear to have inherited from the musical language of their fathers.

A quite remarkable feature of Tommie's conversation was the fascination it held for young people. His favourite topics being the old legends and traditions of the past, one hardly expected them to be of great interest for the young. Tommie's stories and reminiscences enthralled his many teenage friends, who could never get enough of his company.

Essentially, perhaps, he was the supreme clansman, in the best sense of the term. His mother was an O'Malley from Clare Island, and Tommie was a highly esteemed member of the O'Malley Clan, and a most enthusiastic patron and supporter of its annual reunion. I will long remember the ovation given him when he arrived to attend the 1976 Rally. Heart-warming, especially in retrospect, because of course we had no way of knowing then that this would be his final appearance.

But whereas most of us tend to think of the Clan at odd intervals during the year — mostly, perhaps, around Rally time — Tommie was a clansman every day of the year.

To his wife and family, warmest condolences.

He will be sadly missed by his wide circle of friends, young and old. He will be sadly missed at the annual rally of the O'Malley Clan at which he was a familiar and well-beloved figure.

And he will be sadly missed by me, his kinsman and lifelong friend, to whom the West will never be quite the same again.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam!

M.J. O'M.

SOJOURN

In our area we have a lot to attract tourists or visitors from overseas — our clean beaches, unpolluted lakes and rivers and many other attractions. Our news media have described the area as a haven for fisherman and angler. But we have one serious draw-back, namely the weather in this very damp climate of ours. As our prevailing winds blow in from the warm south-western ocean they bring with them the vapour that turns into rain when it meets the colder air over Ireland, and so we get more than our share of rain. The summer of 1976 was an exception: we got a very long spell of fine weather which lasted from early summer until late autumn. Because of that we had a very heavy influx of tourists and visitors from overseas. Among them were some friends of ours who came from London and were our guests during their stay. They were in fact our relations, whose parents had emigrated from here well nigh fifty years ago. Their visit here had a twofold purpose: firstly, they were anxious to see all their relations and the birthplace of their parents; and secondly, they wanted to visit the various places of historic interest that they had learned about, from their parents, when they were in their 'teens. Because of the knowledge they had already acquired from their parents they were very much interested; they toured the place extensively and among the many places they visited was Achill Island. I had the pleasure of accompanying them on that tour.

We arrived on the Island at noon on a fine, sunny day in mid-August; and after a short stay at a restaurant to have a light meal and to make a few inquiries, we set out on our tour of the Island. Achill, no doubt, has a lot to offer the tourist by way of scenery: but the place that impressed me most during our tour of Achill was a place known as "Atlantic Drive". This is a road which was recently constructed mainly to accommodate tourists, and because of where it is situated it has more to offer by way of scenery than I can describe. Built on a precipice or step cliff for a distance of five miles along the sea, it rises at one point to over three hundred

feet above sea-level. As we drove, Clare Island and numerous other small islands were in the foreground; and in the background were Achill's high mountains with sparkling, clear streams quickly winding their way towards the sea. The water-basin of these streams was covered in a blanket of purple heather and the watershed formed the distant horizon so that, no doubt, it is a very rewarding journey for anyone interested in beautiful scenery.

To me, however, — now that I am in my declining years — when I look back on life I often think that the Atlantic Drive has a lot more to offer than the naked eye can see. Being built on a precipice, as I have described, and indeed one which offers no protection to the passer-by, it is to me a very good illustration of what we meet on our sojourn through life. Travelling on that path we may often have to go along the verge of a steep cliff where, if one falls over — even through no fault of one's own — there is no hope of survival. The fall is often arranged by the perverted ingenuity of man. I am convinced that the youth of today are not made fully aware of the pitfalls that lie ahead of them and the sacrifices that their journey through life will often demand of them.

I would suggest that the teachers from the various schools who are responsible for organizing educational tours would accompany their pupils along the Atlantic Drive and explain to them in more detail the comparison I have already referred to between that road and our sojourn through life.

Cross

Michael Sammin



Together! — at Killeen Community Social

PHOTO FRANK DOLAN

AT HOME ABROAD

At Sunday Mass early in April last it was announced that a Louisburgh Reunion and Social would be held in Coventry, England on 15 April, 1977 and anyone from our parish interested in attending the function was invited to contact the organizer, Father Teddy O'Malley C.C. Coventry. During the ensuing week I considered the possibility of my making the trip to Coventry but then I wavered, felt it would not be feasible, and decided to forget it. I must have said my prayers well on the morning of the 14th April for on impulse I made a quick decision and on that afternoon I was on my way to Dublin and next morning I winged my way to Birmingham airport en route to Coventry. As I neared Birmingham I began to have some misgivings about the whole idea. I was a lone Louisburghman on board the 'plane: I never had been to Coventry; was this a wild goose caper or was I mad? Where was I going anyway? — such were my ruminations just then. As I disembarked I felt rather like a man going on his honeymoon without his wife! However as I had crossed the Rubicon there was no point now in dallying, so I boarded a bus for Coventry.

On arrival there I called at the Presbytery on Tiverton Road, Wykam, where I was admitted and cheerfully greeted by the organizer, Father Teddy, whose parents hailed from Cregganbawn and from Cregganacopple. It was our first meeting and in his boyish, genial manner he made me feel quite at home even before I sat to table with him to share his calories while simultaneously holding discourse on tales and topics of general Louisburgh interest. The easy informality of the occasion was accentuated the more by frequent interpositions from his homely and friendly house-keeper, Miss Baynes who comes from Ballina in County Mayo and is a retired nurse.

A little later our Louisburgh Parish Priest (Very Rev. John Canon Fitzgerald) who was to be the guest of honour at the Reunion called at the Presbytery to see Father Teddy and to finalize arrangements about our time of arrival at the function at Saint Brendan's Social Centre. The Canon had arrived in Coventry a day or two earlier. For me, meeting the Canon and greeting him in the City of Coventry — far from our mutual West-of-Ireland environment — was quite an emotive exercise. It evoked for me fond memories of our home parish and (although I was no more than twenty-four hours from home) afforded me a more realistic conception of the nostalgic memories that must surely arise when our emigrants meet the occasional friend or neighbour from

home who is fortunate enough to cross "the Pond" as a visitor.

When final details were arranged for the Social the Canon left us and Father O'Malley then whisked me on a brief tour of part of the city. Our first port of call was the imposing edifice that is Coventry hospital where he had a number of sick calls to attend to while I met and chatted to some Irish patients in the hospital; we then paid a visit to the magnificent and impressive Protestant Cathedral. It stands beside what remains of the old cathedral which was very extensively damaged by German bombs during World War II. Only part of the walls of this building now remains. Inside these walls stands a massive cross of nails. The story of this cross is interesting:

When Coventry (old) Cathedral was blitzed in November 1940 and destroyed by fire, three 14th century iron nails fell from the blazing timber of the roof and a large number of medieval nails were found amongst the rubble and sticking out of the charred and blackened beams. A priest made a large cross out of the three huge nails and this cross is set on an altar in the ruined building. Other nails were gathered up, silver plated and sent to Churches in all corners of the world including Russia and East Berlin. The Coventry Cross of Nails had become a symbol of forgiveness — new life coming out of death and reconciliation between men and nations. The Community of The Cross of Nails which subsequently evolved, is the worldwide expression of this occasion.

(Quoted, composite'y, from: two booklets on the Coventry Cross: "Fire in Coventry" (Stephen Verney) and "The Community of the Cross of Nails" (Coventry Cathedral Publication).

After a short, quick, light shopping-spree (razor blades, shampoo etc.) we returned to the Presbytery where, in preparation for the night, ablutions were performed (and Miss Baynes renewed a shirt-button or two). A young man called and was introduced to me as Austin O'Malley — a law student who is the son of Louisburgh parents — and he drove us to the home of Frank Sheridan where the Canon was awaiting us. Frank is the husband of a Killadoon lady who was formerly Mary Mannion. On arrival at the Sheridan homestead all urgency about the Social seemed to evaporate. Apart from the Sheridan family we also met there a Mrs. Cannon who had arrived in Coventry from Liverpool that evening to attend the Social. She was formerly Miss Geoghegan from Derryheigh. It seemed to me that handshakes and greetings were hardly through when we were seated into a sumptuous repast prepared by the good lady of the house and in such warm, cheery and jovial atmosphere "the inner man" was fully satiated and then the entire party set out for the night's rendezvous.

On arrival at Saint Brendan's Centre it was impossible



Together! — Louisburgh-Coventry

PHOTO IRISH POST

not to discern the Irish flair that prevailed; we might, I mused, be arriving at any social centre in Western Ireland. To me there were many nameless faces and many familiar faces and all were friendly and most were Irish. All the non-Irish were the "better halves" of Irish wives or husbands. Introductions were under way and acquaintances were renewed and the dialogue was brisk. Folk were filling in and in the general, happy excited air that prevailed a sort of pleasant confusion reigned. Each new arrival seemed to cause an abrupt interruption in conversation as fresh dialogue commenced, and finally the business of the enjoyment of the Social got under way to the sweet melodic rhythm of the Johnny Bloomer orchestra.

Among the first to greet us at the function was the smiling, cheerful manageress of Saint Brendan's Club, Nellie Prendergast. It was Nellie who, on behalf of the Coventry/Louisburgh community made the presentation to the Canon of a beautiful, silver tea-set later in the night. A lady of

spontaneous generosity and easy charm — a fitting emissary from our parish — Nellie was formerly Miss Grady from Cloonty. I was pleasantly surprised, too, to renew acquaintance with a fellow-pupil of Accony School the good-natured Austin Burns of Pulgloss who displays so many of the lovable characteristics of his unforgettable father, John A! Austin has contributed to the last issue of "An Choinneal" in verse. As the night moved towards morn I met many Louisburgh people, and still more, but were I to print the list here it would resemble, I think, a litany of the Irish Saints! Mention of saints reminds me of one lady with whom I had a little chat on that night; she was Agnes O'Reilly from Callacoon and, although she was physically handicapped, she was in no way daunted but immersed herself in the spirit of the occasion. Agnes made avid enquiries about Louisburgh, its happenings and its people and asked me to convey to two ladies at home her special regards. This I did on my return but I now know that Agnes will never read these lines. She passed to her eternal reward within the past couple of months. May she find eternal peace in her true Home.

One of the highlights of the night was a colourful and gracious display of Irish dancing in traditional costume by two little girls and a boy, the children of Paddy and Betty Cleary. Their performance was exhilarating and certainly entertained the audience. I could not but reflect that their parents ought to be justifiably proud of these children whose dedication to the art has taken them to diverse cities in England, resulting in the capture by them of a vast array of medals and trophies — proof positive of their high degree of accomplishment. The Cleary home was one of the two homesteads burdened with me as temporary tenant at night. I was their guest on my second and third nights in Coventry and their hospitable generosity and the easily-detected happy atmosphere in their home absolutely fascinated me. Betty is a native of Doughmackeon and, prior to the advent of Paddy, her surname was McGreal. Paddy is a Mayoman from Bangor Erris. On the night of the Social (really on the morning after!) I was guest in the home of my Louisburgh townsman, Austin O'Malley (Chapel Street). After a sound sleep I arose late and found that he had gone off to do a half-day's work. I demolished a hefty breakfast prepared for me by his pleasant, gentle wife, Peggy, who was a Limerick teacher. During breakfast I made the acquaintance of their six unspoilt and well-mannered children and in the early evening Peggy drove me to Saint Brendan's to meet some of the boys who were not working on that Saturday.

At the Club I met a Louisburghman whom I had briefly met on the previous night at the Social and he was a man

who made a great impression on me. I learned that he is a widower and is also a grandfather. I would describe him as a man of quite pleasant countenance and of powerful physique. I had a lengthy conversation with him in the congenial surroundings of Saint Brendan's where he was relaxing with a few friends. He displayed a keen and very genuine interest in current topics and political matters and he was articulate and most interesting in discourse. It was easy to glean from our conversation that he had a deep and abiding interest in the welfare and fortunes of his native land: his intensity was most significant when he spoke of Ireland. I believe that it might be a worthwhile exercise for some of our leading politicians to hear his expressed disappointment at the meagre progress achieved in this country after more than fifty years of native government. He was poignantly critical of the failure to stem the cancer of emigration through the years. The man in question is John Gallagher who emigrated to Coventry from Aitnaveen many years ago.

In the Club on the same day I also met Jim Gibbons (Roonith), and John Kilgallon who although born in Liverpool answers to the description "Irishman". Jim is married to Bridie O'Toole, and John is married to her sister, Celia. The two ladies were reared in Thallabaun. More of Jim later!

On Sunday morning I attended Mass at 11.30 and was accompanied by Paddy and Betty Cleary, their children and a few of their friends. Father Teddy celebrated the Mass.



Mrs. Nellie Prendergast making presentation to Canon Fitzgerald. Also in picture is Father Teddy O'Malley

PHOTO IRISH POST

There was a large congregation, predominantly Irish, with a considerable Louisburgh representation. At the appropriate part of the Mass Father Teddy invited us to exchange a token of peace: I extended my hand to a lady on my right and we shook hands. As I was resuming a kneeling position it crossed my mind that the lady's face was familiar: I felt she was from Louisburgh and that one of us had picked the other as a dancing-partner late on the night of the Social. I succumbed to the distraction and my curiosity impelled me to bend over towards her and whisper "Did I meet you on Friday night?" The reply was in the affirmative but was not verbal. It was uttered by way of a muffled explosive "OH! hee-hee-hee". This charming lady, who had a distinctive and imposing ginger bee-hive hairstyle which one could not easily forget, was Sally Gavin from Cregganbaun. Father Teddy was kind to the carousers in his congregation and he did not deliver any sermon at that Mass! Outside the Church there was a colluvium of many Louisburgh men and women and some of their children, and after lengthy discourse and many reminiscences the ladies, in the best tradition of Womens' Lib., insisted on being driven to their respective homes to get on with preparation of dinner before allowing their men-folk to complete the reminiscences in the cosy surroundings of the local tavern.

An account of my visit to Coventry would be inadequate without further mention of Jim Gibbons, whom I met each day. If ever you are in Coventry and feeling out-of-sorts or depressed or down-and-out, I suggest that you make contact with Jim and the transformation will be instant; even faster than 'Anadin'! Jim has an inborn and invigorating sense of humour and is, without effort, the life of the party; only his magnanimity exceeds his unpredictability. I spent hours with Jim, and his convivial company never faltered. He and his wife, Bridie, gave an unforgettable party at their home on my last night there. The party went on through the night; the menu was superb and, unlike the wedding feast at Cana, no miracle was required to replenish the spirits! The party continued until 5 a.m. and the only mundane comfort I then lacked was sleep. Daylight was now slowly seeping through the drawingroom curtains and in reflective mood I realized that in a few hours' time I would be back in the old country and I would have only memories of the past few days to ponder the many genial and lovable friends I had learned so much to appreciate.

Paddy Cleary got me home from the party and by 10 o'clock I was again in the home of Frank Sheridan with Father Teddy, and the Canon was there and ready for the journey to Birmingham airport. There also to say a final

goodbye were Jim Gibbons and Paddy Cleary. When the final farewells began I suddenly and consciously sensed a heavy silence settle on the party and there was no doubting that the few Irish emigrants in that small group were travelling in spirit with us across the Irish Sea to the place from whence at first they flew; and that their minds, chained in a kind of trance were re-echoing the immortal other words of Oliver Goldsmith " . . . Here to return and die at home at last". I hopefully look forward to the establishment of such reunions as annual events on a reciprocal basis. Thank you, Father Teddy, for the inception of the reunion idea and for ensuring its success; and thank you also for your kindness and your company; and thank you, Louisburgh in Coventry, for three memorable and gloriously happy days in your midst.

Mooneen

Oliver P. Morahan

Canon Fitzgerald asks that the following message of his personal gratitude be included:

I am happy to avail myself of the "Coinneal" pages to express my warm and sincere gratitude to the people of Kilgeever parish now in Coventry, for the genuine welcome they gave me on my recent visit. I concur with the tribute so well paid by Oliver P. Morahan to all those good people who made us feel so much at home. I know that though many of these people could not have known me personally, they welcomed me as the priest of their native parish; and I am sincerely grateful for the presentation by which they expressed their welcome. I hope Louisburgh-Coventry reunions will continue — to the benefit of both communities — and I pray for God's blessing on them.

John Fitzgerald P.P. (Canon)

ORO, SE DO BHEATHA ABHAILE

The trend of immigration back into the parish continues and "An Choinneal" again extends welcome and congratulations to the following who have returned to settle at home :

Johnny and Mrs. Fergus, Cahir
 P. J. and Mrs. O'Malley, Roonagh
 Eddie and Mrs. Nee, Feenone
 Paddy and Mrs. Morrisson, Corragán
 John and Mrs. Kerr, Bunowen
 Seán and Mrs. McEvilly, Bunowen
 Tony and Mrs. Maxwell, Kilgeever
 Brendan and Mrs. O'Malley, Laughta
 Davy Gibbons, new Proprietor McDermott's Hotel
 Peter and Mrs. O'Grady (Glenkeen), with three children

KEEP YOUR WORD

We have erred: erred by misjudgement. In our last issue because of pressure of space we had to omit some features, among them "Keep Your Word". We are glad to hear of our readers' genuine disappointment that this did not appear in Number Nine; and still more glad of the numbers of younger readers — even secondary-school pupils — who noticed the omission and assured us that they had looked forward to, and appreciate the lists of old words which are still in use among the older (perhaps now also the younger) people of the parish.

We willingly continue our avowed effort to keep these salty old words in living circulation both because of their own intrinsic worth and especially as a counter to the proliferation of insipid clichés such as "No-way", "It's a send-up", "This is a rip-off!" "You must be joking!" not to speak of the incorrect use of "thankfully", "hopefully" and "presently" which are currently(!) being foisted on us by shallow communicators. Let's reach for the salt once more then:

(As in earlier issues we print with each word four possible meanings. Can you pick the correct one? We use our usual phonetic spelling in parentheses to facilitate pronunciation).

1. **Aerach** (Ay-ruch) — (a) musical; (b) a windy day in spring; (c) light-hearted; (d) a chafing of the skin of one's legs
2. **Bacán** (buckawn) — (a) a young male goat; (b) a wooden bolt; (c) a milking-vessel; (d) a hinge-support
3. **Cantalach** (kon-thull-uch) — (a) the 'singing' of a kettle; (b) malicious gossip; (c) cranky; (d) an instrument for twisting a straw-rope
4. **Clochár** (kluch-ur) — (a) death-rattle; (b) a large stone; (c) a 'grandfather' clock; (d) an egg which has failed to hatch
5. **Deannach** (jan-uch) — (a) home-made; (b) dust; (c) the jamb of a door; (d) stiff-jointed or arthritic

6. **Dúbhradán** (dhoo-ruh-dhawn) — (a) ink made from sloes; (b) potatoe-blight; (c) a speck of dust; (d) a black beetle
7. **Faiteach** (fotch-yuch) — (a) having freckles; (b) cally (=colcannon); (c) frightened; (d) partly bald
8. **Faoileán** (fweel-yawn) — (a) a sea-gull; (b) the wheel of a water mill; (c) a shell-fish; (d) an old woman's shoulder-shawl
9. **Geidimín** (gedge-emeen) — (a) a coarse grass; (b) a shout used in hunting; (c) an unlikeable character; (d) a utensil used in butter-making
10. **Gleic** (gleck) — (a) a handful; (b) a twist of the neck; (c) a mischievous meddler; (d) a vice-like grip
11. **Puiteach** (pwitch-uch) — (a) a skillet; (b) soft mud; (c) a flably paunch; (d) a "sweating-house"
12. **Scraith** (scraw) — (a) arable, river-side land; (b) "scram!" or "get lost!"; (c) a sod of earth; (d) part of a donkey's tacklings
13. **Seibhneach** (shiv-nuch) — (a) lightning; (b) in danger of toppling; (c) a strong individual; (d) a symptom of on-coming 'flu
14. **Súgán** (soo-gun) — (a) a home-made whiskey; (b) a child's plaything; (c) a disease in cattle; (d) a straw-rope
15. **Traisleach** (thrash-luch) — (a) litter or rubbish; (b) an untidy heap; (c) the door-step; (d) a special kind of flail

Now turn to page 72 to test your knowledge and/or memory.



L. to R. Mary T. Needham, Julia Mannion, Margaret MacNamara.

PHOTO FRANK DOLAN

LETTER FROM SEAN

3 November, 1977

Dear Mother,

Here we are again with the summer gone and Christmas only seven weeks away. It was such a treat to see you all again this summer and also to see all the improvements around the parish mainly the numbers of new houses being built or already completed. Such a great healthy sign to see the new houses instead of the boards nailed across the windows like we used to see some years ago. And the church is beautiful, it's a credit to the parish and the man that did the job, PAT COX. I didn't meet him at all, I'd like to shake his hand and congratulate him also on another job, I saw he did in Carramore. There was a big jungle of a field there on the road down to the ball-alley and he turned it into a piece of the Golden Vale. However there's one job he ought to do and it could be another living monument to his memory and that's if he'd put a floor in the ball alley. I think it would only take a couple of hundred pounds to make a beautiful alley out of that white elephant. When we were young we didn't have the price of a ball and now that we have the ball we don't have a place to play! Do you think maybe you'd mention this to him because I know he had great regard for you always where he might resent me suggesting it being that I'm away from the place so long if you know what I mean. We were so glad to hear of MARTIN JOE O'TOOLE making it to the Senate. He was always nice and helpful: he took me for a drive down Bunowen one day when I was home, as we passed HANNON'S I saw this new house on the side of the brae he said that's a son of TOMMY MACK that built that one and, on the top of the brae there was another one, a son of DICK LYONS he said. JOHN, is it? he teaches in Sancta Maria. Down next to JACK DUNNE'S R.I.P. there were two more: one he told me was DONALD O'LEARY'S and the other EILEEN DUNNE'S family, the KERR'S. Oh! it made my heart glad to see the children on the road going to school. My old friend THOMAS NICHOLSON must have nearly the full of the road of them. They had twins since my last visit. I think what makes me so glad is that once in a while you'll hear the know-it-alls saying that the West is dying and the population moving back east across the Shannon like it was before the plantations and Cromwell's time. Did you go to see MARGARET "MACK", she and PAT from New York had a grand time and wasn't it nice to see a smoke in Joe's house? Lord have mercy on him!

All here are well, thank God. JOHN O'MALLEY of Doughmac-

keown (Tony Mailles) and myself play handball on the week-end, every once in a while we visit AUSTIE BURKE, he's holding up well and sends his regards. We go to the "Old Tuners" in Clinton every second Sunday they have a nice band there playing Irish music. It's run by the McNALLY'S — they'd be the Feenooone McNally's and friends of our own. Now that I think of it I meet many more of your generation there than I would in Louisburgh. There's JOHN O'MALLEY of Buneereen who's wife is a sister of JAMES MAXWELL'S wife, MARY GAVIN from Cregganbawn; and JOHN GANNON from Killsallagh whose wife BRIDGIE is a sister of HARRY HUGHES the blacksmith in Westport. Ah! there's a lot of us here and our hearts are over there and it's small wonder the enchantment is there. It's lovely to go home but there's just one thing that hurts when someone you grew up with passes you on the road in a car and doesn't stop for a minute to shake your hand. Life is so short and twenty-five years from now who'll know the difference, anyhow. I think of all the different ones I would like to have a drink with that are lying in Kilgeever and Killeen. JAMES FOY who was in school with me the best Irish scholar in our class, and it wasn't a bad class; TOM O'TOOLE who fixed my bike innumerable times and got paid maybe one time in five; ANTHONY MACHALE who took me fishing my first time and many times thereafter; PADDY TONER who played the melodeon when he were going to school. The number is getting bigger and our time is getting shorter and how can I help but grieve for MARY COYNE. She harboured us all, was a born matchmaker, and had a knack of putting you in your place when you got out of line. I really enjoyed those old-time dances on Monday nights: it gave me back a few hours of my youth. NORA (Geoghegan) FADDEN is as light on the foot as she was twenty years ago. Also ANNIE BEA CASEY, NORA WALSH and it was nice to meet PADDY GAFFNEY and wife BREEGE home from Cleveland. ANNIE O'TOOLE from Doughmackeown and Saint Louis and also NANCY GAFFNEY. I hadn't seen Nancy in twenty-six years. It was good to meet MAUREEN NEEDHAM of Bunowen home from New York and living in Carndonagh, County Donegal. It was so nice to meet MARY MACHALE of Pulgloss and EILEEN GIBBONS of Askelane. NORA BURKE from Skipton, VIRGINIA SAMMON and JOSIE BURKE from Carrowmore. (I don't remember married names anymore, but you know them all anyhow). I was sorry to hear of JIMMY "Myles" O'MALLEY'S death and ANNIE MACHALE of Emlagh (Austin Jamesy) also PADDY MACK of Bridge Street. It's nice to get the "Mayo News" it does keep one in touch. Drop a line when you can, Mother, and maybe please God, we'll be back next summer, if we can put this winter over us and put a few shillings together. Give my special regards to MRS O'MALLEY of Mooneen, and MRS. MORAHAN who taught me to read and write. And now take care of yourself.

Love,

SEAN



CLINTON, MASS. Little Louisburgh

In the summer of 1977, while trying to cope with an inactivity occasioned by an illness which unduly interrupted our plans for the celebration of our Golden Wedding Anniversary, I came across the song "The Boys from the County Mayo" adapted, from a traditional Irish ballad, by Mary Carton. I was intrigued by an added third verse which took some of the towns of County Mayo and some of the cities of America and rhymed and metered them into a tuneful parody of the first two stanzas of the song. That triggered a natural reaction. The colourful, often melodious, and always apt names of the villages around Louisburgh sprang into my mind — names remembered from childhood when my parents, natives of Derrygorrow and Feenone, told them like beads on a rosary to identify Clinton friends, or to regale their children with the beauty spots of "the West". Later in my ten delightful visits, under the expert guidance of my cousin, Tony Phil of The Bridge, I was to visit these villages — often comprising only a house or two, but always identifying for me some family I knew and grew up with in that little Massachusetts town of Clinton which Father Leo Morahan so appropriately called "Little Louisburgh".

Well, to make a long story longer, I began the composition which I sent to Tony Phil's widow, my first cousin and dearest friend in Ireland, who lived with my grandmother in Feenone and with my mother in Clinton before returning to Ireland to marry Tony O'Malley and settle in the lovely house at The Bridge, which has always been our headquarters as well as that of our friends when we visit Ireland. I suggested "half in jest and wholly in earnest" that Basil Morahan might add it to his remarkable repertoire of ballads, especially for the edification of any Clinton folk in his audiences, at Old Head, Murrisk Abbey Hotel, McDermott's, Clew Bay or Morrison's Beach. That was the last I expected to hear from my lyrical efforts until Nora wrote that our dear friend Mollie McConville had

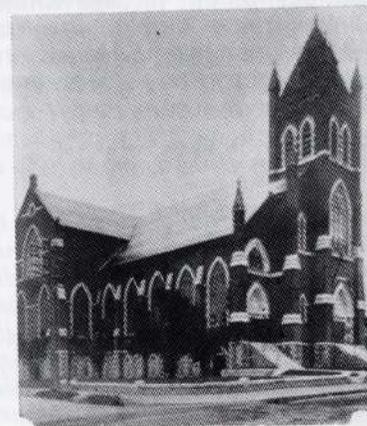
requested a copy for possible entry in "An Choinneal" and to ask if I had any other suitable material would I send it post haste. That reminded me that I had promised Father Leo when he visited with me fourteen years ago that I would write a piece for "An Choinneal" which I greatly admire and which my son, a professor of English and Irish literature at Fitchburg State College, uses in his classes regularly and most successfully. This might be the opportunity to redeem my forgotten pledge.*

After I had used up all the village place names in my ditty, I toasted a bit in the third verse. The Louisburgh emigrants to Clinton, Worcester, Boston, New York, Chicago and other American centres "lost no love on position or wealth" my song states, "education was best". And indeed it was, in their eyes. Because they had so little themselves, it seems they were determined their children would have whatever advantage education could bring, so they sweated and sacrificed and took justifiable pride in the degrees and honours and professions their offspring attained.

Last year, in connection with the United States Bicentennial Celebration, at the request of Monsignor John F. Gannon, pastor of Saint John's Church (a magnificent edifice erected one hundred years ago, largely through the contributions of the Louisburgh settlers in Clinton), I wrote a history of the parish and its people which was published in forty-four weekly installments in the local newspaper. I attempted to catalogue some of the achievements of the sons and daughters of these good people. I gave up on listing Town officials, local teachers both elementary and secondary, not for lack of names but for lack of space and because I feared I might inadvertently omit some. I did

*This poem appears on page 108 — Ed.

*Saint John's Church, Clinton —
"a magnificent edifice erected
one hundred years ago, largely
through the contributions of
Louisburgh settlers in Clinton"*



compile an enumeration and from it, I shall attempt to summarize those who lived in Clinton during the present century, that is coterminous with my own life, and whose roots are in Louisburgh either on their father's or mother's side or, as is true in the vast majority of them, on both sides.

Our greatest boast, of course, is that in the national picture, there were three members of Congress, corresponding to the Irish Dáil, George Donovan, Edward Kenney* and Philip Philbin.* In our State Legislature, Eben Salmon Cobb* and Thomas F. Fallon who is now serving his tenth term. We also had Matthew Connelly*, secretary to President Truman and C. Francis Murphy* who served as Assistant U.S. Attorney General; William Hester,* William O'Grady,* Thomas E. Scanlon and Joseph O'Malley in Internal Revenue Service; Thomas F. McNally as Chief Labor Negotiator; Edmund McNamara and Raymond Ball, Federal Bureau of Investigation Agents, and McNamara later served as Police Commissioner for the city of Boston, one of the largest police departments in the nation. Joseph W. McIntyre, was secretary to Congressman Donovan and later was administrative assistant to U.S. Senators David J. Walsh,* Benjamin Smith, and was, until his death, personal secretary to U.S. Senator, Edward M. Kennedy.

Eva Hester who recently visited Louisburgh with her sisters, Margaret, wife of former Commissioner of Agriculture, Harry Broderick, was secretary to another Clintonian, (also U.S. Congressman) Joseph E. Casey whose folks came from Galway. She was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts and garnered 100,000 votes against the winner of that nomination and election, the son of the Speaker of the National House of Representatives, third most important political office in the United States. Eva is currently administrative aide to the Ways and Means Committee of the Massachusetts House and also teaches Public Speaking for the State Department of Education at Harvard University

*Requiescat in pace

Mr. McGrail's article here lists lengthy catalogues of names of the Clinton-Louisburgh community who became famous in greater or lesser degree in the Judiciary, Law, Medicine, Education, Government, Army, Navy, University, Literature, Arts, Church, Music, Business, and Sport. The lists are at once a splendid witness to the achievements of our cousin community and to the application and dedication of the compiler. And the names on these lists sound quite like a roll-call in a national school in

Louisburgh, Tallabawn or Cregganbawn. The article continues:

Louisburgh is known throughout Ireland as the Mother of Priests. Clinton has the same reputation in the United States. Small in area, only five square miles, with a population of 13,000 which has remained constant during this century, it has produced a total of eighty priests. Of this number, I can identify sixty as having Louisburgh antecedents.

Michael H. Kittredge was born in 1851 and raised in the Duck Harbor section of Clinton, an area on the shore of Coachlace Pond and settled totally by Irish immigrants many from Louisburgh and which was the birth place of both his parents. As was customary at that time because of necessity, he went to work in the Clinton Mills at the age of twelve. After working several years, he returned to school, graduated from Clinton High School and was the first Clinton boy to graduate from Holy Cross College, then only a little more than a quarter of a century old. He entered the Grand Seminary in Montreal and was ordained in 1879, the first priest from Clinton. He was named pastor of Saint John's Church in 1911 at the age of sixty and remained there until his death in 1917.

Considering the geographical area and the resident population of Louisburgh and it environs, and the corresponding statistics of Clinton, the evidence of the influence of this segment of the Irish population is astounding. What of the Louisburgh emigrants who went to England, Scotland, or to Worcester, Boston, New York, Chicago, or the hundreds of other cities and towns which welcomed them? How did they and their descendants fare? What was their influence on the people and places to which they fled, seeking employment and opportunity? Wherever the light of "An Choinneal" reaches, there should be people who, like myself, are interested not only in his own roots but in the accomplishment of the people who came from the same lovely section of God's footstool which nurtured his roots. I know I would like to hear from them and I am sure Father Leo would welcome them into the pages of this magazine.

Berlin, Clinton

John P. McGrail

The editor eagerly underwrites Mr. McGrail's suggestion of pooling our knowledge of Louisburgh's contribution to other communities and having them published in future issues. The Clinton "honours lists" — omitted here because of space shortage — will appear in another Coinneal.

MY VISIT TO LOURDES

It was the last week in August. At midnight on Monday night, my parents and I were among one hundred and twenty pilgrims with a priest-leader who flew out from Dublin airport on our way to Lourdes. We all stayed at the same hotel, which was owned by a French gentleman married to an Irish lady. We were warmly welcomed there and shown to our rooms. After an early continental breakfast the following morning, our courier led us to Mass in the Poor Clare convent opposite the hotel and from there on foot to the Grotto. On entering the grounds it was all so beautiful and edifying. Silence is the rule there, broken only by continuous prayer and the recitation of the Rosary. From the Grotto we walked to Bernadette's birthplace, saw the actual bed in which she was born and the furniture in the house just as it was then, the mill where she and her parents lived in poverty, and the one room in a jail which they occupied for a while around that time. The highlight of that day was the late evening candlelight procession, with people from many countries joining their voices together in the majestic "Ave Maria" and Benediction hymns.

Recess

At six o'clock the following morning, a busload of us set out on a daytrip for the Spanish seaside resort San Sebastian — a journey of four hours each way. We sensed our first contact with Basque nationalist trouble on crossing the border into Spain when two Spanish policemen, armed with revolver and bayonet, boarded our bus to see our passports. Each satisfied himself that the face we wore was the one on the passport so everything was in order and we moved on.

Spanish resort

We had a very enjoyable trip, though at times it was rather frightening as we travelled along the Pyrenees and could see the ravines maybe a thousand feet below. The day was hot, though comfortable enough to enjoy, on the beautiful beach there. To us it was terribly crowded, with

Mary Lyons, R.G.N. "The supernatural atmosphere that we breathed during those five days in the Grotto grounds was like fresh air in the heat of life's desert."



miles and miles of sand; and sun canopies and parasols were used in abundance to protect people from the heat. The fact that the Spaniards take their siesta from two o'clock until four each afternoon curtailed our shopping-time very much. We attended late-afternoon Mass in the crypt of the Basilica there at 6 p.m. before embarking on our four-hour journey back to Lourdes, where we arrived at 11 p.m.

Being essentially Lourdes pilgrims, our party and many others too, visited the Grotto after our return that night. That visit, I can truthfully say, was the highlight of my trip. The place was comparatively uncrowded. The stillness, the peace, the devotion, the silent prayer at midnight was so edifying and so moving. The following day, the ladies in our party were among those who queued over two hours in the forenoon sun and heat for our dip in the purifying water of Lourdes. Meanwhile the men got through faster as their queue was not so long!

Scare on high

In the afternoon we went on a bus trip to La Gavarnie, in the Upper Pyrenees. The scenery was breathtaking but the journey a bit treacherous; at least we thought so. The bus was old and crotchety: the driver had a four-year-old child, who liked a lot of attention, on the seat beside him. This child was possibly his son. The journey was uphill, ascending all the way, and the winter snow was still on the summit. It was a one-way trek for the buses, all going up after two o'clock and coming down after six o'clock. We passed many dangerous ravines, and surely as we were at each of these the bus driver engaged himself in conversation with the child and gave him all his attention even

while negotiating the dangerous bends. We were scared stiff, and some did not dare look out of the windows. The fact that we saw brake-fluid leaking from a bus — not ours — at the top did nothing to calm our nerves for the descent! On the way, we passed through a few towns and valleys all very beautiful, typically peasant countryside. There was pony riding on the summit for anyone interested. Nearby we visited the Catholic Church of Our Lady of Snows; it was old and in dire need of repair. We got back to Lourdes for evening procession and devotions.

On Friday we revisited the cathedrals, all very impressive and beautiful. The modern underground Basilica of Saint Pius X has accommodation for 60,000 people or more, and has a continuous flow of worshippers, due no doubt to the cool temperature prevailing down there. That afternoon our priest-leader, on our behalf, presented a man-size candle for the grotto chandelier, to burn later in petition for the requests of the people of Ireland.

We were very much impressed by the absolute cleanliness of every place and everything we saw. One could not but notice how very commercialized the place was with shops and stalls all crowded with potential buyers of souvenirs of all kinds.

The supernatural atmosphere that we breathed during those five days in the Grotto grounds was like fresh air in the heat of life's desert.

The Hillside Stations of the Cross taught us the seriousness of sin and inspired in us a stronger resolve to improve our ways.

We said goodbye to Lourdes on Friday night and promised, God willing, to be back again one day.

Furmoyle

Mary Lyons

The following are some prayer meetings nearby, where people meet weekly:

WESTPORT	
R.A.Y. Rooms (on Convent grounds)	8.30 Thursday
Sister Hilda - Westport 192.	
CASTLEBAR	
Social Services Centre (entrance from Castle Street)	8.00 Wednesday
Sister Catherine - Castlebar 21016.	
BALLINROBE	
National School	8.30 Monday
Sister Anne Marie - Ballinrobe 80.	
CLAREMORRIS	
Church Sacristy	8.00 Tuesday
Sister Carmel - Claremorris 6.	

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

There is a deep spiritual hunger in the heart of man today. Young people are searching; searching for what? All of us, I'm sure, experience an emptiness in our lives in spite of the fact that we try to bury ourselves in work or luxuries or whatever else appeals. If we are honest with ourselves we must admit that there is more to life than we get out of it — that we are not just living to the full. I believe that we can only find our true identities when we realize like Saint Augustine that our hearts will never rest until they rest in Him.

God is using the Charismatic Renewal to bring people to the realization that they were created for Him alone, and that He alone can satisfy this hunger; fill this emptiness. Before I came to know Jesus through the Charismatic Renewal some four years ago, my spiritual life was very dry. I went to Mass but it didn't mean much to me: I said my prayers but wondered if anybody heard. Now I know He was listening all the time, but I wasn't. The Charismatic Renewal has brought me into a personal relationship with God. He is real to me now — I can come to Him now and know He is listening. It's as if there was a veil lifted to let me see things more clearly. I just couldn't list all the things that God has done in me since I came to know Jesus through this Renewal. It feels as if I never really lived before — it is a new life — a new way of living and with this comes a deep peace and joy which I never experienced before.

This is what is happening all over the world as more and more people acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Saviour, and this is what the Holy Spirit is bringing about through the Charismatic Renewal. Of course many people come to know Jesus outside of the Renewal. He Himself has said through prophet Jeremiah: "Whosoever seeks me sincerely will find me" and (praised be God!) this invitation is for everyone because He says in Revelation 3, v.20: "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me". The Charismatic Renewal is helping people to open themselves to the Lord and they find when they do this that the Lord is true to His Word and great things begin to happen.

Here in Louisburgh we have started to come together to worship God and already the Lord has touched many hearts. Praise Him! The meetings are open to everyone and start at 8.30 in McDermott's Hotel, Louisburgh every Friday night.

Aillemore

Nuala Kitterick

"SHE'S that IF SHE'S A DAY"

In this world they say we are certain of one fact only; death. Each and everyone of us, be he Pope or pauper, will one day depart this life: that is a certainty. However, in my opinion there is one other certain fact. In Louisburgh you cannot get away with hiding your true age. It is no use knocking-off a few years and saying "Sure I am only thirty-two". Rest assured, there is always someone, somewhere, who remembers either being in the same class at school or, maybe making first Holy Communion together; and that pin-points your age group.

Overheard in Louisburgh Church grounds after First Mass:

"Is there one of Micky Tom's at home from America"? "There is". "Which one"? — "Mary Kate". "Did she get married"? — "No. Sure the mother says she's too young; only thirty-six". "Trothen, it's more like forty-six. Sure, I remember the doctor was after delivering their Mary Kate when he got the call to come to our house. That leaves our Annie a couple of hours younger than Mary Kate" . . . (Pause) . . . "and Annie is married this good while and has six children!"

I was born and reared in the cottage at Cahir. Everyone knew the McGreals! We had many good and kind neighbours all around us, but diagonally across the fields, our nearest, perhaps in two senses, were the Hester's. There was the exchange of newspapers and knitting-patterns; and messages to be run. Many a cold winter's night we spent as children sitting round their big, open, turf fire chatting and swapping jokes. Maybe Alice would dish up boxty ("sliothar" we called it) and that, to our unsophisticated palates, was a luxury.

The memory which leaves the greatest impact is running for messages for Alice. Depending on who was eldest, each one of us in turn — and there were a few of us! — took over running for the messages. As I recall, Alice would stand at her door and beckon. Sometimes we pretended not to see her. Eventually the word would go round our house "Alice is calling", and the cry would go up "I'm not going"; but my mother would intervene and order whoever at the time was the eldest to go and see what Alice wanted.

Sure enough my turn came to run for the messages, the three older than I having left home. As a special concession in winter-time, Alice would come to the fence which was half-way between her house and ours: the loaf of bread — fourpence in those days — the pint of paraffin, the half-pound of tea and the ha'p'orth of baking-soda would be handed across the fence. Eventually my day to leave home came. I didn't want to, nobody wanted to but, we all **had** to go! The next one in the McGreal household no doubt took over.

Soon, Alice got married. I am not surprised that she was "snapped" up. I remember spending a most enjoyable week with her and her husband down in Kilmeena. (Pat is now dead. May the Good Lord grant him Eternal Rest!) The vacancy in the Hester household was soon filled when John took unto himself a wife, Nora Duffy from Prospect. A finer woman you wouldn't care to meet in a thousand years. In truth there are those who said at the time "If they knew she was coming over this side, Hester wouldn't have got her!"

The friendship between the McGreal's and Hester's continued over the years. One cold June day five or six years ago I happened to be home on my annual summer holidays when I was called suddenly to Hester's. I could see that John was very ill, and with a great friend of mine in Louisburgh we prepared him for the Last Rites. The doctor was sent for, who in turn ordered the ambulance. John left Cahir about 10 p.m. on that cold June night. I never saw him alive again. I was sad.

Nora stayed on in Cahir for a year or so after the death of her husband, but it was lonely up there on her own especially during the long winter nights. She got an offer of a room in the McBride Home, Westport, which she accepted. It was a very wise decision: she is warm, comfortable and extremely well looked-after; but the last link between the McGreal and Hester households in Cahir had been severed.

Nora's house came up for sale a few years ago. My husband and I bought it. As I stand at the door of my newly-acquired home and look across the fields to the McGreal cottage, memories come crowding back. I feel like beckoning as Alice did but, alas there is nobody to answer my call — the McGreal cottage is empty. The wheel has turned full circle!

But, what am I talking about — amn't I well able to do my own messages: I'm just! (Well, did you hear her! Trothen she's a good bit more than that, nearer to!)"

Cahir

Kathleen Golden

BOLEYING IN IAR-UMHAILL

The commencement at Loch Cunnel in recent weeks of Killeen Group Water Scheme makes topical a few words about activities there in former times. The subject of Boleying (or Booleying) is so seldom mentioned in our day that it may be new to some. But it was a very ancient custom and even when Spenser, Poet and Planter, referred to it in the second half of the sixteenth century it was already thousands of years old: "There is one use amongst them, to keep theyr cattell, and to live themselves the most part of the year in bolyes, pasturing upon the mountain, and wast wild places, and removing still to fresh land, as they have depastured the former". In our district of Iar-Umhail it continued in modified form down to the Great Famine and Loch Cunnel was the largest boley site here.

As Spenser says, the custom was to live with the cattle and pasture them on the mountain grazing. Not indeed on the steep mountain-sides which would be impossible with cattle, but on the bogs and moors and 'tamhnachs' (grassy stretches) at the foot of the mountains. I need not remind fellow-parishioners that bog and moor are often called 'mountain' here, as in other parts of the country. Perhaps in sheltered, wooded areas of Munster where Spenser lived it may have been possible to extend the boley season to more than half the year but in our case, on the bleaker hills exposed to the Atlantic gales, this was not on. Mid-May till late September would probably have been the normal season, give or take a little for exceptionally mild or harsh periods.

The scene

Nor did the whole family go with the cattle to boley. Only women went, or those of them who could be spared from the farm on the lower arable land. These would usually be teenagers, or girls in their early twenties. For shelter and sleeping they had small, roughly-made huts of stone or sod thatched with sedge and their beds were of straw or rushes. The door was narrow and so low that you entered by crawling on your hands and knees. The men built them and the

girls kept them in good repair. A hut was called "bráca' or 'bothán'. It must be more than twenty-five years since I last visited Loch Cunnel but at that time there were still traces of several brácaí there. And the name 'bráca' for a poor dwelling was still in use locally during the first half of this century. A capable, elderly woman was in charge of each 'bráca'. She had a double role to play, that of stock manager and 'competent authority'. No matter how willing or dutiful the youngsters were they could not be given sole responsibility for the precious cattle. They hadn't the knowledge and skills that come only with age and experience. Cattle may be very valuable now in money terms but in those times cattle were life. And for good order and division of work someone was needed to say who did what, and when and why and wherefore.

Life on the boley

What kind of life was it up there by Loch Cunnel, seven hundred feet above sea-level through the long days of summer and autumn? Dull enough at times, doubtless, when day after day, and sometimes week after week the rain and mist and drizzle drifted down from the overhanging mountains, some of them higher than Croagh Patrick. But that's only the gloomy side. They had long spells of dry weather and sunshine too. And when the clouds lifted and the sun shone out from a blue sky and larks trilled all over the glowing purple heath beside the shimmering lake they must surely have recalled the tales of Tír na hÓige, the magic Land of Youth. Their pastimes were singing, story-telling and the making of 'lúibíns' or little verses about local people or incidents. But in bad weather or fine, rain or shine, there was always work in plenty — ceaseless knitting of stockings and garments, repairing clothes, quilting, rush-weaving, as well as the daily care of the cattle, the milking of cows, churning and butter-making and the transport of milk. Churns were used as containers to carry home the skim milk and buttermilk. A few gallons of milk in a churn slung across the shoulder by rope were carried down the hillside to the home. Food, mainly potatoes, and any other small things required were brought up to the boley on the return. This would be necessary, probably three times a week. A gruelling, back-breaking task? I imagine it was not regarded as unduly strenuous. As for the effort and drudgery involved no one made any wonder of these. And pack animals were not practical. Leac na gCoinneog (Flagstone of the Churns) may have been a resting place for churn carriers. It's somewhere in the Sraith Rúsca* area.

* I may be allowed to correct a slip I made in a previous issue when explaining the name 'Sraith Rúsca'. I gave 'rúsc' as a milk-vessel but it was in fact a butter-container.

There was another Leac na gCoinneog in lower Coillín, towards Log, I think.

It may be questioned whether so many hands were really necessary on the boley. Would not far fewer, properly organized, have been sufficient? Maybe so, but conditions were vastly different then and outlook quite unlike modern views, so that we can be fairly sure they had the system best suited to them. In the set-up of the boley there was comfort and support in numbers and a sense of security. When the fairy lights flashed and darted over the bogs at night it was consoling to have many neighbours beside you. Fairies, full of wiles and guile, were always poised to snatch young women if opportunity offered! When the fox whined and the raven croaked through the darkness it was strength and courage to know you had so many friends all round. And no one need be idle. There were jobs and chores for all.

Precautions

When the cattle first arrived on boley they were certain to be restive and difficult. They would want to return home. But they must be watched and held there, in fair or foul weather, till they settled down. Then the ground was new to them and therefore very dangerous for them. They must be guarded from the "pollachars" (bog-holes), from the 'scrathbhogán' (shaking sod), from the muing-bháite' (drowning swamp), and from the 'ball bán' (a green patch in a bog). Even when they had come to accept their new habitat they must still be watched and counted every hour of daylight. At dawn some one had to rise and make the count. So there was justification for having the maiden in the Fáinniú-geal-an-lae (Dawning-of-the-day) type of song abroad at this hour. But little for the stroller who accosts her. Young men did not visit the boley. This was settled and accepted community law. But there was, indeed, a legend about a man — from "the side abroad", it was alleged — who caused consternation in a 'bráca' by Loch Cunnel when he thrust his head and shoulders through the wee door. In such case it seems there was only one principle of action: strike first and investigate later. Down came the 'buailteán' (heavy club) on his 'devoted' head making a 'stolp' (rigid body) of him in the doorway. But he survived — and very likely remembered. Most likely, too, that he heard more about it before he was much older. The family and/or close relatives of the affrighted would almost certainly contact him to demand an explanation. And of course there could have been a quite innocent reason to account for his unfortunate gate-crashing. Fog, 'féar gortach' (fairy-induced hunger) or fóidín mearaí (disorientation) — any of the three could



Loch Cunnel today: the beginning of work for a new water scheme
L. to R. — James O'Malley, Michael Scanlon, Tony O'Hora (contractor), Anthony McHale, Father Dan Conneely, Jim O'Malley, James McNally, Mrs. Sal O'Malley, Thomas Morrison

PHOTO FRANK DOLAN

exculpate him; and maybe he could think of others! But his story had better be convincing if he were to escape a beating; and, if it was felt he deserved it no one would have sympathy for him. But if there was doubt or if the local consensus was against the complainants' inflicting sanctions then they had better watch it or they would have a family feud on their hands and people were very wary of that.

Reasons

But why this boley custom at all and was it sound stock farming? There appear to have been four reasons for its survival and continuance — one, it was immemorial usage; two, it conserved grass on the home farm; three, it protected growing crops; and four, many believed it improved the health of cattle. As to the first it is only necessary to say that until the Great Famine the Irish people were amazingly, incredibly tenacious of all their customs. And of the second there can be no question. But one wonders how the grass so saved was used. Was there waste, and how much? The third must also be admitted; and on farms the vast majority of which had little or no fencing, there was no other means of saving them except to mount guard on every plot over the twenty-four hours of every day to restrain one's own stock and repel your neighbours till the crops were harvested. But why not fence them? There were several reasons but the two main reasons were: no security of land tenure and the danger of having your rent raised. And that's a different

story. Of the fourth reason I can only say I very much doubt it. A massive onset of 'crupán' (aphosphorosis) was a much more likely result of their sojourn on the highlands. And instead of asking was it good management perhaps the question should be: What else was available to them?

In pre-Famine times a lot of living had to be 'catch-as-catch-can' — trying everything and anything to survive.

At least half a dozen boleys are named between Croagh Patrick and the Killery. There may have been others, named or not, of which I have not heard. Some of them seem to have been very small, perhaps merely a shelter for cattle or a milking place. But the one in Aill Mhór is of special interest because it is the only example I have where the name 'boley' is extended to sheep — 'Ból' (Buail) na gCaorach. And this is all the more curious because the word 'banrach' for a sheepfold was well known here. The other boleys are — Boleyvreen and Boley na mBráthar at the foot of the Reek, Boley in Derrygarrow and Uggool. The word 'boley' does not occur in the name of the first one at Loch Cunnell but the site is referred to simply by the name of the lake alone, as in the case of the of the boley at Loch Caol in west Donegal.

One word more. There was another boley known to past generations here; not an earthly but a heavenly one, a constellation. But "Let the story to you!" It so happened that a few youths were visiting in a neighbour's house and to tease the good man of the house, they deliberately overstayed their welcome. But he was too polite to give any indication of his annoyance: he didn't even take the 'Paidrín' (Rosary beads) off the nail, which was a well-recognized warning to tardy visitors. At length he went outside to "look at the night", or perhaps just to relieve the tedium. He soon returned in other mood to announce in tone of horror: "Boley is behind over N.'s ditch!"; clear warning that it was outrageously late.

My knowledge of the stars is limited to the Plough and Pole Star but a friend, God rest him, years ago suggested that the Pleiades may have been meant.

Ar bhuaile Dé go raibh muid uile!

Cluain Cearbán

Daithí Mag Rael

A notice in Irish papers on 5 November, 1977 recorded the death of Constance, neé Forbes, wife of the late Reverend John Robinson Rector of Westport.

Her father was Archdeacon Forbes who ministered for many years in Louisburgh. May they share the peace of the Lord!

A GREAT MAN

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A great man! How often have I heard that phrase! My father, James Gibbons, one of fourteen children, was born in Cloonlara, Louisburgh, County Mayo, Ireland on July 14, 1888. My mother and I share his natal day. I visited his birthplace in 1972 and his nephew (whose father had acquired the old homestead) told me so many stories about him: how he left and walked nineteen miles to the nearest train depot in Westport to begin his long journey to America. As he was part of such a large family, with so many mouths to feed, and the economic situation in Ireland not too great, he thought it best to leave his native land.

He landed in New York and worked long and hard for the railroad. He lived with my Aunt Delia, who, together with her grandson, David Gibbons, was pictured in the Christmas 1971 issue of Life Magazine, expressing her views on Ireland when she was a little girl. She operated a rooming house and often said that my dad could eat almost a peck of potatoes at a time; that his appetite hardly paid for his room and board, for he was over six feet tall and had a very powerful build. But New York could not hold him very long! To the Midwest he came and stayed with an uncle who had a tavern on the West side of Chicago.

His choice of a career was to become a fireman and he joined the Chicago Fire Department in February, 1915. He was only on the job a short while when the Eastland disaster occurred. During his career he had several close calls, too numerous to mention in this article. Then in 1946 there was a fire at the La Salle Hotel in Chicago, which holocaust cost the lives of fifty-nine people. My father, Fire Marshal in charge, said the fire went out of control because the alarm was not sounded in time. After working all night to contain this fire, he drove sixty miles the following morning to paint his summer home and in this manner, I am sure, he warded off the horror of that night — no small feat, this! He not only was a strong man, but a great man. The Fire Commissioner